




SISTERHOOD LOUNGE ROOM

From our lounge room to yours


LET'S TALK ABOUT LIFE, WITH MARGARET STUNT: Part 2



Loved part one of this month's conversation? Well so did we! In part two Julie and Margaret continue their conversation on facing the challenges of life. As you watch this episode, we have highlighted the key scriptures, thoughts shared, as well as a few questions you can use in your group or in your own personal devotion ... enjoy.

Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we boast in the hope of the glory of God. Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.

Romans 5 v5



Julie started this episode by recapping that in part one they spoke about the why of suffering and in this conversation, their focus will be more on how we walk through suffering. We all face disappointments, heartaches, losses, waiting seasons, and various other difficulties. She asked Margaret how we may view suffering as an authentic part of our spiritual journey and not just something that we need

to get through or rebuke quickly but live through.

Margaret began by acknowledging that within the church we do not talk about suffering enough and suffering is mentioned in the bible from Genesis to Revelation, yet because it is not spoken about in church, we tend to think it's not going to happen to us.

In Romans 5 it says that we are to boast in the hope of glory, not in our circumstances. It also says there is glory in our suffering. Suffering produces perseverance. Perseverance produces character and character produces hope. So, in the middle of suffering, look at what it produces.

Margaret referred to Deuteronomy where God says that he set before you a choice. We all have choices. You can stay in your suffering, and you can ask why you are there, but you will be going around in circles. You also have the choice to choose life. Choose to have your character formed by perseverance and discover the wisdom it can produce in your life.

Margaret continued to say that your language locates you. Once you say something is hard, you've already decided it's going to be difficult, and your will experience it that way, so choose your language wisely. We are not disempowered in suffering although we may feel it. We are not victims we are over comers in Christ and always have a choice to decide how we are going to respond. Circumstances happen, but you choose what gets in you.

Julie referenced Viktor Frankl, who was in Auschwitz during the Holocaust who said that between stimulus and response there is always a choice. He said that they could take away every dignity, even their lives, but they could not remove their choice of how they responded to those things.



Q- Reflecting on your own experiences, what have challenges and opposition accomplished in your life?

Q- Margaret explained that we are not victims but over comers. Have you felt disempowered before within suffering, and if so what might you do differently?

Q- Have you experienced the power of your words? Do you find it easy to speak life?

For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the LORD.
Isaiah 55:8

Julie asked Margaret to expand on how we can use our experiences of suffering to reflect God's glory and Margaret referred to when her grandson was sick. People would ask her daughter how she was coping, and she would answer that she couldn't without Jesus. We cannot do suffering without Jesus, but we can do it with Him. Our job is not to understand His way but to find His way.

For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain.
Philippians 1:21

Margaret said that if you have been born again and baptised, a divine exchange took place, you died to yourself and became raised up in Christ. We are supposed to be dead to the things that rob us, steal, and destroy our hope, death has lost its sting. Yet Margaret observes that people are still living like death is stinging them. She said churches are full of people who come every week with a spade in hand ready to dig up their past.

Julie said that people seem afraid of death and asked Margaret how we should view the end of life and perhaps plan for a beautiful death.

Margaret said we plan to buy homes and go on holidays but don't plan our death and it's the

one thing that is certain to happen. Talking about death is not morbid, and people may be fearful of death because heaven isn't talked about enough. When her mother came near to passing, they frequently talked about heaven and how God was preparing a place for her. Margaret said we also need to learn how to release people.

Margaret concluded with a poignant thought saying that perhaps Jesus in heaven is looking down on His creation with His nail-pierced hands asking His father "Do you think they got it?" She said He died so we could have eternal life in Him.

Q- If you are born again and baptised are you aware that a divine exchange took place? What does it mean to have died to yourself, but alive in Christ? (Read Romans 6 if unsure.)

Q- Does death scare you? If so, how can you shift this view to one of hope and expectation?

Q- How can we live with an eternal perspective?

That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in your knowledge of Him. I ask that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you may know the hope of His calling, the riches of His glorious inheritance in the saints.

Ephesians 1: 17 & 18

Julie read a passage from Ephesians and emphasised that scripture is clear that we are foreigners, and our citizenship is in heaven. This life is fleeting, and she expressed her personal assurance that when her time comes to an end, she knows she will be with Jesus.

Margaret agreed and said we need to talk about death and heaven more and learn to say

see you soon to one another and release people well into eternity.

Q- Grief is part of life we all experience. How might you draw closer to God in the midst of your grief, instead of withdrawing from him?

Q- How can you prepare to have more conversations about heaven around your table?

Q- Do you have complete assurance that at the end of your life you will be with Jesus? You can.

Julie invited Margaret to expand on the idea of sustainable faith. Margaret explained that sustainable faith is faith that endures and becomes part of a lifestyle. She says that faith is a gift, so if you feel you are lacking, ask God for more, it's not complicated. If you have lost your faith, simply pick it back up.

And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who approaches Him must believe that He exists and that He rewards those who earnestly seek Him.
Hebrews 11:6

Margaret said we should add faith to people's lives, but too often we commiserate with people instead of adding to their faith. She said we need to give faith away and learn to say, "I have faith for that, let's pray." Julie added that faith that is just for ourselves is faith without love for others.

Consequently, faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.
Romans 10:17

Margaret said you can grow in your faith by reading or listening to the word of God. She shared an observation that we are raising a generation that does not read, but we have no excuse or barriers not to listen via apps and audiobooks. Margaret shared a poignant

image again of Jesus with his nail-pierced hands peering over heaven's balcony, watching us struggle to live a life of sustainable faith, saying to His father, "why isn't this enough?" He paid a huge price for us to live victorious lives. He's given us all that we need yet so often our lives can look no different to those who don't have faith and don't know Jesus.

Q- On a scale of 1-10 where is your faith? If it is 5 how do you get it to 6? Faith is a muscle that grows.

Q- Is the bible a habitual part of your life and if not, what is hindering you?

Q- How can you add faith into other people's lives, or begin the practice of saying "I have faith for that, let's pray"?

Julie asked Margaret to share any final reflections.

Margaret encouraged us to not do life alone and said that independence is a blessing blocker.

She dared us to trust Jesus. She encouraged us to live life on purpose and for a purpose, and our purpose is to introduce people to Jesus. 'Church' can be a wall word for many people as they may have had a negative experience or misconceptions of what church is about. But talk about who Jesus is, and ask yourself when people leave your company 'What aspect of Jesus have I left with people'? Be kind. There is nothing random about kindness, plan for it. How can you bless someone and be kind to them?

And lastly, remember people are watching you: How you respond to situations, how you handle yourself in your suffering, how you speak about your faith. Be a witness to those in your world.

Q- Reading through Margaret's final reflections, what has challenged you the most?

Q- Reflecting on what has challenged you the most, how will you respond?