



OUR PROBLEMS HIS PROMISES

SERIES OVERVIEW

"Houston, we have a problem" is the famous phrase spoken aboard Apollo 13. That same phrase has been used over and over again as a joke or even to describe a difficult situation.

There is nothing like the sinking feeling you get when you walk in the office or walk in the door of your house and the first words you hear are, "We've got a problem". Or the repairman looking at your air conditioner in the middle of summer saying, "We've got a problem."

Truth be told we all have problems. Some problems are seemingly small, while other problems can feel overwhelming. And if we are honest, more times than we care to admit, our problems seem overwhelming.

We've got some good news for you! Because we believe and scripture teaches that God's promises intersect with our problems in life-transforming ways.

Over the next 6 weeks we invite you to take a journey with us. This journey is going to take us through several passages of scripture in the book of Genesis. There we will see how the individuals in these stories discovered the power of God's promises in the midst of their problems and how they continue to help us overcome our problems today.

So join us as we journey through Our Problems... His Promises!

Your Pastors at Second Baytown

TIMELINE

- **July 23 through August 20**
Small Group "Host Ask"
(T-shirt pick-up in Lobby)
- **July 30**
NEW Small Group Host
INTEREST meeting
- **August 27 through September 17**
Group Sign-Up and
Booklet Distribution
- **August 30**
Group HOST Launch Party
- **September 17**
Week One
- **September 24**
Week Two
- **October 1**
Week Three
- **October 8**
Week Four
- **October 15**
Week Five
- **October 22**
Week Six

SERIES COMPONENTS

- Weekly Sermon Messages taught by our Pastors September 17 – October 22
- A 40 Day Devotional
- A 6 session Small Group Study Guide.
- Videos for the small group series provided on YouTube.
- T-shirts for Small Group Hosts
- Weekly Small Group Buddy Calls (for NEW HOSTS)
- Weekly Small Group Host Training and Informative Emails from Second's Small Group Pastor.

GETTING STARTED

- **When will groups meet?** *The week of September 17 through the week of October 22. The day of the week is your choice.*
- **How often will groups meet?** *Weekly for 6 weeks.*
- **How long are the meetings?** *Allow 1 1/2 hours plus about 30 minutes for hanging out afterward.*
- **What is the commitment?** *6 weeks*
- **Am I on my own?** *I recommend every small group leader should have a co-host. You will need help along the way, so think of someone and invite them to join you in hosting your small group. NEW HOSTS will be partnered with a Small Group Host Buddy who they will check in with each week. (Buddies will NOT attend your group meeting unless requested and arranged.)*
- **What about childcare?** *This is a BIGGIE if you are a small group for young families. Make it as easy and clear as possible. Some ideas include: 1) Schedule your small group to meet on campus at the church during times when childcare is provided. 2) Ask each member to find their own childcare. 3) Ask a different parent each week to watch the kids in a separate room from the video/discussion so parents can focus on the message each week.*
- **What do I need for the first night?** *A "reviewed" lesson, a clean-ish house, and some snacks and drinks (non-alcoholic).*



HOW PEOPLE CAN JOIN YOUR GROUP?

1. **Personal Invitation!** Statistics show 50% of people will say "YES" when asked to attend church or a small group. So look at your speed dial, social media friend list, Christmas card link, or more practically think about your neighbors, co-workers and family. Who in your life would enjoy and benefit from this study? Your invitation is by FAR the best way for people to join your group. So ask 3 individuals or couples, and ask them to invite 1-2 others.
2. **Secondbaytown.org** (or the Church Center App) for current small groups OR hosts who have hosted groups in the past 1-2 years and meet with Second's Small Group Pastor.

HELPFUL SUGGESTIONS FOR GROUP LEADERS:

Remember: it is GOD alone who has assembled your group and given you the opportunity to lead. Without question it is GOD who will supply the grace and the strength to guide you and your group through this series.

(REVIEW THE FOLLOWING SUGGESTIONS TO ASSIST YOU AS YOU LEAD YOUR GROUP)

- 1. God is in charge.** Rely solely on Him, NOT yourself or others. Pray often and pray consistently and in cooperation with reading the Bible daily. Your strength and emotional stamina will come from reading and seeking GOD in prayer. Surrender in advance to your own ideas and agendas and replace them with inviting GOD to lead you and your group. Remember, you were not selected to do this on your own, Philippians 2:13 says, for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose.
- 2. Partner Up.** Remember the people God has put around you, your spouse, a friend, another group member. Ask them to partner with you as in providing practical assistance in hospitality, follow-up, reporting, etc.
- 3. Be Prepared.** This one is on you, as the host... be prepared to review and discuss the sessions before your group arrives. Simply review video content and small group chapters in advance. Read through the provided discussion questions, and ask God to guide your thoughts as you prepare.
- 4. Be Open.** GOD wants to use you as you are -- where you are in your own journey to connect with those in your group.
- 5. Encourage Participation.** While each of us is wired differently, it is important to orchestrate conversation that encourages each type of personality to feel comfortable over time. Most importantly, ensure your small group is a safe harbor of confidentiality. Honor each other by listening, encouraging, praying and keeping confidentiality as a non-negotiable principle.
- 6. Have Fun.** This is not a task on your to-do list or a line item on your agenda. We serve a CREATIVE and AWESOME God who honestly has a sense of humor... have you ever seen a platypus? Often groups begin with dinner where social connection becomes a key ingredient to trusting each other and growing together. Don't neglect or ignore the importance of this time. Remember to laugh, to laugh often, and have a good time together.
- 7. Ask for Input.** Be flexible on how you lead and how the group wishes to refine the amount of time spent and the flow of the session. There is not one perfect way.



A SMALL GROUP'S AGREEMENT TO HONOR EACH OTHER

The following are points that can be shared with the small group at your first, and maybe your second meeting. Then maybe include this in your weekly emails while your group meets to keep these items in front of each other.

GROUP ATTENDANCE

We want to give priority to the group meeting. Please call or email if you will be late or can't attend.

SAFE ENVIRONMENT

We want to create a safe place where you feel loved. So we agree to not give quick answers, snap judgments or simple fixes.

RESPECT DIFFERENCES

We will be gentle and gracious to people with different levels of spiritual maturity, personal opinions, temperaments, or imperfections.

CONFIDENTIALITY

We will keep anything that is shared strictly confidential.

ENCOURAGE GROWTH


We will make a conscious effort to reach out to others and share our spiritual life. We will use the unique spiritual talents God has given us.

WELCOME NEWCOMERS

We will keep an open chair so that God might bring someone new to our group.

SHARED OWNERSHIP

We will remember that each of us has something to offer in service to Jesus... so we will strive to share small group responsibilities.



When all hope is lost,
remember God is not done!

KEEPING YOUR MEETING ON TRACK

It's easy to chase rabbit trails, so if you feel like your group is starting on a subject outside of the curriculum, just say something like... "well, that's going to open a whole other can of worms, let's go to the next question" or "well guys, that's going to be a whole other (day, show, discussion), let's get back to today's discussion." Don't interrupt people. When you find the opportunity, get it back on track. The others in your small group will appreciate your leadership in the situation.

If the discussion turns to criticism, please ask the critical person to go and speak directly to the person responsible ...they would love to talk with them about their concern.

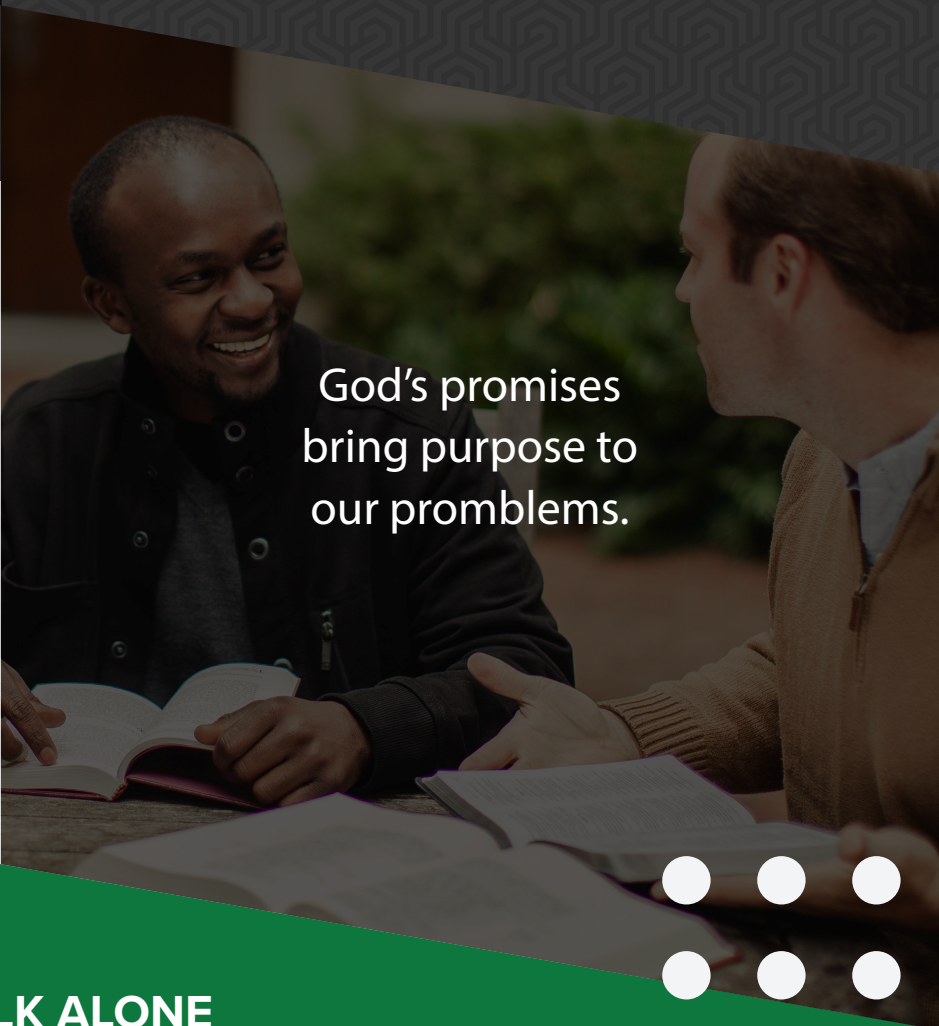
If something comes up that you don't know how to answer or deal with, just be honest. "I'm not sure about that one. Can I get back to you next week?"

REPORTING YOUR GROUP'S PROGRESS

If you have a buddy, check in with them at least once per week.

Report ONLINE: attendance, prayer requests, other needs. Each week you will receive an email after your meeting asking about who was there and what happened. Simply click the "We met" or "We didn't meet" link, then fill out a short online form. If you forget, you will be reminded the next day AND the day after that...

We would also like to know what's happening in your group: decisions for Christ, answers to prayer, life changes. ALWAYS, feel free to email or call Seth Carnes at the church offices, 281-427-6506 or scarnes@secondbaytown.org



God's promises
bring purpose to
our problems.



DON'T WALK ALONE

All of the new hosts be assigned a Small Group Buddy to answer your questions and help you start you group. Your Buddy will call you regularly and see how you're doing. Most importantly, your Buddy and their small group will be praying for you.

If you're a NEW HOST, then you'll meet a Buddy at the Host Launch Party on August 30.