



Stubborn Hope

Isaiah 50:4-9 | Session 10.37

Before the Session

Facilitator: In advance of the session

- Review today's scripture text and the session activities to help better facilitate the discussion.
- Have the Bible Background Video ready to view.
- Encourage your group to listen to the Faithelement podcast ahead of the next session (Share the link via email or social media).

Context

Start by asking:

- Thinking of some instances when people have effectively countered violence with peace and non-violent responses, what did they accomplish?
- Why were their methods so successful?
- In what ways was this is a Biblical model for responding to violence and/or injustice?
- What challenges does this incident issue to us as believers?

Content

Read Isaiah 50:4-9, and watch the Bible Background Video before asking:

- What abilities or gifts does the speaker talk about and how or when might this kind of ability provoke a violent response from others?
- How has the speaker responded to God and why is it important to note first how he responds to God, not just how he responds to his enemies?
- Read aloud Romans 12:17-20. In what ways does this compare to the speaker's response?
- In what ways do you see Jesus' journey foreshadowed here?
- What is the speaker so determined to do, and why do his enemies want to stop him?
- Why, ultimately, can he stand up to his enemies and accusers?

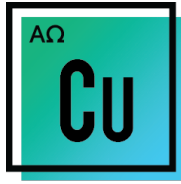
Closure

Continue by asking:

- How does Jesus' response to violence compare to that shown in this passage?
- At what points have Jesus' followers sometimes done this well, or not so well?
- How does this approach differ from passively offering for others to hurt us?
- What do we learn from this passage and Jesus' example about why and how we can behave in this way?
- Knowing that when we talk about violence we don't have to limit our discussion to physical harm, how can we view our response to hateful words and injustice done by individuals and systems?
- Where do we find different types of violence today and how might God be calling us today to respond to it?

Close with prayer.

Writer: Jon Parks



CURRENT

session page

Stubborn Hope

Isaiah 50:4-9 | Session 10.37

Before the Session

Facilitator: In advance of the session

- Review today's scripture text and the session activities to help better facilitate the discussion.
- Have the Bible Background Video ready to view.
- Thoroughly review all the referenced resources for this session in advance.
- Encourage your group to listen to the Faithelement podcast ahead of the next session (Share the link via email or social media)

Context

Read this [article about free hugs](#) and remind the group that *It's not much of a leap we have to make to understand the hatred these people may have felt from their family or even people that didn't even know them. Jen Hatmaker has faced hatred on social media for such actions. Ask:*

- What people can you think of who have been abandoned for their choices to care for others?
- How can we show love to others despite the hatred and anger we may bring upon ourselves?
- Where does someone get the motivation to stand up and tell people to cease their hatred and attacks on others?

- What would you say to those who question your choices to hug someone they disagree with?

Content

Read Isaiah 50:4-9, and watch the Bible Background Video before asking:

- What is the prophet's understanding of the gift he has been given?
- What is he charged to do?
- When the prophet claims to have "the tongue of a teacher," what does that mean?
- What is he risking by taking a stand for God and helping those who are weary?
- At what point is the prophet's community challenged by this passage?
- Knowing God has asked us to stand up for those who face persecution and judgment, what do you think we will receive today for taking a stand?
- How might this question have been interpreted at the time this scripture was written and why?

Closure

Listen together to "I shall not be moved" and ask:

- Why would this recording be appropriate for the Civil Rights movement that was a central part of our culture at the time it was done?
- For what social movements would this song be appropriate today?
- What kind of socially-focused stands should we be taking today?
- What can we as Christians learn from the words of the song about how we should act?

Close in prayer seeking strength to stand up for those persecuted by others.

Writers: Crystal Shepherd and Steve McClain



MYSTIC
session page

Stubborn Hope

Isaiah 50:4-9 | Session 10.37

Before the Session

- Review today's scripture text and the session activities to help better facilitate the discussion.
- Have the Bible Background Video ready to view.
- Preparation and materials: Gather assorted items (Air freshener, detergent, Bread, Candle, Salt, Blanket, Water, Dessert of some sort, Ruler, Hammer, Musical Instrument, Etc.) and place them in a central location.
- Encourage your group to listen to the FaithElement podcast ahead of the next session (Share the link via email or social media)

Context

Read [Isaiah 50:4-9](#), and watch the Bible Background Video.

*This is a brief *Lectio* experience.*

Reflection

Invite the group to watch "Waitress berates Hispanic couple for speaking Spanish | What Would You Do? | WWYD" and ask:

- What most stands out to you about this video and why?
- What would you have actually done in this situation?
- When have you encountered other situations like this, and what was it like for you?

Continue by inviting group members to share any experiences they have had where the opportunity arose to stand up for someone who was suffering in some way – whether they did or not. Encourage them to be as honest as possible about those situations or others they may have witnessed, then return to the text and invite the group to listen as it is read slowly twice again, listening for words or phrases that help us to stand up for those who are suffering.

Invite volunteers to close their eyes and speak those words and phrases that stood out to them (it is okay if there is repetition), letting this be a time when perhaps God's spirit enlivens these words and phrases in our souls.

Close with prayer.

Writer: Joy Yee



MEDIA
session page

Stubborn Hope

Isaiah 50:4-9 | Session 10.37

Before the Session

- Have the Bible Background Video ready to view.
- Review today's scripture text and the session activities to help better facilitate the discussion.
- Encourage your group to listen to the Faithelement podcast ahead of the next session (Share the link via email or social media).

Context

Start by asking:

- When have you or someone you know thought you couldn't do something because people would never accept you in that role?
- How did you handle the situation?

Play the Grenade movie clip and ask:

- Why was Steve Rogers doubted?
- Why do you think he jumped on the grenade?
- What would drive you to sacrifice yourself for others?
- In what ways do we, as followers of Jesus, need for our focus to have more focus?

Content

Read Isaiah 50:4-9, and watch the Bible Background Video before asking:

- What type of person do you think this text is about?
- What type of sacrifices does this person sound ready to make and why?
- How can this person be confident the Lord is helping and they will avoid disgrace?
- Why does this person want others to stand with him?
- In a world capable of such horrible violence, what can we learn from this person?
- In Nikki's video, she mentioned several people and/or movements that faced ultimate suffering, which ones brought the most meaning of this text to you?

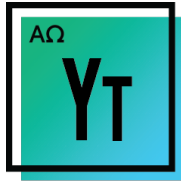
Closure

Play the Dark Times movie clip and ask:

- What first comes to mind when you see this video and why?
- How do you typically face the dark times of your life?
- At what points do we face the temptation do the easy thing, rather than the right thing?
- How do we choose between what is right and what is easy?
- What can we do to remind ourselves that we have friends and we are not alone in our faith when facing dark times?
- How might we help others know this?

Close in prayer.

Writer: Jon Self



YOUTH
session page

Stubborn Hope

Isaiah 50:4-9 | Session 10.37

Before the Session

Facilitator: In advance of the session

- Review today's scripture text and the session activities to help better facilitate the discussion.
- Have the Bible Background Video ready to view.
- Provide a dodge ball or other object it is safe to throw in your meeting area (See Context).
- Listen to the FaithElement podcast for this session.

Intro

Play [the CNN clip](#) and ask:

- What do you think of what these boys did in this clip?
- To what degree is bullying a big problem for you or someone you know and why?
- How do you usually deal with someone who picks on other people or on you?
- What do you think God would want you to do about situations where someone is being picked on?

Context

Play a game of "Protection," using a dodge ball, paper wad, or something else that is safe to throw in your meeting area.

Tell the group: *Imagine that we live in a country with a very strange form of government. There is a president and a bodyguard. In this strange government, it is the bodyguard's job to protect the president, but if someone from the outside hits the president with a ball, the bodyguard becomes the new president, and whoever tagged the president becomes the bodyguard.*

This game is played like dodge ball, with two people in the middle of a circle. The bodyguard can do whatever they wish to protect the president. The ball can hit them over and over as long as it does not hit the president. Once the president is tagged, that person rejoins the outer circle and a new one immediately jumps in. The game is non-stop and no one has to wait for the new bodyguard to get into position before continuing. Play for as long as time allows, then ask: What was the best story and why?

- What was it like playing this game?
- What was more fun and why, protecting someone or being protected?
- In real life, who protects you when someone tries to hurt you?
- In what ways is protecting someone different when it's not just physical harm from which they are being protected?
- Who do you try to protect from being hurt by others and why?

Content

Read [Isaiah 50:4-9](#), and watch the Bible Background Video before asking:

- Why does the author seem to focus so much on the Lord's instructions to him?
- In what way has God's word ever given you strength in a time when you needed it?
- How did the author respond when someone tried to hurt him and why?
- What end result is the author expecting from his pacifist actions?

- How do you feel about the author expressing that we should not resist someone who wants to hurt us?
- What does this passage say about where we should draw our strength when someone tries to hurt us?
- Beyond being a pacifist, what is the prophet calling people to do?

Closure

Play the Gandhi clip and continue by asking:

- What did you think about the actions taken in this clip?
- In what ways did you find Gandhi to be strong or weak in this clip?
- What do you think would have happened if the action got physical in this clip?
- What would happen if you decided not to fight back if someone bullied or threatened you?
- How would you feel if people saw you as someone who did not fight back and why?
- In what ways is our relationship with God affected by how we respond to abuse?
- How might we help others who are affected by some sort of abuse, without becoming abusive ourselves?

Close this session in prayer.

Writer: Don Breeden



MIX
session page

Stubborn Hope

Isaiah 50:4-9 | Session 10.37

Before the Session

Facilitator: In advance of the session

- Have the Bible Background Video ready to view.
- Review today's scripture text and the session activities to help better facilitate the discussion.
- Encourage your group to listen to the Faithelement podcast ahead of the next session (Share the link via email or social media).

Context (From the Current Session Page)

Read this [article about free hugs](#) and remind the group that It's not much of a leap we have to make to understand the hatred these people may have felt from their family or even people that didn't even know them. Jen Hatmaker has faced hatred on social media for such actions. Ask:

- What people can you think of who have been abandoned for their choices to care for others?
- How can we show love to others despite the hatred and anger we may bring upon ourselves?
- Where does someone get the motivation to stand up and tell people to cease their hatred and attacks on others?
- What would you say to those who question your choices to hug someone they disagree with?

Content (From the Mind Session Page)

Read Isaiah 50:4-9, and watch the Bible Background Video before asking:

- What abilities or gifts does the speaker talk about and how or when might this kind of ability provoke a violent response from others?
- How has the speaker responded to God and why is it important to note first how he responds to God, not just how he responds to his enemies?
- Read aloud Romans 12:17-20. In what ways does this compare to the speaker's response?
- In what ways do you see Jesus' journey foreshadowed here?
- What is the speaker so determined to do, and why do his enemies want to stop him?
- Why, ultimately, can he stand up to his enemies and accusers?

Closure (From the Media Session Page)

Play the Dark Times movie clip and ask:

- What first comes to mind when you see this video and why?
- How do you typically face the dark times of your life?
- At what points do we face the temptation do the easy thing, rather than the right thing?
- How do we choose between what is right and what is easy?
- What can we do to remind ourselves that we have friends and we are not alone in our faith when facing dark times?
- How might we help others know this?

Close in prayer.