New Beginnings Community Church
Date: November 8, 2026
Speaker: Guest Pastor Susan Van Riesen

Life Group Discussion Notes

STICKING WITH GOD!

Scripture used: Psalm 126:1–6 (NIV)

OVERVIEW

During childhood visits to South Korea, Pastor Susan's father took her to the demilitarized zone separating North and South Korea. His hometown lay on the northern side. After the war began, his family settled in Seoul, but a favorite brother, visiting up north, was stranded there; they never reunited. Losing his home, brother, and way of life left him with lifelong grief. His story helps us understand the longing beneath Psalm 126's joyful language. These were people who remembered exile and still needed restoration. We, too, carry losses that shape our lives. Through this psalm, Pastor Susan invited us to bring our sorrow to God and remain close to Him, trusting that He is working even when we cannot see it.

KEY POINTS

1. **Bring your longing to God.** Psalm 126 holds gratitude and grief together: the people celebrate what God has done while crying out for restoration. Our losses may involve health, relationships, family, or financial security. Trusting God does not erase the hurt. We can acknowledge our pain honestly while continuing to hope in Him.
2. **Build a lasting connection with Jesus.** Pastor Susan introduced *jeong*, a Korean concept describing deep loyalty and emotional connection that develops over time. Unlike love at first sight, it grows through shared experience, service, and care, enduring even through suffering. As we keep praying and trusting, our relationship with God deepens beyond expecting Him to fulfill requests. We grow in devotion to Jesus, who has already demonstrated His faithful love for us.
3. **Keep sowing even through tears.** The people in the psalm are taking action while grieving. Likewise, waiting on God involves continued obedience: praying, serving, and remaining devoted to Him before we see the outcome. We can trust His promise of restoration while allowing Him to determine its timing and shape.
4. **Trust God's work beyond what you can see.** Feeling directed by God to pray for her father, Pastor Susan asked God to bring her father to faither in Jesus. She sensed God directing her to pray for him twice daily for a year. She obeyed, although his behavior did not change that year. Twenty years later, just before his death, he accepted Jesus. Her testimony reminds us that God's work may unfold far beyond our expectations. Isaiah 55:8–9 (KJV) reminds us that His thoughts and ways exceed our own.

DISCUSSION

1) **HEAR** - God invites us to bring Him our grief and remain faithful while we wait. Through prayer and obedience, we develop *jeong*: a deep, enduring connection with Jesus that sustains us through suffering.
2) **UNDERSTAND** - What pain, fear, anger, or yearning lies deep in your heart? How might continuing to trust Jesus in that area deepen your relationship with Him, even before your circumstances change?
3) **DO** - his week, bring one unresolved burden to God in daily prayer and choose one act of obedience or service you can practice while waiting. Make this your prayer: "As for me, I will stick with the Lord. God, help me to build *jeong* for You."

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