

Workshop 7: Hanging onto Hope (Graham and Emma Phillips)

Emma and Graham Phillips shared their own experience of trusting and finding God in difficult circumstances, and some details from their talk are as follows:

Introduction. Being real, with God when life is difficult, is important, for what is the use of the gospel if it only works in the good times? Other people in trouble need a lifeline and one thrown from the shore won't reach. Life faithfully lived in times of trouble can be a beacon to others which shines all the brighter because of the troubles.

Milestones. Examples of experiences which reveal God's presence and give us windows into His purposes and thereby help to keep us going.

Honesty and integrity in telling your story, including the difficult parts.

What kept us going, kept us seeking God - friendships, Christian holidays, counselling, regular church attendance, allowing each of us to be ourselves in the challenges, perseverance in personal prayer.

Blessings. Looking back and recalling the many blessings.

Conclusion. God makes use of our living with suffering, so that our cross becomes a light for others, demonstrating authenticity of faith. Suffering changes us. God can make use of every circumstance of our lives.