

## 4. Understand what influences us

### While waiting to begin please discuss...

Today we're thinking about the impact that life-circumstances have upon our hearts. Read the story in Numbers 20:1-5 and discuss...

1. What circumstances did the people face?
2. How did they respond? Why?

### Growing meaningful relationships in the body...

(1) With all humility... (2) Move towards other people... (3) Understand the heart

### What influences our hearts?

**People** - E.g. in the psalter (Ps. 133:1-2)

**Our bodies** - E.g. 2 Corinthians 4:16

**Our own sin**- See Romans 7:21-23

**Satan**

**God**

### How “influential” are sufferings and circumstances?

**Don't maximise the impact of our circumstances**

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## God understands... and is working

**Remember: Scripture and our God understands me** (e.g. Psalm 88)

**And God is working in it all** (e.g. Philippians 3:10, Romans 8:26)

## The big influences: share them, listen out for them

**\*\* Our aim: have a growing understanding of other people  
– so that we can serve them \*\***

## Discussion questions

1. How has knowing the particulars of someone's weaknesses (e.g. physical suffering) helped your patience and love for that person?
2. Can you think of prominent influences on your life (perhaps even just one)? How as it affected your heart?
3. In Psalm 13 King David reveals his circumstances... and his heart... and brings them both to the Lord in prayer. This is the sort of process in which the Lord wants us all to engage.
  - Read Psalm 13.
  - What is going on in David's life? (see verses 3-4)
  - What is going on in David's soul? (see verses 1-2)
  - What is David's response to extreme circumstances and turmoil of heart? Why?