

ASKING FOR A FRIEND

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We're squinting in a fog, peering through a mist. But it won't be long
Before the weather clears and the sun shines bright!"
1 Corinthians 13:12 (Message)

What We Know About Evil & Suffering

1. God Is Not The _____ Of _____

"God looked over all he had made, and he saw that it was very good!"
Genesis 1:31

"When Adam sinned, sin entered the world. Adam's sin brought death,
so death spread to everyone, for everyone sinned."
Romans 5:12

2. Though Suffering Isn't Good, God Uses It To _____

"God sometimes uses sorrow in our lives to help us
turn away from sin and seek eternal life."
2 Corinthians 7:10

"We also rejoice in our suffering because we know that suffering
produces perseverance, perseverance character, and character hope."
Romans 5:3

3. Suffering Will _____ & Evil Will Be _____

"The Lord is not slow in keeping His promise as some understand
slowness. He is patient with you not wanting anyone to perish, but
everyone to come to repentance."
2 Peter 3:9

How Can A Good God Allow Evil & Suffering?

4. Our Suffering Will _____ In _____ To What God Has In Store For His Followers

"For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us
an eternal glory that far outweighs them all."
2 Corinthians 4:17

"I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing
with the glory that will be revealed in us."
Romans 8:18

5. We Have A Choice For _____ Or _____

Memory Verse

"These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the
world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world."
John 16:33

"The LORD is close to the brokenhearted and saves
those who are crushed in spirit."
Psalm 34:18

MY NEXT STEP IS TO . . .

- Memorize John 16:33
- Ask God to help me to run to Him rather than from Him when faced with pain and suffering
- Commit to attend (as much as possible) the next 4 weeks of the "Asking For A Friend" series.
- Get the most out of each weekend's teaching by joining a Life Group



Discussion Questions - Week #1

LIFEGROUPS

QUICK REVIEW

Thinking back to the sermon this weekend, "How Can A Good God Allow Evil & Suffering?", summarize the main point in a sentence or two.

Was there anything you heard for the first time or that caught your attention, challenged, or confused you?

Is there any practical step you plan on taking this week in response to the message?

GETTING STARTED

- The pain we face in life can make us bitter or better. Who's someone that you've seen endure painful circumstances and it made them better for it? How did it do so?
- According to the C.S. Lewis quote Pastor Rick shared in the message, "God whispers to us in our pleasures, He speaks to us in our conscious. But He shouts to us in our pain. Pain is God's megaphone to rouse a deaf world." When has God used pain as a megaphone in your life?

DIGGING DEEPER

1. The letter of 1 Peter was written during a time of active and intense persecution. Read 1 Peter 4:12-19. What stands out to you in this passage?

How do the fiery ordeals we face test us?

Peter reminds the church to expect to suffer for the cause of Christ. How is this attitude different from the perspective that most American Christians have towards suffering and trials due to their faith in Christ?

On what grounds should facing persecution be a source for rejoicing?

How could Peter's words serve as an encouragement for your faith this week?

2. Read James 1:1-8 & 12. How might knowing your pain can serve a higher purpose help you to endure it?

Do the trial we face always lead to maturity? Why or why not?

How would you describe spiritual maturity in your own words?

Can you think of a painful experience you've endured that has shaped you spiritually? If so, how did it shape you?

What do you think you could do to cultivate the response of joy when you face trials?

Why do you think it's important we pray for wisdom as well as perseverance in the trials we face?

FOR PRACTICE

In the above passages both Peter and James encourage us to rejoice in the face of our suffering. Yet another legitimate biblical response to suffering is lament. When we face the emotions of anger, sadness, or hurt, scripture teaches that we are not to bottle them up or hide them but express them back to God. Lament gives us the opportunity to give voice to our pain and allows us to turn powerful negative emotion into trust. If you find yourself amid a painful ordeal, consider the practice of regularly praying Psalm 13, 31, 44 or 86.

SHARE IT

Is there anything you heard or learned in the weekend message or Life Group this week that you want to share with someone you know?

PRAYER REQUESTS

➤ Pray for the suffering people of Ukraine and for the churches and para-church ministries in Ukraine to use this tragedy as an opportunity to proclaim Jesus as Savior of the world.