

I have a Q: Does suffering disprove God?

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REVIEW LAST WEEK'S NEXT STEPS

What, if any, next step did you commit to last week, how did it go?

- I will read *Us Versus Us* by Andrew Marin.
- I will not answer closed-ended questions with closed-ended answers.
- I will take the posture of listening in order to build bridges with gay people.
- I will go to the other side and love the other side.
- I will treat gay people with dignity, respect and kindness.

THIS WEEK'S SERMON RECAP

It's interesting that the book that is most troubled and perplexed by human suffering is the Bible. Rather than try to sweep it under the rug, the writers of Scripture give very direct expressions of anguish, confusion, and rage about suffering and pain.

Really, the first two chapters in the Bible are about the universe before suffering, and the last are about existence post-suffering, but most everything else in between is about suffering. So if God is all-loving and God is all-powerful, why is there so much suffering, pain and evil in the world. That's the question we're asking this week.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Psalm 22:1-2 says *"My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? My God, I cry out by day but you do not answer, by night but I find no rest."* Share about a time when you felt or experienced this in your own life.

2. Pastor Matt taught that the first two chapters of the Bible are about the universe BEFORE suffering and the last two are about man's existence POST suffering, but most everything else in between is about mankind's suffering. How do you feel about this?

3. Pastor Matt shared that most every religion was born out of a story of suffering – Christianity, Buddhism, etc. What do you think about this?

4. Former atheist Oxford professor turned famous Christian writer wrote, “My argument against God was that the universe seemed so cruel and unjust. But how had I got this idea of just and unjust? What was I comparing this universe to when I called it unjust? ..My argument depended on saying that the world was really unjust, not simply that it did not happen to please me. Atheism turns out to be too simple.” Deep down we know there is such a thing as justice but that can only come from a just GOD. How do you feel about this?

5. Pastor Matt taught that there's two types of suffering. “**Suffering from**” and “**suffering with**”, and the second “suffering with” is oddly enough a suffering that people actually choose to go through. When we “suffer with” we can do nothing but grieve with the person going through suffering, but

our willingness to “suffer with” them helps them somehow. They’re less alone. Tell about when you’ve experienced this suffering with someone else or when someone suffered with you.

6. Hebrews 5:7-8 says, *“During the days of Jesus life on earth, He offered up prayers and petitions with loud cries and tears to the one who could save him from death, and he was heard, because of His reverent submission. Although He was a son, He learned obedience from what he suffered..”* Seeing Jesus as our example, how can this help you when you are experiencing a season of suffering?

7. Isaiah 53:3 prophesies about Jesus, *“He was despised and rejected by mankind, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.”* How can understanding this help you to “suffer with” others who are going through difficult times?

8. How do you believe “Suffering with Jesus” looks like in our lives as Christ followers today?

9. II Corinthians 4:16-17 says, *“Therefore we do not lose heart. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory which far outweighs them all.”* The apostle Paul who wrote this had been

shipwrecked, flogged, stoned, imprisoned, persecuted, starved, and ultimately was martyred, yet he called these troubles – light and momentary troubles. How are you able to remember this when you’re personally “suffering from” troubles you’re experiencing?

NEXT STEPS FOR THIS WEEK (COMMIT TO GROW)

- I will suffer with those around me who are suffering.
- I will look at those who are suffering as if they are Jesus himself.
- I will bring my grief to Jesus, who knows the place of ultimate suffering and the place of ultimate hope.

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

- Job 6:2-4
- Job 5:7
- Psalm 22:1-2
- Psalm 22:7-8
- Hebrews 5:7-8
- Isaiah 53:3
- Romans 8:16-17
- 2 Corinthians 4:16-17
- Matthew 25:40

Prayer Request(s)

We would like your feedback!

Please answer this brief survey to help us provide you with a better small group experience!

<https://forms.gle/1miQBLuCAeKLC1qc7>