

Why does God allow bad things to happen?

May 24, 2020



Reading/Group Discussion

Begin with prayer (5 minutes)

As you begin your virtual gathering, have someone open your time together by praying that the Holy Spirit would lead and guide your time together.

Checking the pulse (10 minutes)

Use a few minutes catching up on how everyone has been. Make sure that everyone has time and space to share what is happening in their lives.

Read this overview

Jesus told us that this world would be full of trouble and hardship. But he also told us that all those who build their lives on him will be able to withstand any storm. Part of what has made Christians so impactful throughout the centuries is that they have had resources to care for hurting people *even in the midst of hardship*.

This past weekend we looked at five reasons as to why there is pain and suffering in our world.

As Jesus' followers, we have a unique perspective and a unique burden to love God and love others in extraordinary ways during this unprecedented season because of our viewpoint on eternity.

Talk through this past weekend's sermon & encourage one another (20-30 minutes)

Here are a few questions to guide this time:

- How did this weekend's sermon deepen your faith? How did it challenge you? Explain.
- Have you ever asked the question, "Why does God allow so much pain and suffering?" What in your life prompted you to ask that? How did you resolve that question?
- This past weekend, Dan mentioned five reasons as to why pain, evil, and suffering exist in our world. He mentioned it's because we have free will, others have free will, we live in a fallen world, we have an enemy, and because God sometimes disciplines his children. Which of these reasons do you find most compelling? Which of these reasons do you find most challenging? Explain.
- In what ways have you recently felt like your own free will has contributed to the brokenness of creation? Where might you need to pursue reconciliation and repentance?
- In what ways have you recently felt the hurtful effects of the free will that others possess?

- How would you describe your level of awareness of spiritual warfare? How do you think the enemy typically attacks you and your family?
- What specific areas of life do you think the enemy might be presently working on you (i.e. sex, power, money, laziness, gluttony, pride, greed, addictions, etc.)? Is there any history of these in your family?
- How has the enemy's work led to pain and suffering in your life? What steps are you taking to pursue holiness in these areas?
- How does it feel to know that there will be a day with no more pain and no more suffering (see **Revelation 21**)?
- Where might God be inviting you to join him in loving others, in the midst of this unique time, to bring about what we read about in Revelation 21?

As a church, we affirm that God is always working. He is always directing, leading, and guiding us. Spend some time discussing what God is inviting you into right now.

- What do you sense God doing **in** you that you need to respond to?
- What do you sense God doing **around** you that you think he is inviting you into?
- What do you sense God doing **through** you that you need courage for?

Spend time thinking through how your group can be #FORTHE317 (5 minutes)

Try asking the following:

- How can we serve one another?
- How can you best serve your family in this time?
- What is a way that we can best serve our neighbors in this time?

Finish with prayer (5-10 minutes)

You might designate someone in your group to write down everyone's prayer requests and then send them to the whole group for everyone to be praying about through the week.

- What is on your heart that you need prayer for?
- Who in your life needs prayer?

Have someone close your time together by interceding for the requests that were shared.