

Cultivate Reflection Guide

The Healer: Why God Allows Suffering April 2/3, 2022

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We know Jesus as our Lord and Savior, but do we know him as a healer? Whether it's the ongoing struggle with the pandemic, our spiritual and emotional health or our relationships, we all need healing.

Our weekly Reflection Guide equips you to start a REAL conversation in your community group, as well as cultivate God's word into your life through personal bible study. Choose the questions that challenge you to reflect and respond to what we're learning. *It's not about getting through the content, but getting the content through you!*

Note: If you're discussing this week's message in a group, be mindful that this topic may be delicate or even painful for some. Handle one another's hearts with grace and kindness, creating a safe space for everyone to be heard without judgement. Ask curious questions that demonstrate compassion, care and a desire to understand.

Read: [John 9:1-25, 34-38 ESV](#)

Reflect: As you reflect on the weekend message, what most instructed, encouraged or challenged you? This could be any word, verse or point that got your attention.

Respond:

1. Pastor Matt reminded us that there is no pain like the loss of a child, and God willingly endured that suffering to sacrifice Jesus and save us from our sin. How does that truth impact your perspective on suffering – whether suffering around you or your own personal experience?
2. Suffering makes us all **better**.
 - [Read Romans 5:3-5 ESV](#). According to these verses, how does suffering work in our lives?
 - Even if you don't consider yourself someone who has "suffered," how have you experienced growth because of obstacles, trials or difficulty?

Dig Deeper Contrast provides clarity just like light reveals darkness. Reflect on a struggle you are or have gone through. Write down some words to describe what you experienced spiritually, emotionally or relationally. Now, think of the opposite of those words. Has God used your struggle to bring about that contrasting growth in your life? If not, invite Him to begin that work in you.

3. Suffering forces us to **ask the big questions**.
 - If we believe that God is personal, powerful and good then we can trust Him through our hardships. Is there anywhere in your life that you're tempted to give up or give in rather than keep trusting God? This could also look like compromise, disobedience, self-righteousness, pride, fear or doubt.
 - What would it take for you to trust God through this until the end? Remember – the devil wants nothing more than for us to give up before our glory.

Live it Out: Suffering reveals who **our real friends are**. Who are the people in your life who rejoice with you in good times and remind you of God's goodness in hard times? Reach out and tell them what they mean to you. In contrast, are there any relationships in your life distracting you from Jesus? Ask God to help you be REAL with yourself, Him and others about any changes you need to make.

Prayer: *"Lord, it's so hard to say, but "thank you for my suffering." Without darkness, I might never turn toward your light. Without pain, I might never remember that you're my healer. Help me to trust that no matter what I'm walking through, you're walking alongside me until the end. Jesus, silence the lies that tempt me to give up or give in. Instead give me the courage and strength to hold fast to what is right, real and true. Use my suffering to help me become the best version of myself, and may it be for your glory. Amen."*