

SERMON GUIDES

Talking through the message during the week helps you and your group turn what God is saying to you into action steps. Begin with the key questions, add in any optional scriptures and questions if needed, then wrap up by deciding on your next steps.

God's Plan: God's Plan and Pain | WEEK # 2

01.

INTRODUCTION

This week's sermon was on pain. What is God's plan for the pain we experience? When we experience pain we often wonder what we have done to deserve it or we blame God because we mistakenly think God caused our pain. The theological term THEODICY is the attempt by mankind to reconcile a loving God with the suffering that takes place in the world.

02.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Gordon talked about the incorrect theology that happens when we think that if we pray enough or are faithful enough that we won't experience pain. **Read Psalm 23:4, 1 Peter 4:12, 2 Corinthians 1:4, and John 16:33.** What do these verses say about suffering? What do you think about the connection between faith and suffering?
2. There are different types of pain.
 - Pain that comes from wanting to protect – when we realize that the stove is hot after we touch it. This pain helps us to know when to back away.
 - Pain from loving. This pain comes as a result of being connected and loving others. If we want to fully experience love, that will come with pain.
 - Pain that come from perseverance. Enduring hardship so that we can reach a goal.
 - Pain from bad decisions. This is pain that comes from consequences of making bad choices.What type of pain do you struggle the most with? In which situation do you find it hardest to trust God?
3. **Read Hebrews 4:14-16.** What does this say about Jesus and our pain? Jesus understands our pain. In his full humanity Jesus experienced everything we experience.
4. **Read Isaiah 43:1-2.** God walks with us in our pain. How does it make you feel to know that God is with you when you struggle? Share a time when you have experienced the closeness of God during a painful time.

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5. **Read Galatians 11:18-22.** Gordon quoted Sam from the Lord of the Rings, when he says, "Will everything sad become untrue?" How do these verses relate to this quote?

In the Message version verses 20-22 read: "Not only that, but all the broken and dislocated pieces of the universe—people and things, animals and atoms—get properly fixed and fit together in vibrant harmonies, all because of his death, his blood that poured down from the cross." God will redeem our pain.

Is it easy or difficult for you to believe that God will redeem our pain?

03.

NEXT STEPS

1. Think about how we react when we experience pain. Do we blame God or others?
2. Change your thinking, the way you answer will impact your experience when encounter suffering.
3. Remember: God understands our pain. God walks with us in our pain. God will redeem our pain.