

Group Life.

WE ARE BETTER TOGETHER



ICEBREAKER (10 MINUTES)

Do you like roller coasters? If so, where's your favorite roller coaster?

OR

Have you ever gone through a difficult time in your life and discovered that God used that difficulty to accomplish something good? Briefly share your experience with the group.

INTRODUCTION (5-10 MINUTES)

Read John 11:1-44.

What most stood out to you from David's message?

What stands out to you from David's explanation regarding God as omnibenevolent, omnipotent and omniscient? Are these terms you were familiar with?

INTO THE WORD (20 MINUTES)

Read Psalm 13:1-6. Do you agree with the proposition that suffering is universal and that, like King David in this Psalm, everyone experiences pain and suffering at some point in their life? How have you experienced pain and suffering in your own life?

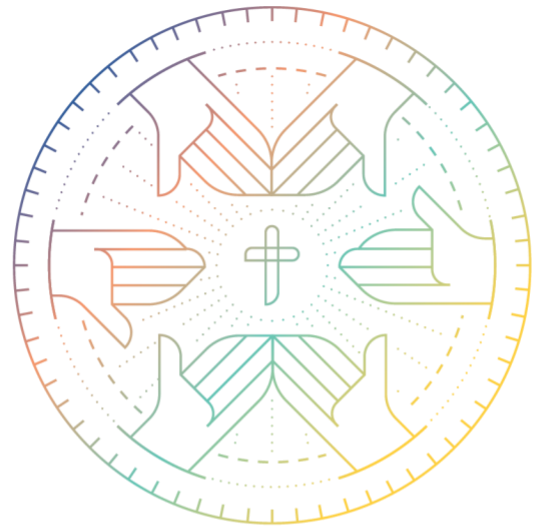
Read 2 Cor. 12:7-10. Paul experienced the pain of his "thorn in the flesh" (whatever that meant). How many times did he pray for healing, what was God's answer, and how did Paul respond?

Read James 1:2-4. What does this passage teach us about suffering? Can you think of a time where you experienced pain and suffering that produced one of the virtues James mentions?

Read Psalm 34:18, 1 Peter 5:10 and 2 Cor. 4:16-18. How can these verses encourage us or comfort us when we face pain and suffering?

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APPLICATION (20 MINUTES)

What does it mean to you to "throw ourselves into fellowship with other sufferers"? How can your small group come around you (if you are suffering) or someone you know who is suffering?

Spend some time at the end of your group time praying for someone you know who is part of the fellowship of sufferers.

PRAYER (10 MINUTES)

Our Savior and Lord Jesus, thank you for this perspective on suffering. As I experience suffering either now or in the future, remind me of your love for me even in the midst of tears. Help me to draw near to you and experience the closeness that you offer to me. Quiet my heart and encourage my strength, as you deepen the roots of my faith through these trials. Amen.

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