

## **Sermon Discussion Guide for small groups, families, and individuals**

### **"Why Does God Allow Suffering?"**

**January 24-25, 2015**

#### **For Starters**

1. Looking back at your notes from this week's teaching, was there anything that particularly caught your attention, challenged you, or raised questions?
2. How do you account for all the suffering in the world? What should be included in your answer and how does it differ from people you know or have heard of?
3. Share a time where pain and suffering drove you to question God. How did or are you working through it? What helped and what doesn't?

#### **Digging In**

1. How does Genesis 1 describe the world at the very beginning? Look at the repeated phrase at the end of verses 10, 13, 18, 21, 25 and 31 for a clue.
2. How does Gen 3:1-19 talk about suffering and evil?
  - What things changed?
  - How did they change? If you could reduce the answer to one word, what is it?
  - What did God do about it? But there's more, don't miss the promise in 3:15.
  - Does Gen 3 answer the question "Why couldn't God create a world without the possibility of sin and suffering?" Explain.
3. What is God's take on suffering? Look up the following verses: Divide them and share.
  - Ex 3:7
  - Deut 26:6-9
  - Is 53:3-6 (a prophesy about the Suffering Messiah)
  - Heb 13:12
  - Rev 21:1-5
4. How can or could suffering be positive? Think of your own experiences and look up these verses which give a sampling of God's commitment to work all things together for the good of his children.
  - Gen 41:52
  - Rom 5:3-4 also James 1:2-4
  - 2 Cor 1:3-4
  - Heb 12:7-11
5. Think through the life of Christ and list the various ways He suffered?

#### **Bringing It Home**

1. Marc is fond of saying, "We never know what a day holds." How ready are you to face suffering, what are the resources you have and what ones are missing or lacking?
2. Are you inclined to embrace suffering and let it drive you to the one who suffered for you or push it aside? Explain.
3. Share stories of how God has used "hard" things and times of suffering for your good.
4. Who do you know who is suffering and what could you do to bring mercy and comfort to the situation. How does Ps 86 help you pray for those who suffer?

**Adopt a Teacher Tip Week #15** Surprise your teacher with a pick-me-up coffee on a Friday afternoon or Monday morning! A little surprise and encouragement can go a long way! Contact Karrah for more information at [kmesser@doorcreekchurch.org](mailto:kmesser@doorcreekchurch.org)

**Life Groups:** Belonging to a small group is a great way to grow spiritually. If you're interested in joining a Life Group or learning more, contact Deb at [dmiller@doorcreekchurch.org](mailto:dmiller@doorcreekchurch.org)