

- Doesn't Suffering Disprove a Loving, All-Powerful God? -

Ice-Breaker:

- What is your most recent experience of suffering, and on a scale of 1 to 10 (with 10 being the worst suffering), what was it like for you?

Discussion:

1. Read Job 5:6-7, 6:2-4. What was Job's observation and experience with suffering?
2. Read Isaiah 53:3. What does the prophet Isaiah's description of the coming Messiah tell us about Jesus' ability to understand our sufferings?
3. Read Romans 8:16-17 and 2 Corinthians 4:16-17. How does Jesus' suffering help us when we suffer?
4. Read Matthew 25:37-40. When we minister to people who suffer, when we "suffer with" them, it delights the heart of Jesus. Share a time when you "suffered with" someone and it brought healing to that person.
5. Discuss the following highlights from this sermon:
 - Sometimes we bring suffering on ourselves, but other times suffering is a mystery.
 - Our outrage at unjust suffering actually points us toward the existence of God.
 - Suffering is not in vain. One day every agony will turn into glory. One day "everything sad is going to come untrue."

Application:

- How has suffering impacted your relationship with God? Do you have reservations about fully trusting God because of suffering?
- Make sure you have a close friend(s) who will be there for you in times of sorrow and suffering.