


**The Problem of Pain**

## ICE BREAKERS:

- **Share about a time in your life when you "elected" to have pain (in the short-term) in order to accomplish some greater benefit in the long run.**
- **C.S. Lewis once said: *'God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks in our conscience, but shouts in our pains. It is his megaphone to rouse a deaf world.'* Discuss this quote as a group. Can you think of an experience where God 'shouted to you' in your pain?**

## DISCUSSION & APPLICATION:

- **In the <u>beginning</u>... sin entered and cursed the world.**
- **In the <u>meantime</u>... God is with us (so we have hope).**
- **In the <u>end</u>... all things will be made right and new (no more sin/suffering).**

1. **Read Romans 8:18. How does anticipating the future give you hope in the midst of your present suffering?**

2. **Read Romans 8:19-21. In the beginning, sin entered the world and cursed all creation. This is the primary reason for so much of the pain and suffering in our world.**
   - **Why do you think we always want to look to our own lives/circumstances to explain our pain and suffering, rather than the broader context of a broken, cursed world?**
   - **What does Paul consider to be our 'future hope' in this passage?**
   - **Share an example of the fact that you are currently in 'bondage to decay.'**

3. **Read Romans 8:22-23. Paul compares the sufferings of the 'whole creation' to the pains of childbirth. That speaks of the intensity of the pain we can experience in this life.**
   - **What does it mean that Christians have the 'first fruits' of the Spirit?**
   - **What specifically is going to be redeemed in our future 'adoption'?**

4. **Read Romans 8:26-27; II Corinthians 12:10. Explain what Paul means in II Corinthians 12.**

5. **Read Romans 8:28**
   - **What does this verse say about God's Sovereignty in the midst of our suffering?**
   - **How does this verse give you strength in the midst of your suffering?**

6. **Read Romans 8:31. What encouragement do you receive from this passage of Scripture?**