

GROUP DISCUSSION

Questions for facilitating dynamic discussion

Too Good to Be True

Week 2: Then why is there suffering?
2 Peter 3:9-13

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The Bible declares that God's goodness exceeds our wildest dreams. We'd all love to believe that, but skeptics have a list of reasons it can't be true. Rather than ignoring the skeptics' arguments, let's have honest and courageous conversations about some of life's hardest questions. This week, we're taking a closer look at one of the most significant questions in world history — why God allows suffering.

Kicking It Off: Which would you rather have every day for a month straight: rain all day or snow all day? Why is that? (And pretend you don't have to worry about any flooding or snow accumulation.)

Discussion:

- Let's get a pulse of the group. When you hear the title of this sermon, which statement do you relate to the most this week?
 - Oh great. Another topic I can't really enjoy because it's so depressing to think about.
 - I'm not really going through a hard time right now, but my friend or relative sure is.
 - This was just what I needed to hear. I've been dealing with some heavy storms lately.
- What types of human suffering around the world give you the most cause for doubting God's goodness? (Or in other words, fill in the blank: *Why does God allow _____?*)
- Read 2 Peter 3:9. What is God's ultimate purpose as it relates to salvation?

"The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance." (NIV)
- What does Revelation 21:4 say about how God will treat our pain one day? How does that help you?

'He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.' (NIV)
- Read Romans 8:28. Next, think of a time when you sensed God used suffering for some greater good in your life. How did you see the truth of this passage point you to Jesus or help grow your character?

"And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose." (NIV)
- Before hearing this week's message, did you think God's heart breaks? How about now? How can you apply what we've learned about the ways God uses suffering for greater good?

Wrapping Up: Read 2 Corinthians 1:4, and pray for God to bring comfort to your group members and to others.

"He comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort others. When they are troubled, we will be able to give them the same comfort God has given us." (NLT)