

# Luke

JESUS &  
SUFFERING

SECTION V

WEEKS 20-22

WEEK 20:

# WHY DOES SUFFERING HAPPEN?

## PRIMARY SCRIPTURE:

Luke 13:1-5

## RELATED SCRIPTURES:

Genesis 50:15-21, Psalm 23, John 9 (especially v. 1-3),  
Romans 8:18-28, Philippians 1:27-30, 2 Timothy 3:10-13

“There is a God we want and a God who is, and the two are not the same.”

- Ligon Duncan

“This is a dark world. There are many ways we keep that darkness at bay, but we cannot do it forever. Eventually the lights of our lives—love, health, home, work—will begin to go out. And when that happens, we will need something more than what our own understanding, competence, and power can give us.”

- Dr. Timothy Keller, *Walking with God through Pain and Suffering*

## PERSONAL STUDY:

What are the most intense seasons of suffering that you have endured (past or present)? How has it affected you?

**Read the related scriptures.** Why do you think that suffering happens? When you have suffered, what came to mind as possible reasons for why it was happening?

Do you agree, disagree, or don't know about the following:

- My suffering is the result of my sin. \_\_\_\_\_
- My suffering is the result of other people's sin. \_\_\_\_\_
- Suffering exists to make us stronger. \_\_\_\_\_
- Suffering is an opportunity to prove my valor. \_\_\_\_\_
- Suffering is the result of dark forces at work. \_\_\_\_\_
- God is in control of my suffering. \_\_\_\_\_
- God is indifferent to my suffering. \_\_\_\_\_

**Read Luke 13:1-5.** What does v. 1 mean when it says they told him about "the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices"? (Use a commentary if you need to.)

- **v. 2 and 4.** Jesus asks the audience twice if they think a particular tragedy was the result of people's sinfulness; in other words, did these people have it coming? Do you ever find yourself thinking someone's suffering is deserved? When?
- **v. 3 and 5.** Why does Jesus say, "unless you repent, you will all likewise perish"?

## SERMON NOTES:

## LIFEGROUP DISCUSSION:

What types of suffering and pain have you experienced? Has your suffering led you to doubt God's goodness and power? If so, how?

**Read Luke 13:1-5.** When are you most tempted to believe that people's suffering is the result of their sin and therefore they deserve it?

This thinking represents a karmic view wherein we get rewards for our good behavior and punishments for our bad behavior. In what ways is this view consistent with Scripture?

**Read Romans 4:4-8.** In what ways is a karmic view of suffering contrary to the grace of the gospel? How does the gospel force us to rethink the question of why suffering happens?

**Read Romans 5:1-5 and James 1:1-3.** How is gospel-steadfastness absolutely different than moral valor and strength? How can the gospel bring joy even in the very midst of our suffering?

In what ways are we currently suffering as a group? Pray and ask God to help us see and believe the truths of Romans 5:1-5 and James 1:1-3 as a group. How can we support each other in this pursuit?

WEEK 21:

# THE COMPASSION OF JESUS

**PRIMARY SCRIPTURE:**

Luke 8:40-56

**RELATED SCRIPTURES:**

1 Kings 17:19-24, Matthew 9:18-26 and 35-38,  
Mark 5:21-43, 2 Corinthians 1:3-5

“There’s an opening of the soul that happens during times of stress or duress. During times of suffering, we can experience God at a deep, profound level.”

– Dr. Tim Hager

“There is no pit so deep that God’s love is not deeper still.”

- Corrie Ten Boom

## PERSONAL STUDY:

**Read 2 Corinthians 1:3-5.** When in your life have you felt God's care most full and His presence most near? When have you seen personal opportunities to comfort others in light of how God has comforted you during your suffering?

**Read Luke 8:40-42.** What would you guess Jairus is feeling, thinking and experiencing? Why is the suffering of children particularly excruciating?

What did Jairus risk by throwing himself at Jesus' feet?

**Read Luke 8:43-48.** Imagine this woman's life. She's had a deeply private, intimate ailment for 12 years and the hunt for a cure has cost her all of her wealth. How might her experience of pain be similar and different from Jairus'?

Who needs more urgent medical attention, a dying little girl or a grown woman who's had a condition for 12 years? What might Jairus be thinking as he waits for Jesus to dialogue with and heal the older woman?

**Read Luke 8:49-56.** God can heal anyone at any time even once they are dead like this little girl. Yet people continue to die – some dear to us – everyday. In what ways is this truth comforting? Enlightening? Scary? Perplexing? Does God ever not care about the suffering of humanity?

## SERMON NOTES:

## LIFEGROUP DISCUSSION:

Why is doubting God's love a relatively natural human response to suffering? What presuppositions does this reveal?

**Read Luke 8:40-56.** How does Jesus ask from both Jairus and the bleeding woman more than they were expecting to give? In what ways does He give them more than they asked for?

When in your life have you felt isolated by your suffering like the bleeding woman or absolutely helpless like Jairus?

**Read 2 Corinthians 1:8-9.** Paul doesn't feel the need to hide raw emotions, nor does he waiver in his faith and hope. Are you more tempted to hide your fears and pain or to waiver in your faith and hope?

How can we cultivate a safe place as a LifeGroup where people can be fully honest about their pain and can also find real hope in Jesus? What would keep us from being this kind of environment?

Pray as a group for anyone you currently know who is suffering. Ask Jesus to help you be practical and spiritual relief to them in the midst of their suffering.

WEEK 22:

# THE SUFFERING OF JESUS

## PRIMARY SCRIPTURE:

Luke 22:39-46

## RELATED SCRIPTURES:

Psalm 22 and 75, Isaiah 53, Matthew 26:36-46, Mark 14:32-42,  
John 12:27-28, 1 Peter 2:20-25, Revelation 5:1-10

“The main reason that Christians insist that God can be trusted in the midst of suffering is that ... God himself has firsthand experience of suffering.”

- Dan. G McCartney *Why Does It Have to Hurt?*

“People who suffer want people who have suffered to tell them there is hope. They are justifiably suspicious of people who appear to have lived lives of ease. There is no doubt in my mind that this is the reason that Jesus suffered in every way that we do, while he was here.”

- Stephen Saint

## PERSONAL STUDY:

**Read Luke 22:39-40.** Do you have any routines or places where you like to go to pray? Why is prayer specifically important when we're suffering?

**Read Luke 22:41-46.** Have you ever been in such agony that you didn't even want anyone to be around – you just needed to be alone in prayer?

What types of suffering does Jesus experience here? How do these foreshadow the deeper sufferings he will experience in the next 24 hours? From what you know about other gods and religions, why is this picture of Jesus' agony unique?

**Read John 12:27-28 and Luke 22:42.** What is strange about Jesus' request for God to let the cup of His wrath pass?

**Read Revelation 5:1-10.** In v. 5-6 what are we to understand from Jesus being described as both Lion of Judah and Lamb of God who was slain? According to v. 9-10, why is Jesus worthy to open the scroll?

**Read Acts 2:22-24.** In v. 23, Peter weaves together three things: 1.) God's sovereign plan to deliver Jesus up, 2.) the Jewish crowd's sinful desire to crucify Him, and 3.) the Roman governing systems and soldiers who worked within them. Did you know God's sovereignty, sinful humans, and sinful systems could coexist? What does that mean for us?

## SERMON NOTES:

## LIFEGROUP DISCUSSION:

When are you most tempted to believe God owes you a good, easy, comfortable life?

**Read Luke 22:39-46.** How is Jesus' agony after a perfect life of obedient submission unsettling to many of our modern American assumptions about God and life?

**Reread v. 42.** When have you been confident of something God wanted you to do and also terrified to obey? How is Jesus' humanity in this moment both hugely comforting and also empowering?

**Read Mark 13:9-13.** How often do you think about the fact that following Jesus will involve doing things you don't want to do and/or result in things you do not wish to experience?

Pray for our vision to be filled with Jesus' suffering and that it will strengthen us, empower us and encourage us as we live on mission with Him until He returns.