



### *The Life of Job*

The topic of suffering poses some the deepest questions human beings struggle with. Why is there suffering? Why does God allow it? Does the fact that we suffer mean there is no God? Or, that He is not good?

Though suffering has always existed, we don't seem to be getting any better at coping with it. When pain comes our way we are not prepared; it takes us by surprise because we expected (even thought we were entitled to) an easy life. In the midst of our pain, we are impatient, looking for a quick fix. Seeking escape, we anesthetize ourselves. When pain comes to others we have no idea how to help, so we isolate and avoid them, or add insult to their injury with meaningless platitudes.

Where do we find wisdom to help us make sense of suffering? What does the Bible have to say on the subject? Should Christ-followers expect a life that is free from suffering? Isn't it God's job to protect us from pain? The story of Job offers an unexpected perspective.

Week One Text: Job 1:1-2:10

## Discussion Questions:

The following are based on the “My Application” Questions found in the bulletin this week. (Leader, urge your group members to attend worship—or watch the sermon online—and to spend time considering and answering those questions before coming to the group. This will produce a richer discussion time.)

- What sorts of things do people do to avoid pain?
- When you have experienced pain, what sort of advice or encouragement have you gotten that was no help at all? How have people been a real help?
- Give some examples of how pain reveals what we really believe about
  - Life
  - Ourselves
  - God
- Since pain is inevitable, what can you do today to prepare for future suffering?
- What suffering do you have that has challenged your trust in God?

## Prayer

Pray for each other regarding those areas of pain. Don't stop with merely asking for the suffering to stop. Go deeper. Ask God to...

- Develop patient endurance in the one suffering
- Reveal more of who He is in the process
- Give you the ability to see Him at work
- Give the group greater insight on how to help and encourage
- Glorify Himself!

## Application

How can you prepare today for tomorrow's suffering? What habits is God bringing to mind for you to adopt? Below are a few suggestions. Maybe your group has others.

- Lean into relationship with people who are currently suffering (rather than avoiding them). What lessons can you learn from their example? (Positive OR negative...)
- Keep a gratitude journal. Cultivate the habit of being thankful everyday, in all circumstances.
- Begin memorizing scripture that creates a well of truth you can draw from when life is difficult. Start with this...

## Scripture Memory

*Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds,  
because you know that the test of your faith develops perseverance.*

*James 1:2-3*