

Why Does God Allow Pain and Suffering

For the week of Jan. 27, 2019

Full message available at highpoint.church/currentseries

Access Explore God materials at highpoint.church/exploregod

VIDEO 1: PULSE OF THE WORLD: PAIN AND SUFFERING

This video is a 2.5-minute survey of many people's responses to this question.

Questions for Discussion:

- Did you identify with anyone's expressed views in the film? If so, who and what resonated with you?
- Was it surprising to learn that the top question people would ask God is, "Why is there pain and suffering in the world?" What would be some of the questions you'd ask God?

VIDEO 2: THE CURIOSITY COLLECTIVE: WHY DOES GOD ALLOW PAIN AND SUFFERING?

This is a 10-minute collection of subject matter experts discussing the question "Why does God allow pain and suffering?" It displays the various questions, struggles, and perspectives of these individuals regarding this week's topic. See what they have to say and discuss it.

Questions for Discussion:

After watching the video, choose from this list of questions or ask some of your own to facilitate discussion. There's no need to limit your discussion to these questions or to feel pressured to cover all of them in the time you have.

- In what ways can you identify with any of the stories in The Curiosity Collective? What did you find intriguing or compelling?
- On a scale of 1 to 10, how difficult is it for you to reconcile the existence of both suffering and God (1 = easy; 10 = impossible)? Why? Have you sought satisfaction? Did they satisfy?



- One of the Pulse speakers noted, “Some of the best lessons I’ve learned in life . . . came from very painful times.” In what ways might good come from bad? Do you have any experience with this?
- If there’s a God, why do you think he allows evil in the world?
- In the video, what did you think of James’s suggestion that God “understands our suffering . . . [and] is seeking to heal it”?

INTO THE BIBLE:

1. Read Job 1:13-22. God allows Satan to test Job, a righteous man, by essentially taking away everything in his life. Conventional wisdom would lead you to believe that good things happen to good people, and bad things happen to bad people. But what the book of Job shows us (and our own life experience) is it’s not that simple. Bad things happen to good people and good things happen to bad people.

- While Job’s case is extreme, can you identify with him at all? Can you think of a time in your life when you felt like you were doing all the right things, moving in a positive direction with God, and still experienced pain and suffering?
- Amidst pain, suffering, and loss, are you able to say “blessed be the name of the Lord” as Job did? What tends to be your reaction?

2. Throughout the book of Job, friends come around him, but instead of providing comfort, they accuse him that he must have done something sinful to deserve what happened to him. This is obviously not helpful. If you’re suffering from pain and loss, what would you want to hear? What would you say to someone who is experiencing pain and loss?

3. The topic of “Why does God allow pain and suffering?” is one of the toughest in the Christian faith and keeps many from believing in God. In your own words, how would you best answer that question? What Scriptures would you point to?

Memory Verse: *“For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us” (Romans 8:18).*



Why does real purpose begin by putting Jesus at the center of your life?

2. Do you have a life verse? If you don't, consider Galatians 2:20 that describes what your relationship with Jesus as your Savior looks like. Underline or highlight it in your Bible. How does this verse describe our ultimate purpose in life? Can you think of any other verses that would serve well as a life verse?

3. Another verse to underline in your Bible is 1 Corinthians 7:17 that says, “**only let each person lead the life that the Lord has assigned to him, and to which God has called him.**” The life we want to live—really the only life we want to live—is the one God has mapped out for us. That includes seeing, choosing, acting, deciding, taking hold of life, and living your life on purpose. That's what this series, Explore God, is all about. What freedom do you see in 1 Corinthians 7:17? Why does this truth give us a foundation on which to build a life of purpose?

Memory Verse: Psalm 19:1 says, “**The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands.**” In other words, creation reflects its creator. If God exists, all people have seen and experienced God, though they might not have known it or attributed that experience to God.

