



Community Group Discussion Guide

November 16, 2104

Week 4 | How Could A Loving God Allow Suffering?
Selected Scripture

Introduction

From its beginning the early Church faced intense opposition. Read any one of the letters to these men and women who were among the first to follow Christ and you can't miss the extreme challenge that was theirs to persevere through persecution.

Read these same letters and you'll find repeated encouragements for these believers to not only persevere, but to also be wise and bold in sharing their faith. A good example is what Peter wrote in the third chapter of his first letter:

Even if you should suffer for what is right, you are blessed. Do not fear their threats; do not be afraid. But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope you have. But do this with gentleness and respect.
1 Peter 3:14-15

What Peter is taking about here is apologetics. It's equipping ourselves so we're able to give a clear explanation and convincing defense of what we believe. This is what we'll be doing in this five week series we've title "Prepared."

Questions for Study

1. Have you ever struggled with this question yourself? If you did, how were you able to find help in answering it for yourself?
2. Are you struggling with this question now? What question or questions would you ask God about this if given the opportunity?
3. Have you had conversations with people who do not share your faith in Jesus Christ, where this issue has been brought into your conversation? If you remember how those conversations went, what were some of the concerns expressed to you?
4. What have you found most challenging in responding to this objection against God?
5. Write down verses of scripture you know that speak to this issue. (Please write them on the back side of this sheet.)
6. If given the option...Would you want to be created with the ability and freedom to make choices for your life? Or...Would you prefer to be created like some kind of machine, where God programmed you to dutifully do everything God wanted you to do?
7. Which way did God create Adam and Eve? Why is this the only right way for God to create them?
8. How does God creating them this way answer the question in this Sunday's sermon?
9. In Sunday's sermon what did Steve say are three results from Adam and Eve's choice? He also described them as three causes of suffering?