

wrestling with  
**doubt,**  
finding  
**faith**

**SMALL GROUP  
STUDY GUIDE**

Week 5 February 4, 2024

**“Why Do the Innocent Suffer?”**



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**OPENING PRAYER**

Heavenly Father, thank you for never leaving us or forsaking us. Thank you for defeating death and giving us hope. Lord, help us to believe and help us to trust in you. When we see the suffering of others help us to respond as your hands and voice. Take the painful things in our lives and bring something good from them. Lord, we offer our lives to you and pray all this in the powerful and matchless name of Jesus. Amen.

**SCRIPTURE PASSAGES**

**Romans 8:18 (NIV)**

*The I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.*

**Joshua 1:9 (NIV)**

*“Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.”*

**Isaiah 41:10 (NIV)**

*So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.*

# SMALL GROUP STUDY GUIDE

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“Why Do the Innocent Suffer?”

## INTRODUCTION

People dying from natural disasters, children getting terminal illnesses, people dying of starvation, innocent people killed by gun violence or wars are among the situations that make us wrestle with doubt when it comes to our faith. Many people wonder how a good and loving God can allow these things to happen.

Our disappointment with God in the face of suffering and injustice typically stems from our assumptions about how God is supposed to work in our world. God never promised that we would never struggle and suffer in this life. But God does promise to never leave you or forsake you, He works through others to help people in need, and he can bring beauty from ashes. Our job is to trust Him and place our sorrows and suffering in his hands.

## QUESTIONS

1. Have you ever struggled with faith because of evil that you see in the world or suffering you have seen in your own life? Explain.
2. In Pastor Eric’s sermon, he talked about three areas of suffering and God’s providence (natural disasters, evil acts of others, and disease/death). Which of these three do you struggle the most with when trying to reconciling suffering with a good and loving God? Did you learn anything in the sermon that may help you in this area?
3. What do you think of the phrase “everything happens for a reason?” What does that mean to you and do you think God causes all things to happen?
4. Read Romans 8:18 (on page 1). Does this verse or can this verse give you a sense of hope when you are suffering? Why or why not?
5. Read Joshua 1:9 and Isaiah 41:10 (on page 1). When you go through difficult times, do you feel like God is with you or do you feel abandoned and alone? Do these verses bring you hope?

## FINAL APPLICATION

This week, place one circumstance in your life that is bringing you anxiety, sorrow or suffering into God’s hands. Trust that He will bring good from the suffering.