

*Discussion Questions*  
**Sharing Christ's Passion**



Discipleship  
Course

# *Discussion Topics*

The Problem of Evil & Suffering

The Origins of Evil

The Results of The Fall

God's Answer to Evil

The Cross & Resurrection

Sharing Christ's Passion

Christian Persecution

Christian Grief

Sharing Christ's Compassion

Christian Missions

From Tragedy to Triumph

## The Problem of Evil & Suffering: *Why Bad Things Happen To Good People*

- Q1** What is the classic statement of the problem of evil?  
Why does it seem to be so persuasive?
- Q2** What does the Bible say about the problem?  
What two aspects of God's character are highlighted in  
**Psalm 62:11-12** ?
- Q3** Theologian Peter Kreeft has argued that two major problems for those who believe in God are the problem of evil and the apparent ability of science to explain everything.  
  
Do you agree? How might one answer these objections?
- Q4** What three kinds of evil are portrayed in the Bible?  
How does this differ from a naturalistic, scientific approach?
- Q5** What evidence do you see of the three different types of evil in the world?
- Q6** In what way is all evil and suffering ultimately attributable to Satan?



## The Origins of Evil & Suffering: *Rebellion in Heaven & On Earth*

- Q1** Where did evil originate, according to the Bible?
- Q2** What happened?
- Q3** If God's original creation was perfect, how did evil and suffering come into the world, according to the account in **Genesis Chapter 3**?
- Q4** How did Satan persuade the human beings God had created to disobey his orders?
- Q5** What tactics does he use today?  
How are they to be seen in everyday life?
- Q6** What is the original sin?



## The Results of the Fall of Mankind:

*Sin & Death; Sickness & Suffering; Separation from God*

- Q1** What were the three disastrous results of Adam and Eve's disobedience?
- Q2** Which of the three has/have been the most destructive?
- Q3** What is meant by 'love hunger'?  
In what way is it the origin of all addictions?
- Q4** Draw a diagram to describe the addiction cycle.  
Describe some of the addictive agents people use.  
Why do people become addicted?
- Q5** Have you ever been addicted to something?  
What are addicts secretly longing for?
- Q6** What is God's answer to our longing for intimacy?  
How can we be set free from our addictions?

## God's Answer to Evil & Suffering:

### *The Cross & Resurrection of Jesus Christ*

- Q1** What is the Bible's answer to the problem of evil and suffering?
- Q2** What does **1 John 3:8** say is the reason why Jesus came into the world?
- Q3** What does Paul mean when he says that Jesus is the second Adam? In what way do the first and second Adam differ?
- Q4** Was Jesus' crucifixion an accident?  
In what way was it all part of God's eternal plan of salvation?
- Q5** In what ways do the death and resurrection of Jesus reverse the disastrous results of the Fall of mankind?
- Q6** *Read Psalm 22*  
In what ways is this such an amazing psalm?  
Why did Jesus quote just the first and last verses as he was dying?  
How is it related to John 19:30?



## Sharing Christ's Passion: *From Witnesses to Martyrs*

- Q1** What does the Greek word *martyr* mean?  
What did Jesus tell his disciples they would be in **Acts 1:8**?
- Q2** Why was Stephen martyred? Who witnessed the event?
- Q3** Read the account of one of the Christians martyred by Roman emperors such as that of Bishop Polycarp of Smyrna in 160AD in Asia Minor or of Perpetua in Carthage, North Africa in 235AD.  
  
What is so noticeable about these two Christians?
- Q4** Why did Tertullian say:  
*"The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church?"*  
Was he right?
- Q5** Does your fellowship support persecuted Christians?  
  
How can individuals support our persecuted brothers and sisters in Christ?

In which countries is persecution of Christians fiercest?  
See [www.opendoorsuk.org/persecution/world-watch-list](http://www.opendoorsuk.org/persecution/world-watch-list)



## Identifying with The Persecuted Church

- Q1** What is one of the consequences of obeying Jesus' Great Commission?
- Q2** In what way is the history of the Church one of persecution?
- Q3** Look at the section headed *Suffering For Christ*. What form has persecution taken over the centuries?
- Q4** Look at one of the organisations below and find out what the organisation does to help Christians being persecuted in different parts of the world.



- Q5** *Open Doors* publish a list of countries where persecution of Christians is taking place. You can find out more at [www.opendoorsuk.org/persecution/world-watch-list](http://www.opendoorsuk.org/persecution/world-watch-list)
- Q6** How can the group or fellowship support Christians who are being persecuted?



## Christian Bereavement & Grief

- Q1** Describe the pattern of grieving one's own mortality. In what way(s) is it different from grieving the death of someone else?
- Q2** What does Paul mean in **1 Thessalonians 4:13** when he says that Christians should not grieve like the rest of the world?
- Q3** What experience of grief have the members of the group had?  
What aspect(s) have you found the most difficult to handle?  
What did you find helped most?
- Q4** How can Christians know for certain we are going to be with Jesus in heaven when we die?
- Q5** How can the Church reach out to the dying and those suffering the grief at the loss of someone they loved, the loss of a pet, job or their physical or mental faculties?
- Q6** Research the work of Christian organisations like *The Samaritans*, *Cruse Bereavement Care*, *Winston's Wish* (for bereaved children), or *Christians Against Poverty* (for those struggling with debt through loss of a job, poverty or bereavement).



## Sharing Christ's Compassion: *Sharing God's Love With The Hurting*

- Q1** What commission did Jesus give his disciples in **Matthew 28:18-20**?
- Q2** What was the spur to Christian missionary activity at the start?
- Q3** What is meant by the *'love cycle of ministry'* ?  
What does Paul say about it in **2 Corinthians 1:3-7**?
- Q4** What accompanied Paul's preaching of the Gospel on his missionary journeys?
- Q5** Look at the history of a Christian missionary organisation.  
How did it begin ?  
Trace its growth since its original beginnings to see how God has used it to share his love with the hurting.
- Q6** Does your fellowship support any Christian missionaries or organisations?  
How can individuals support the work?

"My God! My God!  
Why have you  
abandoned me?"  
~ PSALM 22:1

## Sharing Christ's Sufferings: *When Prayers Seem To Go Unanswered*

**Q1** In **John 16:33** Jesus said:

*"I've told you all this so that trusting me, you will be unshakable and assured, deeply at peace. In this godless world you will continue to experience difficulties. But take heart! I've conquered the world." The Message*

What does Jesus promise his followers in the midst of problems?  
How can we be sure?

**Q2** In The Garden of Gethsemane prayed three times, asking his heavenly Father to take away the cup of God's wrath at human sin by his death on the cross, *"nevertheless not my will but Thy will be done"* (**Luke 22:42**).

In a similar way Paul prayed three times asking God to remove the 'thorn in his flesh.' (**2 Corinthians 12:8-10**)  
What answer did Paul receive to his prayer?

**Q3** What promise did God make in **Isaiah 43:1-5**?

What does this mean for us when we are experiencing problems?

**Q4** Share with the group your own experience of a time when God took you through a problem rather than removing the problem. What effect did the experience have on your faith?



## All Things Work Together For Good: *God Can Turn Tragedies Into Triumphs Of His Grace*

- Q1** What is the greatest example of a tragedy being turned to a triumph of God's grace?
- Q2** Read **ACTS 16:11-40** and **PHILIPPIANS 1:12-19** and look at *From Tragedy To Triumph*.  
How did God turn a situation of suffering into a triumph of his grace and mercy?
- Q3** Watch the trailer of a film like *End Of The Spear* or *The Hiding Place*.  
How did God turn these tragedies into a triumph of his grace?
- Q4** Have any members of the group experienced tragedy in their lives?  
If so, are you able to share how God has turned a tragedy into a triumph of his grace?
- Q5** What evidence do you have of God's faithfulness in your life or the lives of your family?
- Q6** Do you agree with Paul in **ROMANS 8:28** that all things work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to God's purposes?

# NOTES

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*The 3:10 Discipleship Course*

# Sharing Christ's Passion



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