



Small Group Study Guide

Settling In
Sermon Series • September 13-20

September 13, 2020
“The Problem of
Suffering?”

OPENING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, thank you for your grace and your mercy in our times of need. And Father, for anyone who needs a big dose of grace and mercy today, I pray that you would provide that for them, through somebody they talk to, through something they hear, through music, through whatever it might be. I pray that they would have the confidence to know that you are with them, and that you will give them the grace they need to endure whatever they are facing. Help them to see their situation the way that you see it. We pray this in the matchless name of Jesus. Amen.

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE:

John 9:1-5 (NIV)

As he went along, he saw a man blind from birth. ²His disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?”

³“Neither this man nor his parents sinned,” said Jesus, “but this happened so that the works of God might be displayed in him. ⁴As long as it is day, we must do the works of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work. ⁵While I am in the world, I am the light of the world.”

Hebrews 4:14-16 (NIV)

Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has ascended into heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. ¹⁵For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin. ¹⁶Let us then approach God’s throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.



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INTRODUCTION

Some people lose faith because they experience pain and suffering in this world. But what if the ultimate issue in this world is not illness, sickness or pain? What if there is a bigger issue and God has already addressed it? Understanding the ultimate problem and the solution will lead you to hope. But what is the problem and solution?

The brutal fact of Christianity is that there is a global relationship between sin and suffering. Christians have never believed in a God who doesn't allow bad things to happen to good people. If you divorce your hope in Christ from the fact of the global consequences of sin, you run the risk of losing your faith. The ultimate hope is that Jesus came to Earth not only to die for our sins but to demonstrate He has the power over the global consequences of sin. Follow Jesus and you will reign in life despite your circumstances.

QUESTIONS

- 1) Were you raised to assume there is a one-to-one correlation between bad behavior and suffering?
- 2) What is, or has been, your go-to explanation for why good people suffer?
- 3) Has suffering ever chipped away at your faith?
- 4) Read John 9:1–5 on page 1. How does this account address the myth that good things happen to good people, while bad things happen to sinners?
- 5) Read Hebrews 4:14–16. What stands out to you? According to verse 14, why should we remain faithful during seasons of suffering? According to verse 16, what can we expect from God during seasons of suffering?

FINAL APPLICATION

If left unaddressed, what is currently happening in your life that has the potential to undermine your faith?