

THE NEED FOR A SUFFERING GOD

The Purpose Of A Suffering Jesus:

Hebrews 2:10-18 Philippians 2:1-11 Isaiah 53 Romans 2:5

Suffering was essential for:

- ▶ Our sin to be **dealt with** by a **loving and just** God.

God's wrath is:

Not like ours

Provoked

Slow

Revealed now

Stored up

On sinners

Dealt with

- ▶ Us to have a God who we can now **relate with**.
- ▶ Heaven to become a **home** for **all people**.

The Two Conclusions Of A Suffering Jesus:

Mark 14:32-42 John 3:3-21 5:19-27 14:6-7

1. A suffering Savior was necessary for **all of humanity**.
2. God is a **sadistic, child abusing** deity.
Jesus is a **quillible and ignorant** son.

Growth Group Homework

For the week of January 21, 2018

GETTING TO KNOW YOU

1. Would you rather get one free round-trip international plane ticket every year or be able to fly domestic anytime for free?

2. In 30 seconds or less, write down five words you would use to describe God?

If you were asked this same question five years ago do you think your answer would have been any different?

3. Looking back at your notes from this week's teaching, was there anything you heard for the first time or that caught your attention, challenged or confused you?

DIGGING DEEPER

1. This weekend we heard that because of God's wrath towards sin, everyone is under the judgment of God. There's no question that the topic of judgment can be uncomfortable or confusing to many people, and these days it's hardly politically correct. That's why it's important for us to take a look at what Jesus and the Bible actually say about it. How does the Bible describe the reality and consequences of judgment in each of the following verses?

Ephesians 5:6 *New International Version (NIV)*

⁶ Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of such things God's wrath comes on those who are disobedient.

Matthew 25:41 *New International Version (NIV)*

⁴¹ "Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.

Ezekiel 7:8 *New International Version (NIV)*

⁸ I am about to pour out my wrath on you
and spend my anger against you.

I will judge you according to your conduct
and repay you for all your detestable practices

Revelation 14:9-12 *New International Version (NIV)*

⁹ A third angel followed them and said in a loud voice: "If anyone worships the beast and its image and receives its mark on their fore head or on their hand, ¹⁰ they, too, will drink the wine of God's fury, which has been poured full strength into the cup of his wrath. They will be tormented with burning sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and of the Lamb. ¹¹ And the smoke of their torment will rise for ever and ever. There will be no rest day or night for those who worship the beast and its image, or for anyone who receives the mark of its name." ¹² This calls for patient endurance on the part of the people of God who keep his commands and remain faithful to Jesus.

If God forgives us as followers of Jesus, why might it be important to keep in mind God's wrath and judgment?

Because of the severity of the biblical descriptions of judgment and hell, some people question how it fits in with God's love. Can you think of any ways a person can reconcile God's love with the truth that he will also judge people? If so, explain.

2. It can be humbling when we realize Jesus' life, death and resurrection satisfies God's wrath against us. He then takes us, flaws and all, and gives us a new identity. This truth impacts everyone differently, but can be hard to embrace if you feel undeserving. How do Paul's words to the Colossians describe a person's new identity in Christ as a Jesus follower?

Colossians 1:13-14 *New International Version (NIV)*

¹³ For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, ¹⁴ in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

Colossians 1:21-22 *New International Version (NIV)*

²¹ Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. ²² But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation—

Colossians 2:9-14 *New International Version (NIV)*

⁹ For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, ¹⁰ and in Christ you have been brought to fullness. He is the head over every power and authority. ¹¹ In him you were also circumcised with a circumcision not performed by human hands. Your whole self ruled by the flesh was put off when you were circumcised by Christ, ¹² having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through your faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead.

¹³ When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, ¹⁴ having canceled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross.

Which description is most meaningful to you?

3. This week we heard how Jesus' sufferings accomplished so much more beyond his immediate situation. The same can be true for our own hardships and challenges. What insight does Paul give us in 2 Corinthians 1:3-11 when life's challenges heat up?

2 Corinthians 1:3-11 *New International Version (NIV)*

Praise to the God of All Comfort

³ Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, ⁴ who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God. ⁵ For just as we share abundantly in the sufferings of Christ, so also our comfort abounds through Christ. ⁶ If we are distressed, it is for your comfort and salvation; if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which produces in you patient endurance of the same sufferings we suffer. ⁷ And our hope for you is firm, because we know that just as you share in our sufferings, so also you share in our comfort. ⁸ We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about the troubles we experienced in the province of Asia. We were under great pressure, far beyond our ability to endure, so that we despaired of life itself. ⁹ Indeed, we felt we had received the sentence of death. But this happened that we might not rely on ourselves but on God, who raises the dead. ¹⁰ He has delivered us from such a deadly peril, and he will deliver us again. On him we have set our hope that he will continue to deliver us, ¹¹ as you help us by your prayers. Then many will give thanks on our behalf for the gracious favor granted us in answer to the prayers of many.

Which part of what Paul says is most encouraging for you? What is most challenging?

TAKING IT HOME

1. Looking back at this week's teaching and study, is there one thing you'd especially like to remember this week?
2. Do you have any prayer requests for your group?

Tips on Group Prayer

Prayer is an important part of being in a Growth Group. Over the years we've found that group prayer goes better when we follow three simple guidelines.

WE PRAY FOR ONE TOPIC AT A TIME - Anyone in the group is free to introduce a prayer request either before prayer begins or during the prayer time. Once a topic is introduced, the group focuses on that request alone. Once it's covered, the group moves on to the next topic.

PRAY MORE THAN ONCE - Because the group is focusing on one topic at a time, each person is encouraged to pray several times during the prayer time for those topics they feel most led to pray about. No one is required to pray.

WE KEEP OUR PRAYERS SHORT AND SIMPLE - Group prayer goes better when members keep their prayers short and to the point. When someone prays for a long time, it's hard for the other members to stay focused and long prayers tend to intimidate those who are just learning to pray out loud in a group. No one is required to pray out loud.



COMMUNITY SERVICE IMPACT

Community Service is a ministry of North Coast Church dedicated to being the hands and feet of Jesus and showing God's love in tangible ways through service to the community. There are many options for you to serve. For ideas, check out NorthCoastCommunityService.org