

## *How can there be a good God and suffering at the same time?*

John 11:1-46

**The Logic:** If God were all \_\_\_\_\_, He could stop suffering. If he were all \_\_\_\_\_, He would stop suffering.

➤ Suffering is a \_\_\_\_\_ for belief in God; it is even more a \_\_\_\_\_ for not believing in God.

*My argument against God was that the universe seemed so cruel and unjust. But how had I got this idea of “just” and “unjust”? ... What was I comparing this universe with when I called it unjust? ... Of course I could have given up my idea of justice by saying it was nothing but a private idea of my own. But if I did that, then my argument against God collapsed too – for the argument depended on saying that the world was really unjust, not simply that it did not happen to please my private fancies ... Consequently atheism turns out to be too simple. – C.S. Lewis*

*If God does not exist everything is permitted. - Dostoevsky*

### **Things to keep in mind:**

1. God \_\_\_\_\_ us even when we suffer. (vs. 33, 35, 36)

2. God has \_\_\_\_\_ us from the worst suffering. (vs. 23-26)

Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting? (1 Corinthians 15:55)

3. God has \_\_\_\_\_ for our suffering. (vs.4-6, 45)

*Since we, with limited time and a limited vantage point can already see good reasons for some of the pain in life, don't we think that with enough time and God's perspective we might see reason for all of it? If you're going to assume that God is infinite in love and power, wouldn't you also assume He's infinite in wisdom? -JD Greear*

4. God \_\_\_\_\_ us in our suffering. (v. 35)

*If I remember His love for me in His darkest hour, I won't doubt His love for me in my darkest hour. –JD Greear*

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## *Going Deeper*

(This section is for those who want to pursue this subject more deeply by themselves or with a group.)

**Scripture:** 1Peter 1:3-12

(This week's study is taken from the work of Tim Keller)

1. Verses 3–5 talk about one specific resource the gospel provides to help a Christian endure suffering. What is that resource? Pick apart the verses a bit, and consider why this is an appropriate resource during suffering. If the resurrection means that all things will be made new or that all evil will come to an end, how does that help during an experience of suffering?
2. Verses 6–9 describe some of the redemptive outcomes that result from suffering. How does suffering refine the Christian; that is, how does it change his or her character and faith? Are there ways your character has been shaped by suffering? Is it similar to Peter's teaching or different?
3. Verses 10–12 discuss the writings and teachings of the prophets (which have been recorded in the Bible). What was the central teaching of the prophets according to these verses? What was the purpose of this teaching? Most significantly, what resources are available to a believer in the midst of suffering?
4. Verse 12 talks about the fact that “even angels long to look into these things.” If angels long to look into the truths of the gospel, what might that imply about the gospel? What might that imply about how we should “look into” the story of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ?

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