



Sermon Discussion Guide

Feb. 8 & 9, 2025

“How Can a Good God Allow Suffering?”

[Psalm 30:4-12](#)

Life’s biggest questions deserve thoughtful answers. In this new sermon series, we’ll explore foundational truths about faith, God, and our place in his creation. Together, we’ll seek biblical wisdom to navigate life’s complexities, deepen our understanding, and strengthen our trust in the God who holds all answers.

PRAY & CONNECT

Open in prayer and invite the Holy Spirit into your conversation. Ask God for wisdom and discernment and trust him to guide you. Take time to recap the message or view it on [hopeonline.tv](#). Did you have any ah-ha moments where you felt convicted, compelled, or inspired during the sermon? What’s been on your mind this week? Have you been able to apply the message to your everyday life?

GROW

Read [Romans 8:26-30](#) – “The Future Glory”

- How do you reconcile the existence of a loving God with the reality of suffering in the world?
- Can you share a time when you experienced God’s presence or provision during a hardship? How does reflecting on such experiences shape your ability to trust God in current challenges?
- How does the concept of future glory influence your approach to present-day struggles?
- How might this passage inform the way you support or comfort someone experiencing suffering?

Read [John 11:32-36](#) – “The Raising of Lazarus”

- If you were encountering this story for the first time, what questions would you have about Jesus’ reaction to Lazarus’ death? How does the idea of God weeping challenge or expand your understanding of God’s nature?
- Have you ever experienced a loss that made you question God’s presence or care?
- How does Jesus’ example of weeping with those who mourn inspire you to act when someone around you is grieving? How can you show empathy without trying to fix the situation or minimize pain?
- How can Jesus’ willingness to enter into the grief of Mary and Martha inspire us to be present with others in their suffering? How can we emulate Jesus’ example by actively engaging with the pain and loss of others, rather than avoiding it?

Read [2 Corinthians 9:6-11](#) – “The Collection for Christians in Jerusalem”

- What comes to mind when you hear the word “generosity”? Does the idea of giving freely make you feel comfortable or uncomfortable?
- How does this passage connect generosity to God’s blessing?
- What practical steps can you take to become a more generous person?
- How can you inspire others in your community to embrace a lifestyle of generosity?

Read [Psalm 22:1](#) – “A Cry of Despair”

- If you’ve ever felt abandoned or alone, how do you express those feelings? How does it make you feel to know that even Jesus cried out to God in a moment of crisis?
- How does this Psalm impact your understanding of Jesus’ sacrifice and his identification with human suffering?
- What does it mean to you to know that God is present even in our darkest moments?
- How can we offer hope and remind others of God’s presence, even in the midst of suffering?

APPLY

Pick one of the applications below to put into practice this week ...

- **Reflect on God’s presence.** Spend some quiet time reflecting on a difficult situation you’ve faced in the past. Identify one specific way you can trust God more fully in a current challenge you’re facing.
- **Practice empathetic presence.** Think of someone in your life who is experiencing suffering or loss. Reach out to them this week, not to offer advice or fix their problem, but simply to be present with them in their pain.
- **Cultivate a generous heart.** Examine your current giving habits. Identify one area where God might be calling you to be more generous—with your time, talents, or resources. Pray about this and take a step this week to put your intention into action.