

It's important that God's Word continues after the message. At Celebrate, we find that you will talk over this week's message long after our experience is over. That's because God has lasting impact. The Sermon Discussion Guide is designed to help you continue the conversation all week.

Re-THINK Your Pain

Why does God allow pain? We are promised to have pain, but also to not be alone in our pain. When given a purpose, pain is bearable. When we cooperate with God and follow His purpose, great things can come from our deepest hurts. Through our pain, we become better followers of Christ.

Four Ways God Wants to Use Your Pain:

1. Draw Closer to God.

Discuss with your group a time when you suffered loss. How did you express your pain? How did you cope with your pain? In what ways was God involved in your struggle? Did you pray, and what did you pray for? Did you tell God what you were feeling?

2 Corinthians 4:17-18; Matthew 5:4; Romans 8:28

2. Draw Closer to Others.

When did someone close to you suffer pain that you could not understand? How did you attempt to comfort them? Describe a time when presence was more comforting than words, whether for you or for someone else. How did fellowship with another believer become stronger when you shared pain with them?

1 Peter 5:9-10; Isaiah 61:1-2; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-14

3. Develop Christ-like Character.

How has pain in your life developed your maturity as a human being? How has pain provided opportunities to improve your character? Describe one characteristic you would not have without experiencing loss, pain, or suffering. How has pain you suffered when straying from God's purpose strengthened your obedience to God?

1 Corinthians 10:13; Proverbs 18:10; Isaiah 26:3-4

4. Become More Sensitive in Serving Others.

How has pain changed the way you view others who are hurting? What is one way pain has changed the way you connect with others? Are you more restricted because you are afraid to experience pain, or more open because you want to help those in need? What do you think God's intention might be for a pain you are struggling with right now?

Psalms 69:29-30; Romans 8:1; John 16:22

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Make It Real

- Make a list of your current struggles, fears, pains, and losses. Talk to God about each one, and tell Him how those things are affecting you.
- Call or visit someone you know who is suffering from loss or pain. You don't need fancy words. Just offer them your company.
- Thank someone who helped you through a hard time, and give thanks to God for bringing you through that event.