
TALK IT OVER

How Can I Benefit From My Pain?

Pain - Where is God When it Hurts? - Part 2

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Open your group in prayer and remember that this is only a guide. Feel free to discuss each of the provided questions in the message notes, or simply dive deeper into just one. Before you close with prayer, take a few minutes to look over the Three Essential Questions towards the end of the document.

Message Notes

Talk It Over

So what do people get for all of their hard work and struggles on Earth? Their lives are filled with pain, and their work is filled with grief. Even at night their minds don't rest. It doesn't make sense at all!

Ecclesiastes 2:22-23

We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

Romans 8:28 (NIV)

Have you gone through all of this for nothing? Is it all really for nothing?

Galatians 3:4 (CEV)

5 WAYS TO BENEFIT FROM ANY KIND OF PAIN

1. USE MY PAIN TO DRAW CLOSER TO GOD IN WORSHIP

We were crushed and overwhelmed ... and saw how powerless we were to help ourselves; but that was good, for then we put everything into the hands of God, who alone could save us ... and he did help us!

2 Corinthians 1:8-10 (LB)

I am glad ... not because it (your troubles) hurt you but because the pain turned you to God.

2 Corinthians 7:9 (LB)

Question 1 Pain is unavoidable and is the warning sign that something is not right. Pain can be physical, spiritual, relational, and it can also be emotional. Instead of focusing on avoiding the pain, 2 Corinthians 1:8-10 teaches us that we are powerless to help ourselves but instead can choose to leave everything in God's hands through surrender. How does this step of faith draw us closer to God in worship?

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2. USE MY PAIN TO DRAW CLOSER TO OTHERS IN FELLOWSHIP

By helping each other with your troubles, you truly obey the law of Christ. Galatians 6:2 (NCV)

Question 2 God uses pain to help us fulfill our God-given purpose of fellowship. How does sharing your suffering with other Christians deepen the level of fellowship in your group?

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3. USE MY PAIN TO GROW MORE LIKE JESUS IN DISCIPLESHIP

Sometimes it takes a painful experience to make us change our ways. Proverbs 20:30 (TEV)

So even though Jesus was God's Son, he learned obedience from the things he suffered.

Hebrews 5:8 (NLT)

Suffering made Jesus perfect, and now he can save forever all who obey him. Hebrews 5:9 (CEV)

Now, isn't it wonderful all the ways in which this distress has goaded you closer to God? You're more alive, more concerned, more sensitive, more reverent, more human, more passionate, more responsible. Looked at from any angle, you've come out of this with purity of heart. 2 Corinthians 7:11 (MSG)

Paul's Testimony of Pain:

2 Corinthians 11:23-28 and 2 Corinthians 4:8-10

For this reason we never become discouraged. Even though our physical being is gradually decaying, our spiritual being is renewed day after day. And these temporary troubles we suffer will bring us a tremendous and eternal glory, much greater than the trouble. For we fix our attention, not on things that are seen, but on things that are unseen. What can be seen lasts only for a time, but what cannot be seen lasts forever. 2 Corinthians 4:16-18 (TEV)

Question 3 Through pain and suffering, God grows us in his purpose of discipleship so that we can become more like Jesus. How can you use that to grow and strengthen the character qualities described in 2 Corinthians 7:11 in your life? Which aspect of your character needs work, and how can you use your pain to grow in that character quality?

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4. USE MY PAIN TO BE MORE SENSITIVE IN SERVING OTHERS

God comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort others. Then, when others are troubled, we will be able to give them the same comfort God has given us. You can be sure that the more we suffer for Christ, the more God will shower us with his comfort through Christ. So when we are weighed down with troubles, it is for your benefit and salvation! For when God comforts us, it is so that we, in turn, can be an encouragement to you. Then you can patiently endure the same things we suffer.

2 Corinthians 1:4-6 (NLT)

Question 4 Second Corinthians 1:4 tells us that God comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort others. How does pain help us to be more sensitive as we serve?

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5. USE MY PAIN TO WITNESS TO THE WORLD

(Paul in Prison) *I want you to know, dear brothers and sisters, that everything that has happened to me here has helped to spread the Good News.*

Philippians 1:12 (NLT)

In everything we do we try to show that we are true servants of God. We patiently endure suffering and hardship and trouble of every kind.

2 Corinthians 6:4 (LB)

Question 5 God uses pain to shape our message to the world. How does knowing that our deepest life message comes from our deepest pain help us to be an authentic witness to those around us?

Three Essential Questions

The following questions are intended to be open-ended and encourage members to consider how they felt and what they, or the group, can do as a result of hearing the message!

1. **What did you hear?** *What point in this message was most impactful for you?*
2. **What do you think?** *How did this message challenge, change, or affirm your thinking?*
3. **What will you do?** *How will you or your group put into practice what you've learned today?*