


# GOOD NEWS FOR THE SUFFERING DISCUSSION QUESTIONS


ROMANS 8:17-25


- 1 **God has built the concept of future glory into our world.** What areas of life have you seen this principle at work? One example would be the countless hours and thousands of dollars to earn a degree that you hope will help you in your future vocation. What others have you experienced personally?

 *How does focusing on the greater and lasting reward help endure temporal difficulty?*

- 2 **How can Paul speak with authority about suffering?** What sufferings had he experienced? Consult 1 Cor. 4:9-12; 2 Cor 4:7-12; 6:4-10; 11:23-29 for specifics.

 *What did Paul say about all those sufferings? See Colossians 1:24, 2 Tim. 2:10.*

 *Personal suffering equips a person for greater ministry in other's lives. What is the link between experiencing suffering and equipping for ministry? Read 2 Corinthians 1:4 for help.*

 *Interact with the following quote: "When you've passed through your own fiery trials, and found God to be true to what he says, you have real help to offer. You have firsthand experience of both his sustaining grace and his purposeful design. He has kept you through pain; he has reshaped you more into his image. . . . What you are experiencing from God, you can give away in increasing measure to others. You are learning both the tenderness and the clarity necessary to help sanctify another person's deepest distress." - David Powlison, *Suffering and the Sovereignty of God*, 166.*

- 3 **God is always at work in and through our sufferings.** What are some of the things that He is doing? Provide Biblical support for your answer.

- 4 **In Romans 8:20, Paul personifies creation as someone who is eagerly waiting.**

 *Study the following passages and answer the question, what is creation eagerly waiting for? Read Romans 8:19, Colossians 1:19, Acts 3:20-21, Matthew 19:28, Revelation 21:5.*

 *At times, the Bible zooms out of the day to day workings of God and describes a cosmic side of His redemptive work. How does that thought encourage you in your day to day life? What do you have to look forward to as a child of God?*

**5** Are you presently experiencing any of sin's consequences in your fallen body (Romans 8:23-25)?

♥ How do those weaknesses make you homesick for heaven?

⚙️ In what ways are you tempted in the pursuits and pleasures of the world to make this world your home? Pray for one another.

🗨️ How can you remind yourself this week that this world is not your home?

**6** **Christians look forward to future glory.** In what ways can you actively bring to mind the glory that you are heading to? Brainstorm several ideas as a group and seek to implement them this week.

⚙️ How can this type of thinking transform your view of your life and your circumstances?

**PRAYER REQUESTS**

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**7** **Are there any sufferings that you are struggling to see are worth it?** Share them as a group and pray for each other, that the prospect of future glory would far outweigh the temporal sufferings of this life. Encourage one another by applying Eph 3:14-16, 2 Cor. 4:16-18, 1 Peter 1:6-7, 4:13 to the specific situations in your group.

**8** **What do the truths in Romans 8:22-25 mean for the prosperity gospel?** Drawing on these verses, how would you talk to someone whose faith in God gospel is undone by suffering or evil in this life?

**FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

*"[God] will make the feeblest and filthiest of us into...a dazzling, radiant, immortal creature, pulsating all through with such energy and joy and wisdom and love as we cannot now imagine, a bright stainless mirror which reflects back to God perfectly (though, of course, on a smaller scale) his own boundless power and delight and goodness. The process will be long and in parts very painful; but that is what we are in for. Nothing less. He meant what he said." (C.S. Lewis, Mere Christianity, pages 174-175)*