



Personal & Group Study Guide: March 6, 2022

Message Series: The Purpose of Pain: How Jesus Makes Sense of Our Suffering

Message Title: BETRAYED

Series Intro: Why does God allow unjust pain and suffering? Why do bad things happen to good people? Whether you're a believer or a skeptic, these questions are near to every hurting, human heart. Every Sunday between now and Easter (Apr 17), we'll explore these questions in search of God's Truth.

Most people imagine Jesus of Nazareth to have been a nice-looking, well-dressed man with gentle features, slightly taller than his disciples. But how do the Bible's descriptions of Jesus contradict our common conceptions of his appearance? (see Isaiah 53:2-3)?

Read Matthew 4:1-11. How, specifically, did Satan tempt Jesus in the wilderness? What is surprising about these temptations?

Temptations = God-given _____ + Man-made _____

Who was Judas Iscariot, and what do we know about him? (See John 6:67-71, John 12:4-6, Matthew 26:14-16, Mark 14:43-45, Matthew 27:3-5)

What were Judas' possible motives for betraying Jesus?



What does it tell us about Jesus that he continued to include and love a man he knew would betray him?

How did Jesus handle the pain of Judas' betrayal, (See Matthew 26:47-54), and what does this teach us about the purpose of pain?

Ways to Connect Today:

- 1. Page 1 Gathering** - If you're new to The Story and want to learn all about our mission, values, and ways to get involved, or you're ready to become a member of our church, join Pastor Eric **TODAY AT 12:15pm** at the Museum District, or Pastor Kale at the Timbergrove campus.
- 2. Serve with our kids ministry** - Every Sunday, our NextGen Ministries team holds classes for children of all ages, and they need your help! Volunteer teachers are currently needed to lead students through a fun lesson and engaging craft or activity. No prior teaching experience required.
Sign up to serve: thestory.church/teams



Personal & Group Study Guide: March 13, 2022

Message Series: The Purpose of Pain: How Jesus Makes Sense of Our Suffering

Message Title: AGONY

Series Intro: Why does God allow unjust pain and suffering? Why do bad things happen to good people? Whether you're a believer or a skeptic, these questions are near to every hurting, human heart. Every Sunday between now and Easter (Apr 17), we'll explore these questions in search of God's Truth.

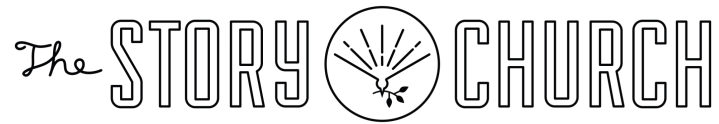
What are some big decisions that you have agonized over in your life?

What's the definition Pastor Kale uses for agony and what surprised you about it?

Read Luke 22:39-44. What are three things that surprised or stood out to you in this passage?

Why does agonizing with God strengthen our faith and trust in Him?

Read Genesis 32:28-29. Why does God bless Jacob and change his name? Why is this such a significant thread throughout the Bible?



How should you agonize with God?

In _____, with _____, by _____.

How can you change the posture of your prayers?

Who, in your life, can you be painfully specific with? Have you allowed people in your life to agonize with you? Reach out to someone you know going through an agonizing season, and let them know that you're with them and there for them.

How do you surrender your will to God's will?

What should you agonize over?

Why is it liberating to be able to agonize and be honest about our sin and be certain about our forgiveness? What happens when we forget one of these truths or the other?

Read Matthew 11:28-30. How does this passage comfort you about wrestling in agony with God?



Personal & Group Study Guide: March 20, 2022

Message Series: The Purpose of Pain: How Jesus Makes Sense of Our Suffering

Message Title: ABANDONMENT

Series Intro: Why does God allow unjust pain and suffering? Why do bad things happen to good people? Whether you're a believer or a skeptic, these questions are near to every hurting, human heart. Every Sunday between now and Easter (Apr 17), we'll explore these questions in search of God's Truth.

Who are people, organizations, or communities who have abandoned you?

What's the definition of abandonment we are using this morning?

The _____ decision where, despite the _____, you _____

How is abandonment different from betrayal?

How does past abandonment affect future relationships?

Read Luke 22:31-34. What do you think about Peter's bold response to Jesus? Was he being sincere or was he naive of what was to come?

The STORY CHURCH



Read Luke 22:54-62. What stands out to you about Peter's denial? How do you think he felt when he heard the rooster crow?

How does abandonment lead to further abandonment?

How does Jesus respond to abandonment?

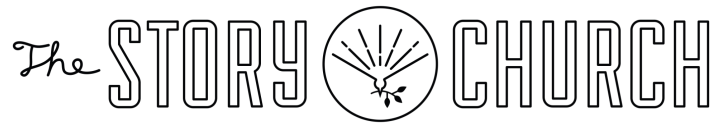
- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Reflect on this quote. What is abandonment to God?

"You will never know anything about abandonment until you have realized John 3:16 means that God gave Himself absolutely. In our abandonment, we give ourselves over to God just as God gave Himself for us, without any calculation" - Oswald Chambers

After the resurrection, how did Peter live out abandonment to God?

What would it look like for you to live a life that is completely abandoned to God?



Personal & Group Study Guide: March 27, 2022

Message Series: The Purpose of Pain: How Jesus Makes Sense of Our Suffering

Message Title: CRUELTY (Part 4)

Series Intro: Why does God allow pain and suffering? Why do bad things happen to good people? Whether you're a believer or a skeptic, these questions are near to all our hearts. With this series, we'll explore these questions in pursuit of God's Truth.

What is cruelty, and what is unique about the kind of pain it causes?

Why do cruel people often dehumanize their victims?

Have you experienced the kind of humiliation that is caused by someone's else's cruelty? How did you handle it?

Read Matthew 27:27-31. List the examples of cruelty that Jesus endured.

3 Ways Jesus Overcame Cruelty and Humiliation

1. Jesus _____ Cruelty

What clues do we have that Jesus saw this cruelty coming? (See Matt. 20:17-19)
How did Jesus' teachings in Matt. 5:38:42 *anticipate* the cruelty he later endured?

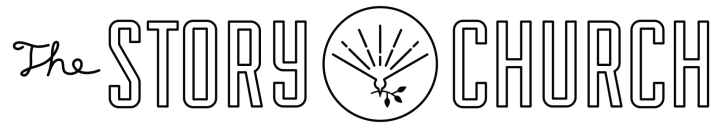
2. Jesus _____ Cruelty

How did Jesus absorb cruelty without becoming a coward - and without becoming cruel?
How would your life change if you were able to absorb people's cruelty like Jesus did? (See Philippians 2:5-8)

3. Jesus _____ Cruelty

What's the difference between forgiving someone's cruelty and excusing it?
How did Jesus demonstrate amazing grace as he died on the cross (see Luke 23:34), and how did his grace change at least one soldier's heart (see Mark 15:39)?

What do you find particularly challenging about dealing with the cruelty of others like Jesus did? What (if anything) do you need to change about yourself in order to overcome the pain caused by cruelty and humiliation?



Personal & Group Study Guide: April 3, 2022

Message Series: The Purpose of Pain: How Jesus Makes Sense of Our Suffering

Message Title: AFFLICTION (Part 5)

Series Intro: Why does God allow pain and suffering? Why do bad things happen to good people? Whether you're a believer or a skeptic, these questions are near to all our hearts. With this series, we'll explore these questions in pursuit of God's Truth.

What is an affliction? How have you experienced physical afflictions and how have they affected you, your relationships, and your faith?

Why do you think churches tend to talk more about emotional pain (ex, "God wants to mend your broken heart") than physical pain (ex, "God wants to heal your broken body")? What are some of the reasons why it's important for believers to talk about physical afflictions?

Read 2 Corinthians 4:7-18. List some of the ways that the Christian interpretation of pain stands apart from other religions and worldviews.

Read Luke 23:36-43. What were some of the bodily afflictions that Jesus endured, and why does it matter to Christians that Jesus experienced real, physical pain?

3 Ways Jesus Overcame Physical Pain/Afflictions

1. Jesus _____ (but only to _____)

Notes:

2. Jesus _____.

Notes:

3. Jesus _____.

Notes:

What can you learn from the way Jesus overcame bodily pain? What obstacles stand in the way of you dealing with your pain more like Jesus did?



Personal & Group Study Guide: April 10, 2022

Message Series: The Purpose of Pain: How Jesus Makes Sense of Our Suffering

Message Title: FORSAKEN (Part 6)

Series Intro: Why does God allow pain and suffering? Why do bad things happen to good people? Whether you're a believer or a skeptic, these questions are near to all our hearts. With this series, we'll explore these questions in pursuit of God's Truth.

Can you think of a time when you - or someone you care about - felt forsaken by God? What real-life circumstances led you - or them - to feel that way?

What is the definition of *forsaken*?

With this definition in mind, name some of the reasons why many people today may be tempted to believe that this world is God-forsaken.

Read Matthew 27:45-46. Before shouting these words from the cross, Jesus suffered all kinds of physical and psychological abuse, including:

Why do you think it's so hard for many Christians to believe that Jesus was actually God-forsaken on the cross?

3 Reasons to Be Grateful that Jesus Was Forsaken by the Father:

1. _____ was done. (1 Peter 2:24, Romans 6:23)

Your notes:

2. _____ was exposed. (Psalm 22)

Your notes:

3. _____ will never be _____. (Colossians 2:14)

Your notes: