

ROOTED WEEK 4: SUFFERING

Welcome to **Rooted Week 3: "How Does God Speak to Us?"** I hope by now your participants are connecting and getting to know each other.

REVIEW

- If you have done your Prayer Experience, please take time to debrief. Ask people to share how their prayer life has changed since the prayer experience.
- Encourage your group to memorize the weekly memory verses.
- Discuss the serve experience. A few options are available for your consideration. Ask the Rooted Coordinator.
- Start thinking and praying about the whether your group will become a Life Group and who the leaders might be. Review the qualities of a leader on page 46 of the leader guide.

RESOURCES

- Nametags

ABOUT ROOTED WEEK 4

Welcome to Week 4: **"Where is God in the midst of suffering?"** This is a question most of us have asked, are asking, and will ask. The last 3 weeks have prepared us for this conversation. We have looked at the nature and character of God and His creation, the consequences of human rebellion and the solution that God provides through Jesus Christ. We have seen that God is not passive. He speaks to us and we can speak to him, and He gives us His Holy Spirit as our divine helper. During the Prayer Experience, we get to pray together in community, hear God's voice and respond when He speaks.

Still, this week's reading introduces a practical challenge to our view of and response to God. We want to be especially caring and sensitive to those suffering. Do not attempt to provide answers or solutions. Instead, redirect the group to God's word and the hope and peace that Jesus gives us so that we can endure the trials in life.

Remind the group that suffering was never God's intent. God created a good and beautiful world in Shalom. Sin, however, entered the world and caused a rift between God's good creation and the reality of life. God has provided a way back to Shalom through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. We live in the tension between the Shalom that God gives through Jesus and the reality of the suffering in our lives and the world. The good news is that we are not alone in our pain. God is not detached from our human experience. Jesus experienced our pain and suffering and grieves with us. He died so that we can find a way back to God. He calls us to believe that God will redeem our pain and sorrow. He calls us to have an attitude of surrender. He calls us to a double-fisted faith.

Some people may feel that this is easier said than done. Remember, we are not trying to provide answers. Share your story and your own posture of surrender and allow space for God to speak to people in their unique situations.

Towards the end of the class, introduce Strongholds and ask the group to pray and be prepared for a potentially heavy conversation next week.

Group dynamics

Your group is quickly gelling as people get more comfortable with each other. You may find that people are beginning to address each other directly rather than going through you as the leader. Expect the next two weeks to drive the relationships deeper as people become even more vulnerable.

Announcements

- **Rooted Serve Experience** is coming up fast. Please discuss and agree on your Serve Experience if you haven't done so already. If you'd like suggestions for a serve experience, please get in touch with the Rooted Coordinator.
- Baptism is coming up soon. Look out for details in the latest Move Booklet