

## PERSONAL REFLECTION GUIDE

5/11/25

At Southland Church, we are committed to help you KNOW Christ, LIVE like Him, and make Him KNOWN. This guide is designed to help you reflect on and apply what you learned from the sermon this weekend. Use this guide as a quiet time this week. Write your answers in a journal, with the date and main passage noted at the top of the page.

- What main point from the sermon stood out to you? What did the Holy Spirit convict you of or encourage you with?
- Which one of these 4 things do you think suffering makes people most-often question: God's existence, His power, His plan, or His goodness? Why?
- CS Lewis famously wrote: "God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks in our conscience, but shouts in our pains: it is his megaphone to rouse a deaf world." What do you think he means? How have you experienced this?
- Let's survey some passages on suffering. As you read each one, note the cause and outcome for suffering according to God's Word. **Read Romans 8:18-25, Hebrews 12:7-11, 1 Corinthians 11:23-32, 2 Corinthians 4:7-18, Job 1:6-12, Romans 5:3-5, James 1:2-4, and 2 Peter 5:6-11.**
- Among other reasons, suffering can be due to (1) spiritual attack, (2) the effects of sin in the world, which leads to people who hurt us or diseases that plague us, or (3) our personal sin and choices which leads to bad outcomes or God's discipline for believers. Which of these is the hardest for you to accept? Why?
- When was a time you experienced pain and suffering that seemed to have no explanation? How did you feel about God in the midst of that suffering?
- When speaking to a non-believer about suffering, how can remembering your own suffering be a benefit to you? To them?
- If you were speaking to a skeptic who said, "If God is all-powerful, He could eliminate suffering. If God is all-good, He would want to eliminate all suffering. But suffering exists; therefore, either God doesn't exist or He is not all-powerful or all-good." How would you respond?
- **Read 1 Peter 3:15-16.** What would it look like to answer with gentleness and respect?
- Based on this passage or the sermon, what is one step of obedience the Holy Spirit is leading you towards this week. Who will you tell about this step, in order to help you?

## LOOKING AHEAD TO NEXT WEEK

**Read Romans 1:28-2:1.** If people say they follow Jesus, what does God feel about hypocrisy?



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## FAMILY DISCUSSION GUIDE

Southland Church is committed to helping parents raise the next generation of disciples who KNOW Christ, LIVE like Him, and make Him KNOWN. This guide is meant to help you as a family, particularly those over 12 years old, to discuss the Sunday sermon. You can do this in an evening devotion or over lunch after service.

A few tips to get started: (1) Make this a phone-free conversation. You and your family put the phones away, except for the person who looks up the Scriptures. He/She would read the passage and then put his/her phone away. (2) Set the pace for how vulnerable to be. If you give a shallow answer, you are more likely to get a shallow answer from your kids. (3) Do not feel like you have to ask all of these questions. Just focus on having a good honest discussion.

Open with prayer, asking God to lead you to know more about Christ and live like Him.

- What stood out to you from the sermon this week? What challenged or encouraged you?
- When is a time when you would say you suffered? How did you feel about God when you were hurting?
- **Read Romans 8:18-25 and Hebrews 12:7-11.** Based on these verses, what are some reasons that people might suffer? What comfort can you get from these verses?
- What might it look like to lean on Jesus when we hurt?
- How can remembering that suffering is temporary (and heaven is eternal) help you when you suffer?
- **Read 2 Corinthians 1:3-4 and James 1:2-4.** Why might God allow suffering in your life?
- How can remembering your own pain help you to comfort those who are hurting?
- **Read Psalm 34:17-18.** How can these verses comfort you when you hurt? Consider memorizing these verses as a family.
- If someone said to you that suffering proves there is no all-loving, all-powerful God, how would you respond? What would it look like to be gentle to that person who was asking the question?
- What is one thing you want to put in practice from these passages or the sermon?

Ask if there is some way you can pray for your family members, and then close in prayer.



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