

EXTRA! Ideas for Adults – When Life Gets Hard – Session 1

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Why Does Suffering Exist?

The Point: Suffering is a part of living in a fallen world.

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Get Into the Study

Use the following information to introduce Question #1.

Business News Daily recently published an article about the most stressful jobs. For the third year in a row the top four most stressful jobs are: enlisted military personnel, firefighter, airline pilot, and police officer. Rounding out the top 10 list of most stressful jobs are: broadcaster, event coordinator, newspaper reporter, public relations executive, senior corporate executive, and taxi driver. In ranking the jobs, they considered stress factors such as amount of travel, deadlines, competitiveness, environmental conditions, and risk to one's own life.

Say: *Maybe your job doesn't make this top 10 list of stressful jobs, but most all of us are looking for ways to relax at the end of a long, hard day. Call attention to Question #1 (What's your favorite way to relax and recover after a hard day?) and invite volunteers to respond.*

Information for this post was gleaned from:

<https://www.businessnewsdaily.com/1875-stressful-careers.html>

Study the Bible

Use the following information to supplement Question #5.

Hun Sol is a missionary with the International Mission Board, serving in South Korea. Part of his job is training students who go out to work alongside IMB missionaries throughout South Korea. "About 80 percent of the students who apply have never shared the gospel before," said Hun. "Before they leave here, we show them how. Then in their six months on the field, they see how powerful it is. They realize sharing it is so important." Hun's hope is that these students' enthusiasm for the gospel will spread through South Korean churches.

Say: *Missionary Hun Sol shares that his hope is for the good news of the gospel to spread through the students he trains. Call attention to Question #5 (What excites you most about our future hope?) and invite volunteers to share.*

Information for this post was gleaned from:

<https://www.imb.org/2019/12/04/pray-day-4/>

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— Donna McKinney wrote these *Leader Extras*. Donna is retired from a career with the federal government of the United States. She is a veteran Bible study group leader living in North Carolina.

Additional Questions

Icebreakers

- What's the first thing that comes to mind when you hear the word "suffering"?
- What type of sacrifices do people commonly make for the sake of a future reward?
- What questions do people ask about God when they see suffering in the world?

Genesis 3:16-19

- How should we understand the connection between suffering and sin?
- What is the ultimate cause of suffering in our lives?
- What do we learn about God and His view of sin from these verses?

Romans 8:18-22

- How did Paul describe the difference between his present and his future?
- How do these verses help us know how to respond to suffering in our world?
- What does God promise to us that can make any suffering bearable?

Romans 8:23-25

- How would you describe the hope we are offered in Christ?
- How does our future hope impact our response to suffering?
- What excites you most about our future hope?