**EXTRA! Ideas for Adults – Confident in the Face of Hard Questions – Session 3**

**Date: October 29, 2023**

**Why Do We Suffer?**

**The Point: We may not know why we suffer, but God meets us in our suffering.**

**Get Into the Study**

*Share the following after discussing Question 1.*

It can be incredibly difficult to admit when you’ve done something wrong, especially when it became a public spectacle.

[Wildfires](https://www.washingtonpost.com/climate-environment/2023/08/15/maui-fires-power-line-cause/) ravaged the Hawaiian island of Maui in August of 2023. Thought to be started by faulty power lines, these fires caused a [massive toll](https://www.cnn.com/2023/08/15/us/hawaii-maui-wildfires-death-toll-tuesday/index.html) in casualties and property damage. To help aid in relief to those affected, celebrities like [Dwayne “The Rock” Johnson](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dwayne_Johnson) and [Oprah Winfrey](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oprah_Winfrey) donated to the [People’s Fund of Maui](https://www.eifoundation.org/peoples-fund-of-maui/) and encouraged others to do the same.

The pair donated a combined $10 million, but many people were upset, claiming that the wealthy celebrities could’ve contributed much more. People were also angry that the pair were being presumptuous that people could afford any donations in the current economy.

[Johnson later apologized](https://www.dailywire.com/news/dwayne-johnson-addresses-maui-relief-fund-backlash-i-completely-understand) for his thoughtlessness, saying that he understands that money is hard to come by right now, and how he should’ve been more mindful of how things looked when he first started the fund.

Mistakes are always hard to learn from, but admitting fault and being willing to change is always helpful.

**Study the Bible**

*Share the following after discussing Question 2.*

A common way that people cope with suffering is to blame the victim, saying that they must have done something to cause the bad things to happen.

On October 7, around [300 Israelis were killed](https://www.dailywire.com/news/300-israelis-dead-1600-injured-in-9-11-level-palestinian-terror-attack-on-israel) by attacks from the terror group, Hamas. Instead of being appalled in the face of this tragedy, many groups around the world are [sympathizing with Hamas](https://www.dailywire.com/news/terrorist-sympathizers-around-the-world-including-u-s-and-europe-celebrate-palestinian-attacks) and saying that it would be better to destroy Israel [“from the river to the sea.”](https://twitter.com/Wid_Lyman/status/1711058489051598963?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw%7Ctwcamp%5Etweetembed%7Ctwterm%5E1711058489051598963%7Ctwgr%5E55d4c38f1a932cafcd6c50b6519ad4b9a3b22fa3%7Ctwcon%5Es1_&ref_url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.dailywire.com%2Fnews%2F300-israelis-dead-1600-injured-in-9-11-level-palestinian-terror-attack-on-israel)

Over [thirty groups at Harvard University](https://www.dailywire.com/news/deeply-sick-over-30-harvard-university-groups-blame-israel-after-hamas-commits-atrocities) have come together to condemn Israel, saying that Israel’s apartheid regime is what caused these attacks, and that the violence is a justified way of “decolonizing” Palestine. When suffering happens, we shouldn’t blame the victims. We should turn to God in prayer.

*EXTRA was written by Emily Duncan, a Southern California native currently living in West Georgia with her husband, daughter, and two dogs. She became a Christian when she was sixteen at a youth retreat. Now, she’s a self-described homemaker and semi-professional baker who dreams of eventually finishing all the projects in her workroom.*

**Study the Bible [Option from the Daily Discipleship Leader Guide]**

Draw the group’s attention back to **The Point: We may not know why we suffer but God meets us in our suffering** and play one of these videos to allow the group to experience a variety of personal testimonies of how God meets us in our suffering.

This activity gives the group a chance to not only witness a variety of testimonies of how God meets us in our suffering but allows them an opportunity to talk about how the experiences of the people in the video are examples of God’s grace and mercy, as well as to share their own experiences of God’s mercy during suffering.

<https://youtu.be/EhsA27GPtQg>

<https://youtu.be/6WzsxpgEwhY>

**Additional Questions**

Icebreaker

* When has an issue or a cause become personal to you?
* When was the last time you didn’t know the answer to something?
* What are some important lessons you have learned the hard way?
* What makes life better when you feel lousy?
* Who’s great at “bringing chicken soup” when you’re suffering?
* What’s a mystery you’d most like to see solved?

Job 30:26-31

* How might we halt the help God calls us to provide when we focus on the why for suffering?
* What are several practical actions that help someone who suffers?
* How can our response to suffering show that we still love and follow God?
* What are some basic answers for why there is suffering?
* What methods or defense mechanisms have you adopted to handle seasons of suffering?
* What methods or defense mechanisms do many adopt to handle suffering? (LP)

Job 42:1-3

* How does suffering take us beyond our resources to dependence on God?
* What truths about God get you through suffering?
* How do we trust that God is good, even when our circumstances are bad?
* What are some possible positive outcomes that may result from suffering?
* What positive outcomes have you seen come from your own times of suffering?
* What are specific steps we can take to trust God even in seasons of suffering?
* What has helped you trust God in times of suffering?

Job 42:4-6

* What’s the difference between knowing about God and knowing God?
* How do we actively listen to God in the midst of suffering?
* How does God reveal Himself to us in the midst of suffering?
* How have you experienced the presence of God in the midst of suffering?
* When have you encountered God’s presence in the middle of suffering?
* What specific steps can we take now to prepare for seasons of suffering in the future?
* What can we learn from Job’s example about how to respond to suffering?

**For Those in Your Group**

Send the following link to your group members as either a teaser before the group meets or as a follow-up thought:

[Why Does God Allow Bad Things to Happen?](https://lynnhpryor.com/2023/10/16/why-does-god-allow-bad-things-to-happen-3/)

**Magazine Article**

[Emerge as Pure Gld](https://biblestudiesforlife.lifeway.com/confident-in-the-fact-of-hard-questions-session-3-emerge-as-pure-gold/)