

A Primer for the Suffering

“The WHEN of Suffering”

GETTING STARTED

ICE BREAKER: When has it been hardest for you to watch someone in pain?

KEY THOUGHT: ***We suffer today with eyes on eternity***

GETTING THE POINT

Read 2 Corinthians 4:16-18

1. What contrasts does Paul use here, and how do these contrasts strengthen his main point?
2. What does Paul mean by “our inner self is being renewed day by day”? How might this renewal take place in the midst of hardship?
3. In what sense can suffering *prepare* glory?

Read 2 Corinthians 11:23-29

4. What one word would you use to describe Paul’s life, given his memories recounted here?
5. How does this description of Paul’s suffering deepen your understanding of his phrase “light momentary affliction”?

GETTING DEEPER

Read 2 Corinthians 4:14

1. How does this verse ground our hope in the resurrection of Christ?
2. Why is the resurrection essential to viewing suffering through an eternal lens?

GETTING PERSONAL

1. When you experience suffering, what is your natural focus—relief from pain, understanding the cause, or something else? Why do you think that is?
2. How might remembering that today’s affliction is temporary change the way you pray, speak, or make decisions this week?
3. Paul refuses to “lose heart.” What would it look like for you to adopt that same resolve in your current circumstances—and how could this perspective impact others who are watching your response to suffering?
4. What practical steps can help you “look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen” (4:18) during a time of hardship?

PRAY...

that those currently suffering will fix their eyes on the eternity Jesus has promised.