



## Discussion Questions from Weekly Message

Feel free to customize this to use in your small group, family or for you personally

### From Message on: 8/23/20

#### Optional Opener Question

Have you ever broken a bone? Or been there when someone else broke a bone? What happened?

#### Introductory Thought

Paradoxes are seemingly self-contradictory statements that might seem to go against the grain of our culture. This week we looked at the Paradox of Pain. The world says avoid pain, God says pain can be purposeful and transformational.

#### Discussion Questions

- What are some of the ways we intentionally avoid different kinds of pain? Pain in my body? Pain in our Relationships? Pain in our emotions?
- Does it seem incongruous or odd for a loving God to “invent” pain? What’s your first - without thinking – answer: yes or no? In the 3 areas from the last question, what would each area be like with no pain, EVER?
- Brent talked about four sources for pain. The first one was the natural laws of God, i.e. gravity. What would it be like to be the parent of the child who didn’t feel pain? Why aren’t we more grateful for pain?
- The second source is Growth. What do you think he meant by this? Is growth the same as change, or are they different? What do you think of this statement: “He/She is a year older but not a year wiser.” How does pain fit into that statement? Is it wise to protect our children from all uncomfortable situations (*not talking about physical pain here!*): why or why not?
- Quote: “Sometimes pain is needed to help us grow; sometimes pain is needed to help redirect our life.” How does James 1:2-3 add to the discussion? In the Phillips paraphrase, it’s translated as “welcome them as friends.” What kind of maturity does it take to welcome uncomfortable situations as Friends?
- The Psalms are often a record of David’s spiritual journey, through painful situations and emotions as well as worshipful joy. People go there when emotions are running high. Read Psalm 31:13-15. How is BUT a pivot word? How could I apply that same pivot moment to my own uncomfortable situations? How could the pain be a transformational season in my life?
- The third source of pain is Personal Choices/sin. Brent said: “God gave us freedom to choose how to live our life. That freedom can cause joy or pain depending on our decisions.” Can you think of some illustrations of this principle? For an extreme picture of this, read Rev 16:11. How do these other verses add to our discussion:
  - I John 1:8-9    Rev. 3:19    Isaiah 5:21    Titus 3:3-5
- Fourth source is Personal choices/sins of others. How do I acknowledge this truth, but not live a life playing the Victim Card? Why might spending too much time on “it’s THEIR fault” be a trap? What difference can it make if I know the source of my pain? How might my attitude change? Where is God when the stupidity of others affects me? How does this verse add to our discussion: Isaiah 43:2
- Read Psalm 31:21. How might being in a painful situation feel like being in a Besieged City? What lifeline does God extend? Can you share a time when God spoke into your pain? Psalm 31:24.
- Have you ever thought of God being in pain? Read Genesis 6:5-6. Why do you think Scripture casts God’s heart as being in pain? Do you get any insights into the Love of God from this?

#### Practical Application & Next Steps

- In the next seven days, consider your thinking as you process uncomfortable or even painful situations: do you pitch a tent and camp in the pain? How long is too long? What would it look like for you to actively seek ways to allow God to transform your thinking?
- Write a letter to God telling Him that you trust Him in your pain or uncomfortable seasons. Tell Him why. Repent when you need to, and then move on deeper into your relationship with a God who loves you.