

YOU CAN DO THIS

TALK IT OVER

You Can Have Courage to Suffer Well

You Can Do This, Part Four

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If you would like to watch the weekend message, visit www.saddleback.com/watch.

Open your group in prayer and remember that this is only a guide. Feel free to discuss each of the provided questions, or simply dive deeper into just one. Before you close with prayer, take a few minutes to look over the Three Essential Questions toward the end of the document.

Scriptures

Psalm 23:1-4 (NIV); 1 Peter 4:12 (NIV); 2 Corinthians 4:17 (NIV); Isaiah 40:31 (NIV);
Isaiah 43:2a (NIV); Isaiah 53:6 (NIV); John 16:33 (NIV); Romans 5:3-5 (NIV)

Questions

1. Psalm 23:1-4 says, *“The LORD is my shepherd, I lack nothing. He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he refreshes my soul. He guides me along the right paths for his name’s sake. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.”* The passage doesn’t indicate “why” there is suffering in this world—it simply indicates that there “is.” The first three verses remind us how good the Lord, our shepherd, is; verse 4 gives us assurance that he will be with us in our suffering. What does the passage reveal with regard to God’s role as our shepherd? How does it teach us that we can have the courage to suffer well?
2. C.S. Lewis wrote: “Pain insists upon being attended to. 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.” How does God speak to us through Christ’s suffering and give us confidence to call out to him when we are suffering?
3. Psalm 23:4 (NIV) says, *“Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.”* How did God comfort David in difficult times—even giving him the confidence to face evil and death without fear? How does

this verse change your perspective on the challenges you are facing? Suffering is unavoidable, so we should be prepared. 1 Peter 4:12 (NIV) says, *"Dear friends, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that has come on you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you."* What painful trials have you gone through as a believer? How does 1 Peter 4:12 give believers courage in adverse situations? Discuss how we can deepen our relationship with God so that we can have courage to suffer through the inevitable storms of life.

4. There is hope in a believer's suffering because we know that it will come to an end, and we know that it is achieving something greater for us. *"For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all"* 2 Corinthians 4:17 (NIV). God uses suffering to form us into the people he wants us to be. Discuss how our suffering is like a refiner's fire—forming Christ in us. How can you encourage another Christian who is suffering?
5. Isaiah 40:31 (NIV) says, *"Those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint."* What is the effect when we hope in the Lord; how does it encourage us to have courage when we suffer? Discuss how the Lord not only gives us strength but causes us to soar in times of suffering!
6. Isaiah 43:2a (NIV) says, *"When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you."* God doesn't promise to remove all suffering in this world; however, he does promise to be with us as we pass *"through"* suffering! What is the significance of God's presence when we suffer? Will you invite the Holy Spirit to minister to your heart in the midst of your suffering? Discuss how you can use God's promise in Isaiah 43:2a to give you faith and courage in difficult circumstances.
7. Isaiah 53:6 (NIV) says, *"We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all."* Do you need a companion on this lonely road that you're walking—a Good Shepherd who bore your sins on the cross? How does suffering as a wrongdoer differ significantly from suffering as a Christian? Have you invited Jesus into your life? What suffering can you turn to the Good Shepherd for help with today to give you the courage to suffer well? How can you comfort or encourage a friend who is suffering?

Three Essential Questions

The following questions are intended to be open-ended and encourage members to consider how they felt and what they, or the group, can do as a result of hearing the message.

1. **What did you hear?** *What point in this message was most impactful for you?*
2. **What do you think?** *How did this message challenge, change, or affirm your thinking?*
3. **What will you do?** *How will you or your group put into practice what you've learned today?*

Small Group Action Steps

1. Consider taking the Group Health Assessment in your small group to see how your small group is balancing the five purposes, and to get suggested next steps for each purpose: <https://saddleback.com/connect/smallgroups#spiritualCheckup>
2. Did you know that Saddleback produces many new small group studies each year? Visit <https://saddleback.com/studies> to see Saddleback's ever-growing library of group curricula.

Are you interested in the Bible and in helping small groups benefit from the weekend message? Well, you are in luck! Saddleback members like you create these discussion guides each week. If you are interested in joining the team, please email Maturity@saddleback.com