

## Scripture References

John 11 1 Now a man named Lazarus was sick. He was from Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. ... 3 So the sisters sent word to Jesus, "Lord, the one you love is sick." ... 5 Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. 6 So when he heard that Lazarus was sick, he stayed where he was two more days, ... 17 On his arrival, Jesus found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. ... 20 When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went out to meet him, but Mary stayed at home. 21 "Lord," Martha said to Jesus, "if you had been here, my brother would not have died. 22 But I know that even now God will give you whatever you ask." 23 Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again." 24 Martha answered, "I know he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day." 25 Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; 26 and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?" ... 32 When Mary reached the place where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet and said, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died." ... 33 When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come along with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in spirit and troubled. ... 34 "Where have you laid him?" he asked. "Come and see, Lord," they replied. 35 Jesus wept. 36 Then the Jews said, "See how he loved him!" 37 But some of them said, "Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?" 38 Jesus, once more deeply moved, came to the tomb. It was a cave with a stone laid across the entrance. 39 "Take away the stone," he said. But, Lord," said Martha, the sister of the dead man, "by this time there is a bad odor, for he has been there four days." ... 43 When he had said this, Jesus called in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" 44 The dead man came out, his hands and feet wrapped with strips of linen, and a cloth around his face. Jesus said to them, "Take off the grave clothes and let him go."

Isaiah 53:3-5 He was despised and rejected by mankind, a man of suffering, and familiar with pain. Like one from whom people hide their faces he was despised, and we held him in low esteem. 4 Surely he took up our pain and bore our suffering, yet we considered him punished by God, stricken by him, and afflicted. 5 But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed.

Ps 68:19 Praise be to the Lord, to God our Savior, who daily bears our burdens.

Romans 5:3b-4 we know that suffering produces perseverance; 4 perseverance, character; and character, hope. Romans 5:3b-4

2 Cor 4:8-10 We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; 9 persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. 10 We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body.

## Reasons to Believe – Fred Hennes

Jan 19, 2020

### #658, "How Could a Loving God Allow So Much Suffering?" (John 11)

Why didn't God create a world where \_\_\_\_\_ didn't exist?

If God is loving, then suffering must have some redeeming \_\_\_\_\_.

Sometimes, we \_\_\_\_\_ for Jesus through our tears, and he does not come.

Jesus is not a \_\_\_\_\_ deity; He is the God who inhabits our suffering.

If there is no God, we still suffer, but there is no universe to \_\_\_\_\_.

There is no design, no purpose, no evil, no good – nothing but blind, pitiless \_\_\_\_\_.

Jesus's power over death is absolute. It is the only \_\_\_\_\_ we have in the face of our inevitable end.

The space between Lazarus's death and Jesus's calling of him out of the tomb is the space in which Martha sees Jesus for who he really is \_\_\_\_\_.

### What possible good could come from your suffering?

1. Suffering increases awareness of the \_\_\_\_\_ power of God. (Ps 68:19)
2. Suffering teaches us that God is more concerned about character than \_\_\_\_\_. (Romans 5:3-4)
3. Suffering teaches us that the greatest good of the Christian life is not the absence of pain, but rather \_\_\_\_\_. (2 Cor 4:8-10)

## Life Group Ice Breaker

1. Have you ever lived in an area that snowed in the winter? If so, what did you like about it?

## Discussion Questions

- Regarding this sermon, is there any truth that stands out as being particularly helpful, insightful or difficult to grasp?
- Did you ever have a sports coach who yelled out, “No Pain, No Gain?” What did the coach mean, and does this catch phrase apply to suffering in other parts of life as well? Explain.
- Read Isaiah 53:3-5 and then create a list showing the various ways that Jesus suffered while here on earth. How does His suffering relate to your suffering?

- Have each member of the Life Group identify a biblical character who suffered. What good did God allow to come from that person’s suffering?

## Application Questions & Prayer

- Share an experience of yours that involved suffering. What good came from that experience and would you go through it again?
- How do you use your suffering to draw closer to God?
- Pray for one another so that you may be strong in your faith, yet compassionate in your approach as you defend and share your faith.