

REFRAMED

SAME
SITUATION.



GOD'S
PERSPECTIVE.

REFRAMING SUFFERING



DINNER TABLE DISCUSSIONS

FOR THE FACILITATOR

Welcome to **REFRAMED**, a journey of discovering God's perspective on our current challenges.

Encourage the group to take turns reading and answering questions.

You will be asked questions on the topic. You can open the question to the group as you reach each question.

TOPIC: REFRAMING SUFFERING

Sermon audio: outlookchurch.co.za/sermons/287

READER 1

Today we are getting a fresh perspective and reframing our suffering.

John 9 : 1-3

As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man who had been blind from birth. "Rabbi," his disciples asked him, "why was this man born blind? Was it because of his own sin or his parents' sin?" "It was not because of his sins or his parents' sins," Jesus answered. "This happened so the power of God could be seen in him."

Before Jesus came to the world suffering was seen as the result of your own sin, or as punishment for wrongdoings.

Question 1: Was there ever a time in your life where you felt that your suffering was a punishment from God?

READER 2

Jesus said that the blind man's suffering was not a punishment for anyone's sins, but rather; it was an opportunity for God's glory to be displayed.

God can **redeem** suffering.

Question 2: Have you ever seen, in your own life, a time when your suffering has been redeemed by God and has been turned to glorify Him instead?

READER 3

The world thinks of suffering as something that should be avoided at all cost and that it is a punishment for sin, however; suffering is a very normal part of a christian life.

Hebrews 5 : 8-9

Even though Jesus was God's Son, he learned obedience from the things he suffered. In this way, God qualified him as a perfect High Priest,

and he became the source of eternal salvation for all those who obey him.

Out of Jesus' own suffering He became a source of salvation to everyone. Jesus showed us that our suffering can become a source of salvation and blessing to others.

READER 4

If we look back at the story of Job, we can see that he was a man who truly knew suffering. Job was a blameless man who God loved and blessed. Job had everything taken away from him, he lost his entire family, and was of poor health. Regardless of all this he still chose to worship God and never once did he accuse God of doing any wrong to him.

After Job showed that his heart was pure and loving towards the Lord, regardless of his circumstance, God rewarded him by restoring

twice as much as he had lost. His suffering prepared him for an even greater blessing.

Question 3: When in your life has your suffering set you up for even greater blessings?

READER 5

Suffering should be a normal part of a Gospel life. The Gospel is not just the start of the race for our christian lives, rather; it is the lifestyle that we step into at the start and remain in for the rest of our lives.

Suffering in our lives can often take the form of saying no to the desires of the flesh, and leaving them behind. This often causes our flesh to suffer, but this type of suffering brings glory to God and bears fruit in our lives.

Luke 9 : 23

Then Jesus said to the crowd, “If any of you wants to be my follower, you must give up your own way, take up your cross daily, and follow me.”

There is only resurrection power when you take up your cross. When Jesus took up His cross and died for us God resurrected Him and brought Him back to life. In the same way it is only once we take up our cross that God’s resurrection power is outworked in our lives.

Question 4: What are some things you need to say no to, in your life, so that you can take up your cross with Jesus?

READER 6

We are rewarded richly when we suffer well. This means that when we deny ourselves and suffer

for the Kingdom we become heirs to His Kingdom.

Romans 8 : 16-17

For his Spirit joins with our spirit to affirm that we are God's children. And since we are his children, we are his heirs. In fact, together with Christ we are heirs of God's glory. But if we are to share his glory, we must also share his suffering.

To share in God's **Glory** we need to share in His **suffering**. Paul had an incredible revelation that suffering for God was actually a blessing and something to rejoice in.

Colossians 1 : 24

Now I rejoice in what I am suffering for you, and I fill up in my flesh what is still lacking in regard to Christ's afflictions, for the sake of his body, which is the church.

Question 5: Have you ever suffered for the Kingdom of God? Was suffering for God worth

it to you? Or is suffering still something you try and avoid as often as you can.

READER 7

Suffering brings us into a deeper intimacy with our saviour. Jesus suffered greatly during his time on Earth, when we share in his suffering with Him, we are drawn into deeper intimacy with Him.

Philippians 3 : 10

I want to know Christ and experience the mighty power that raised him from the dead. I want to suffer with him, sharing in his death.

We should long to know Jesus more, but the pathway to knowing Him more is to share in the fellowship of his suffering with Him.

Question 6: Have you ever felt a deepened intimacy with God through suffering with Him?

SHARE YOUR HIGHLIGHT

Take turns sharing what stood out to you the most from what we read. What stood out to you and *why*?

ACTION STEP

What action step can you take to respond to God's Word?

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