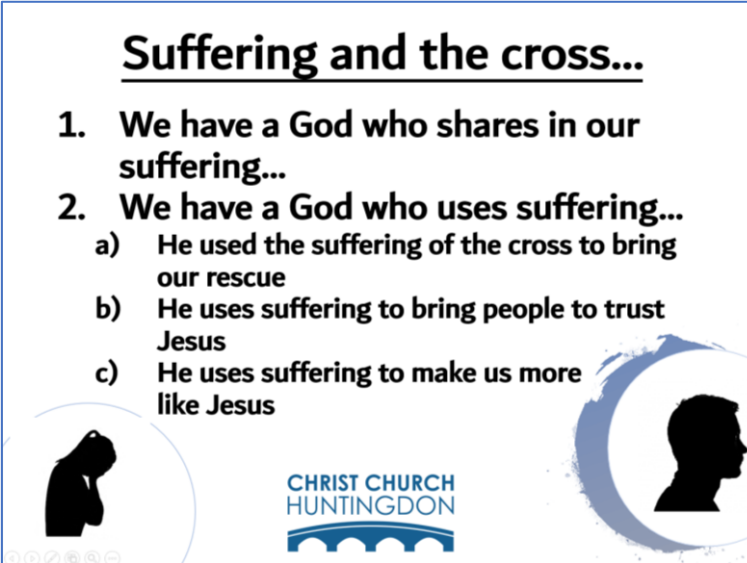


Sermon 2) Suffering from the perspective of the middle

Suffering and the cross...

1. **We have a God who shares in our suffering...**
2. **We have a God who uses suffering...**
 - a) **He used the suffering of the cross to bring our rescue**
 - b) **He uses suffering to bring people to trust Jesus**
 - c) **He uses suffering to make us more like Jesus**



Verses used in the sermon...

1) Isaiah 53:3-5; Matthew 14:34; Psalm 88;

2a) Isa 53 (see also 1 Peter 3:18) 2b) Mark 2:1-12; Luke 13:4-5; Phil 1:13

2c) Psalm 119:67,71; 1 Peter 1:7; James 1:4; Hebrews 12:11.

Questions for further investigation on your own or in small groups...

- 1) Under point 1, we considered how in Christ, the man of sorrows (Isaiah 53:3) we have a “God with scars”. Can you think of how it makes a genuine difference in suffering when someone else has been there before? How do the sufferings of Christ comfort you?
- 2) Why is the good news so much more wonderful when we discover that Jesus not only suffers **with** us, but suffered **for** us (Isaiah 53:5,6)? How would you explain what happened at the cross to a non-church friend who is suffering?
- 3) Did God use anyone’s suffering to bring you to faith at all? Or for someone you know? Or how might you use Luke 13:4,5 to gently challenge unbelievers when bad things happen?
- 4) How might God be using your suffering at the moment? See especially Hebrews 12:11.
- 5) Think of someone you know who is suffering at the moment. Is there any way you can support them in word and/or deed?

Some Further Resources...

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jv8lqJm6q7w> Music video by rapper Lecrae referred to in the sermon. Wikipedia explains that the video is in support of St Jude Children’s hospital.
- <https://au.thegospelcoalition.org/article/peter-adam-on-depression/> Australian pastor Peter Adam shares his experiences of depression very frankly, openly and with hope.
- <https://www.desiringgod.org/interviews/how-can-god-be-sovereign-and-good-and-allow-suffering> 12 minutes from Pastor John Piper on why does God allow suffering?
- <https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/five-purposes-for-suffering> 5 Bible verses that John Piper uses to show us some purposes for suffering: repentance, reliance, righteousness, reward and a reminder of Christ’s sufferings.