

Weekend Teaching Discussion Guide

Tough Questions – Week Four

Teaching by Pastor Ken

WARM-UP QUESTION

When you hear the question, “Why is there so much pain and suffering in the world?” what is your first honest reaction or thought?

DISCUSS

1. God’s Nature: God Is Good

Pastor Ken began by grounding us in a foundational truth. God is good. Even in the middle of pain, this truth does not change. However, God’s goodness does not mean we will avoid difficulty. Some hardship is discipline that shapes us, while other moments are tests that reveal what is happening inside us.

1 John 1:5

Hebrews 12:11

James 1:13–15

Romans 8:31

- Why is it important to start with the truth that God is good when talking about suffering?
- How have you seen trials tempt you to question God’s love, provision, or justice?
- What does it practically look like to trust that God is for you in a difficult season?

2. Creative Laws and Personal Responsibility

God created the world with order and laws. At times, suffering results from living outside those boundaries. Pastor Ken challenged us to consider that our pain may sometimes be connected to our own choices, a fact that can be difficult to acknowledge.

Matthew 4:5–7

Galatians 6:7–8

- Why is it often easier to blame something else rather than examine our own role in our pain?
- What are some examples of “sowing and reaping” you have seen in real life?
- Where might God be inviting you to take responsibility and make a change?

3. Free Will and Moral Choice

God gives humanity the ability to choose. This is a gift, but it also introduces complexity. Sometimes our suffering comes not from our own choices, but from the choices of others. Free will helps explain much of the pain we see in the world, even though it does not make it easier.

Joshua 24:14–15

- How does understanding free will help explain certain kinds of suffering?
- Why is it especially difficult when someone else's choices cause our pain?
- How can we continue to choose God even when life feels unfair?

4. A Broken and Sin Filled World

We live in a fallen world where sin has affected everything. Not all suffering can be traced to a specific action. Some pain simply exists because the world is not as it was originally created to be. Even then, God is able to work in and through suffering.

John 9:1–3

Romans 8:20–21

Genesis 50:20

- Why do we often search for a clear cause when suffering happens?
- How does it change your perspective to know that not all suffering has a direct explanation?
- Where have you seen God bring good out of something painful?

5. Grace to Get Through and Trust Beyond Understanding

Pastor Ken reminded us that while we may not always receive answers, we are promised God's presence and grace. We are invited to trust God even when we do not fully understand. One day, God will make all things right, but until then, we live by faith.

2 Corinthians 12:9

Revelation 21:4

Isaiah 55:8–9

- What does it mean to you that God's grace is sufficient in weakness?
- How does the promise of a future without pain shape how you endure today?
- Where is God asking you to trust Him even without answers?

CLOSING REFLECTION

Which statement best reflects where you are right now?

- I am wrestling with trusting that God is good in the middle of pain.
- I need to take an honest look at my own choices and what they are producing.
- I am struggling with pain caused by someone else's decisions.
- I need to lean on God's grace to carry me through a difficult season.
- I need to trust God even when I do not understand.

PRAYER

Close by acknowledging that God is good, even when life is hard. Thank Him for His presence in suffering and for the grace that sustains us. Ask for humility to take responsibility where needed, strength to endure what cannot be changed, and faith to trust Him beyond what we can understand. Pray for healing, hope, and a deeper confidence in His promises.