

### **Suffering comes through our SITUATION**

As Jesus and his disciples leave the Temple, they see a man blind from birth. The disciples ask a theological question about this man who was sentenced to a life of begging. *Suffering shows us that something isn't right, which we think should be made right.* Jesus uses the blind man as a case study in suffering and the power of God. One of the most difficult aspects of being human is experiencing personal suffering or seeing it in others. To a greater or lesser degree, we all experience suffering because of the sinful, broken state of the world we live in. *Some suffering is beyond our control and some suffering we create because of our control.*

### **Human suffering doesn't negate God's EXISTENCE**

It was a common teaching that obedience to God created blessing and disobedience meant being cursed (Deut. 30:19, 20). Many Jews also believed in 'transmigration,' which taught the pre-existence of the soul where if you did wrong before birth, you were sent into a body to suffer for it. This teaching continues today in Hinduism and Buddhism relating to karma and reincarnation. *Don't let your view of God's goodness be tainted by bad theology!* Though all sin has consequences, it isn't true suffering is *always* the result of personal sin, as in six months Jesus would glorify God by innocently suffering on the cross and satisfy God's punishment of sin (Heb. 12:2). Jesus corrects the disciples by stating the man wasn't cursed by his, or his parents sin, but it is a chance to show the glory of God. *It is often in difficulty we see God the clearest* (2 Cor. 12:7-10)!

### **With God, pain has a PURPOSE**

In the beginning, God created an ideal world without death or suffering the way a good and all-powerful God would. But when sin and rebellion entered the world, God's judgment brought brokenness and pain (Gen. 1:31; 2:17). Yet even in this, God gave grace and salvation. *With Jesus, we can have hope through the hurt!* While healing may come naturally or supernaturally, God expects us to trust His plan. *God is less concerned with your comfort than your character.* God will give strength through any suffering or problem. Suffering reminds us this life isn't eternal, but the next one is (James 1:2-4; 1 Pet. 1:6-9). *We can trust a good God, even in bad times!*