**“If God is Good, Why all the Pain?”**

3-Fold Purpose: ***Love God, Love Others, Serve the World***

One Mission: ***Make Disciples***

4 Commitments:

***Shaped by the Word***

1. Is this week’s sermon question on pain something that you yourself have wrestled with? Discuss with your life group.
2. Share something from Steve’s sermon that challenged your thinking or helped you in your understanding of pain in light of God’s goodness?
3. Read John 9:1-11. We know that ultimately pain is the result of sin (see Gen. 3). Yet as Jesus points out in this passage, hardship and pain have a higher purpose and aren’t necessarily a judgement because of specific sins.
   1. What misunderstanding did the disciples have regarding the blind man’s disability?
   2. How did Jesus respond? What do you learn from his response?
   3. Is there something you can relate to from this story?

***Surrendered to His Will***

1. Read 2 Corinthians 12:7-10.
   1. In Paul’s case, what was the purpose for the pain (‘thorn in the flesh’) in his life?
   2. Why did God not relent and relieve Paul of his affliction?
   3. How does Paul’s response reveal that he was surrendered to God’s will
   4. Can you relate to this story at all? If so, how?

***Connected to His Spirit***

1. In verse 9 Paul declares: “Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me.”

And then he concludes in verse 10: “For when I am weak, then I am strong.”

* 1. Can you identify with what Paul is relating here? If so, how?
  2. In Gal. 2:20, Paul refers to having been ‘crucified with Christ’, and that he no longer lives, but Christ lives in him. How is it possible to live in such a way that the Holy Spirit lives through you?
  3. On a scale of 1 to 10, to what degree are you yielded to the Holy Spirit in you? Discuss this as a group.

***Building His Kingdom***

1. C.S. Lewis in *The Problem of Pain* writes: “God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks in our conscience, but shouts in our pains: it is his megaphone to rouse a deaf world.” How might God use pain as an inroad to the gospel message? Have you observed that to be the case?
2. What is your take-away from today’s lesson? Express one principle that you will put into action this week.
3. What is God calling you to do in a broader sense to address the issue of pain? Write your reflections in the blanks below: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Weekly Scripture Memory

*But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. 2 Corinthians 12:9* (ESV)