

THE BIG IDEA CURRICULUM
Does God Cause Pain?
Sermon 18.7.09
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Small Group Study for Week of July 18-24

The Big Idea

Whether it is bad whether it is good; I have chosen to stick with God

Group Reads: Hebrews 12:6-12

Questions:

1. Why does God want to discipline us?
2. Discipline, even from God, can cause pain (physical, emotional etc.) Discuss the statement, “sometimes we can’t grow because we do not want the pain the growth requires?”
3. Discuss: If we attribute all pain to the devil, we can be giving him too much credit and limiting the possibility of the growth God may want us to achieve.
4. What else did you find helpful in these texts?

Group Reads Acts 16:16-40 and Romans 8:28

Observations: God wanted the jailer and his family to be saved. It could well be that the best way to reach the jailer would be to have someone in jail who could demonstrate what a life with Christ was all about.

5. Who do you think caused Paul and Silas to be in jail? God, Satan, does it matter?
6. Paul and Silas may not have known why they were in prison or who put them there. How does the way they behaved (prayer and singing to God) model for us appropriate behaviour? (If they were in jail because Satan wanted it, how was their response the best possible response? If they were in jail because God wanted it, how was their response the best possible response?)
7. Do you think you would have reacted to injustice done against you the same way Paul and Silas did? Why, why not?
What does that say about our ability to grow or be used by God?
8. Discuss: My pain may be for my growth or even so God’s will (eg saving a jailer) can be done in some other part of the global war between good and evil.

9. Discuss: We may not know until Christ comes why we experienced pain, or whether it was from God or Satan. Whether it is bad whether it is good; it is better to stick with God.

10. How then should I relate to trials and pain in my own life?