

# TAKEAWAY

## SEARCHLIGHT

### Frequently asked questions

#### WHY DOES GOD ALLOW SUFFERING?

Sunday 12th January 2020

#### INTRODUCTION

As we look at the different questions that people have about faith, Bekah explored one of the most frequently asked questions that can cause a real stumbling block to those with and without faith – the problem of pain and suffering.

#### DISCUSS

1. Bekah suggested at the start of her talk that not all pain is bad. What examples can you think of that where pain or suffering actually has a purpose?

2. CS Lewis said, “*We can ignore even pleasure. But pain insists upon being attended to. 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.*” The suggestion is that when our world is ticking along nicely, we often ignore God or fail to recognise our need for Him. Tough times sometimes help us to recognise that need, or wake us up to

something in us that we need to change. Are there stories in the Bible where you see this happen? When have you experienced this in your life?

3. We all experience and respond to pain differently. How do you respond to pain? How does it affect your relationship with God?

#### READ

Philippians 2:6-8

The Long Silence  
<http://www.ldolphin.org/silence.html>

#### DISCUSS

As you reflect on this verse and this poem, does that change how you feel about suffering in the world? What difference does it make to you that Jesus experienced so much pain himself?

5. John 11 tells the story of Lazarus’ death. He was Jesus’ friend and when Jesus encounters Lazarus’s sisters, the Bible tells us He wept. (v35). Even though he knew he would raise Lazarus from the dead, even though he knew this was a tiny thing in the scheme of things. How can this help us respond to our friends when they are grieving and lost? How can we show Jesus’ love to those experiencing suffering?

#### PRAY

Take some time to pray for each other’s struggles and pain.

