



# KNOWING GOD

## The Suffering of God - Reflection Guide

A God Who Suffers and Calls Us to Follow Him in the  
Midst of Suffering

### Understanding the God Who Suffers

Unlike distant or impassive gods of human imagination, the God revealed in Scripture is a God who enters into human suffering.

- In Jesus Christ, God experienced hunger, betrayal, grief, rejection, pain, and death.
- This means God is not indifferent to our pain. Instead, He knows it intimately and meets us within it.
- To follow Him is to embrace a life where suffering is not avoided, but redeemed.

### Read and Reflection on Key Texts:

- *Matthew 16:13–25* – Jesus reveals that He is the Messiah, yet declares He must suffer and be killed. He then calls His followers to deny themselves and take up their cross.
- *Luke 4:14–21* – Jesus proclaims good news to the poor, freedom for the oppressed, and healing for the broken—identifying with the hurting.

### Reflection Question:

What does it mean for you personally that the Messiah you follow chose the path of suffering rather than avoiding it?

### Following Christ in the Midst of Suffering

Jesus not only suffers for us, He calls us to follow Him *through* suffering. This doesn't glorify pain itself but points to God's purposes in it—shaping us, drawing us closer to Him, and using us as vessels of hope for others.

### Reflection Question:

Where in your life is Jesus calling you to carry your cross, trusting Him to bring life through pain or loss?

### Living This Out: How Does This Impact...

#### a) ...How I Pray? (*Acts 4:1–31*)

- Early believers prayed for boldness, not escape, in the face of suffering.
- Prayers shift from asking “Why me?” to asking “How can I glorify Christ in this?”

### Reflection Question:

How might your prayers change if you saw suffering as a place to experience God's presence and power more deeply?

#### b) ...How I Show Love to People? (*Matt 18:21–35; Phil 1:12–21*)

- Suffering softens our hearts toward others.
- Forgiveness, compassion, and encouragement often flow out of shared pain.

### Reflection Question:

Who in your life needs you to extend love or forgiveness born out of Christ's mercy toward you?

#### c) ...How I View My Own Suffering? (*Rom 5:3–4; Phil 3:10–11; 1 Peter*)

- Suffering produces endurance, character, and hope.
- It shapes us into the likeness of Christ, allowing us to share in His resurrection power.

### Reflection Question:

What current struggle might God be using to deepen your faith and shape your character?

#### d) ...How I Engage the Suffering of Others? (*1 Cor 12:26; Heb 10:32–36*)

- We are called to bear one another's burdens.
- Suffering is not endured alone—we belong to a body where “if one suffers, all suffer.”

### Reflection Question:

Where is God inviting you to step into another's suffering with compassion and presence?

### Application to Life Circumstances

- In prayer, seek boldness and intimacy with Christ, not just relief.
- In relationships, let suffering deepen your ability to forgive and love.
- In personal trials, embrace suffering as a place where Christ shapes and strengthens you.
- In community, walk alongside others, reflecting the God who entered our pain.

### Closing Reflection:

To serve a God who suffers is to know that pain is never wasted, love is never lost, and hope is never defeated. The cross is not the end—it is the path through which God brings resurrection life.