

Discussion Guide: "A Groaning God in a Suffering World"

Let us examine the Scriptures like the Bereans who "received the message with the great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true."

Acts 17:11 (NIV)

October 12, 2003; "A Groaning God in a Suffering World" –sermon by Rich Vincent as a continuation of "Symphony of Sighs" based on Romans 8:18-27 on 9/7/03

Based upon Romans 8:26; "...the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express", Rich showed us a suffering, groaning God. He began with "The Scream" by Edvard Munch.



"The Scream"
by Edvard Munch

*"I was walking along the road with two friends.
The sun was setting.
I felt a breath of melancholy -
Suddenly the sky turned blood-red.
I stopped, and leaned against the railing, deathly tired -
looking out across the flaming clouds that hung like blood and a sword
over the blue-black fjord and town.
My friends walked on - I stood there, trembling with fear.
And I sensed a great, infinite scream pass through nature."
--Edvard Munch, January 22, 1892*

Rich discussed the 2 problems of evil in this world:

A. The Presence of Evil

The argument goes like this...

- If God is Good, He would destroy evil
- If God is all Powerful, He could destroy evil
- Evil is not destroyed

Therefore there are 5 possibilities

- There is no God
- God is not good
- God is not omnipotent
- There really is no “evil”
- At the cross evil is real and manifested....God’s power is manifest.....God’s goodness is shown [“forgive them for they know not what they do.”]

B. The Possibility of Evil

Why would God create a world with full awareness of the future suffering?

- **parents do this when they decide to have children!!
- **Love is genuinely expressed by our choice—an authentic Divine-Human relationship can occur

The ANSWER!

****The Presence of a Sympathetic Sufferer—JESUS!**

Have someone read Hosea 11:7-9 and Genesis 6:5-6---God grieves!

Jesus suffered on the cross

- “God’s choice to create is a choice to suffer”
- ”God has made His joy and grief contingent upon His creation, because He wants it that way”
- “God’s suffering is more acute and intense than any other”

“THE TRIUMPH OF SUFFERING LOVE”

Discussion Questions

As you begin your discussion, pray that the Lord will enlighten us to the truths of his word as you read Romans 8:26 together.

1. Have flock group members list verses of Scripture that show that God/Jesus suffers/suffered
2. How does knowing of God’s suffering affect you when you suffer?
3. If someone you knew was very sick and wondered where God was in all this, what would you say?
4. What good can you say came out of your past trials?

Note: For a complete transcript of today’s sermon, go online to...

Part 1: <http://www.theocentric.com/theoarchives/000234.html> and

Part 2: <http://www.theocentric.com/theoarchives/000234.html>