



Gospel Community Study Questions

The Cross Shaped Life | The Garden

Key Passages: *Matthew 26:36-46*

Big Idea: *We can endure all suffering with Christ and his church*

Read

Read Matthew 26:36-46. If the narrative of passion week is unfamiliar, take some time to recap the events leading up to Jesus' suffering in the garden.

Discuss

On Sunday we looked at how the suffering of Jesus in the garden helps us understand our suffering. We learned first that suffering is not God punishing his children. How does what we know about the character of the Father, the redemptive story of the bible and what Jesus accomplished on the cross show us that our suffering is not punishment from God?

Why do we struggle to be vulnerable about our sorrow and weakness in suffering? How does the passage demonstrate what a godly response to suffering looks like?

The repeated prayer of Jesus in his suffering in v39, v42 and v44 shows us how suffering can be a school that teaches us. Read through some of the quotes below and discuss what they, and Jesus' prayers in the garden teach us about suffering:

"There are no lessons so useful as those learned in the school of suffering" J C Ryle

"Affliction is the best book in my library" Martin Luther

"Suffering is the badge of true discipleship" Dietrich Bonhoeffer

"God whispers in our pleasures, speaks in our conscience, but shouts in pain" C S Lewis

Jesus' experience in the garden helps us see how Christian suffering is not an individual struggle. Share how we see Jesus lean on God in his suffering also lean on his spiritual family in the passage. What implications does this have for us as a Gospel community as we engage with suffering in our lives and the lives of others around us?

Pray

Spend some time praying for those that we know that are suffering amongst our church family. Pray that the Spirit would also help us grow in our own vulnerability in our suffering.

Coming Up

Next week we're looking at the Trial of Jesus in Luke 22:66–23:25