

WEEK 4 | THERE IS AN ENEMY

DAILY WORK

In Rooted this week, we will examine one of the most common questions people have when considering faith in God: If this is God's world and He is good, powerful, and loving, why is there so much pain and suffering? People in the Bible, such as David, wrestled with the same questions. We can find comfort in suffering by receiving hope and comfort from God, recognizing that God often answers prayers in unexpected ways, and that our suffering can help us grow in Christ-like character.

WEEKLY OVERVIEW

Day 1: The Reality of Hardship and Suffering | Read pages 68-69

Day 2: The Spiritual Realm | Read pages 72-73

Day 3: Tempting, Isn't It | Read pages 75-76

Day 4: The Enemy Within | Read pages 79-80

Day 5: Strongholds | Read pages 82-83

MEMORY VERSE

"Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

– Philippians 4:6-7

EXTRA RESOURCES

- *Walking with God through Pain and Suffering*, Tim Keller
- *The Problem of Pain*, C.S. Lewis
- *Writing Your Own Lament*, by Jenna Perrine ([link?](#))

BEFORE YOU BEGIN...

Pause and ask God to show you what is most important for you to pay attention to in today's reading and reflection questions. Ask him to help you surrender any concern over getting it right and instead focus on what he wants you to learn about who He is and what He wants you to show you today.

DAY 1: THE REALITY OF HARDSHIP AND SUFFERING

Read pages 68-69 in your Rooted participant's guide, then prayerfully answer the following questions.

- Today's reading began with a list of questions. Which of them most resonate with you? What questions about suffering and faith would you add to the list?
- All of us have gone through times of despair or loneliness. In that time, what were your feelings about your situation and about God?
- What lessons from David's life can help you through these challenging times?

DAY 2: YOU ARE NOT ALONE

Read pages 72-73 in your Rooted participant's guide, then prayerfully answer the following questions.

- Describe a time when you felt hopeless and alone.
- Which of the verses from today's reading is most encouraging to you and why? Consider writing it down and putting it someplace you can see it each day.
- Pray and thank God for His unfailing love. If you are in a challenging spot right now, boldly ask for His sustaining hope.

DAY 3: DOUBLE-FISTED FAITH

Read pages 75-76 in your Rooted participant's guide, then prayerfully answer the following questions.

- How do you respond to the idea of “double-fisted faith”? Is it a concept you struggle to accept, or do you embrace it?
- When have you had to clench your fists and cling tightly onto God's promises, not knowing the outcome of a situation?
- Pray that God would strengthen your faith in questioning times, knowing that He has you in the palm of His hand.

DAY 4: THE ENEMY WITHIN

Read pages 79-80 in your Rooted participant's guide, then prayerfully answer the following questions.

- We often think of "surrender" as "giving up." But today's reading defines it as trusting that what the Father has for you comes from a place of perfect love. How does this definition change how you think about surrender?
- To what degree (if any) have you surrendered your life to God? Are there areas you have surrendered but others you are holding on to?
- Take a moment to think about an area you have not surrendered. How would your ability to surrender in that area change if you trusted that what the Father has for you in that part of your life comes from a place of perfect love? Pray, asking for the courage to surrender to what God has for you.

DAY 5: CHARACTER LIKE CHRIST

Read pages 82-83 in your participant's guide, then prayerfully answer the following questions.

- What challenges are you facing now that are helping you transform your character to be more like Christ's?
- Where do you see God's hand at work in these circumstances?
- Thank God for the opportunities He gives you to become more like Christ. Ask Him to show you His plan as you move through difficult times.

FINAL REFLECTIONS

As you prepare for the conversation in your group, take a few moments to look over the readings and your responses from the past five days.

- What did God teach you this week? What questions do you have?
- What is one way God is inviting you to grow or change from this week's material?
- In light of this time of reflection, what are you asking God for?