

INTRO

- What's one thing in your life that has changed this week?
- Name one thing you are grateful for.

READ

Mark 15:25, 33-34
Isaiah 53:3-5

"My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

"Upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed."

REFLECT & RESPOND

"I wish it need not have happened in my time," said Frodo.

"So do I," said Gandalf, "and so do all who live to see such times. But that is not for them to decide. All we have to decide is what to do with the time that is given us."

— J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Ring*

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"Suffering gives you the chance to reorder your priorities." Tim Keller

1. Curiosity

"Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert."

— Isaiah 43:19

Qu: Questions are the natural response when faced with circumstances so unfamiliar and out of our control. What question would you like to ask God at this moment?

2. Closeness

"My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me, from the words of my groaning? O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer, and by night, but I find no rest." — Psalm 22:1-2

Jesus was truly abandoned by God in His darkest hour, at the moment of His greatest suffering. He understands. And he is with us.

Qu: With so much uncertainty, what do you feel is your greatest need? How can you draw near to God with confidence? How can you encourage others to draw near to God?

3. Creativity

"So let's do it—full of belief, confident that we're presentable inside and out. Let's keep a firm grip on the promises that keep us going. He always keeps his word. Let's see how **inventive** we can be in **encouraging** love and **helping** out." Hebrews 10:22-24 (MSG)

Qu: Let's be inventive. What's one thing you can do this week to "encourage" and "help"?

4. Confidence

During the days of Habakkuk, the nation of Israel was facing years of captivity and hardship. The prophet cried out, "O Lord, how long?"

This was God's response:

"Look among the nations, and see; wonder and be astounded. For I am doing a work in your days that you would not believe if told."

— Habakkuk 1:5

Qu: Use your imagination. What might God be doing in our days?

PRAY

- Pray prayers of gratitude. Reflect on the goodness and provision of God, and this unique opportunity in history.
- Pray for any specific needs in our group.
- Pray that God would move in an unprecedented way in our city and nation.