



# Why Suffering?

## A Response to the Tragedy in Haiti

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Selected Scriptures  
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### Core Truth

Though we can't thoroughly explain the suffering in this world, it should lead us to the point where we recognize that God is in control and desires to provide comfort and care through His people and His church.

### *Getting Started*

1. As you have seen the news, read the paper, and heard the stories of the tragic earthquake in Haiti this week, how have you personally reacted? How have those around you reacted?
2. If churches and the people who serve believers in your communities collapsed around you, how would your life and the life of your community be different?

### *Going Deeper*

In his message this weekend, Ron focused on the kind of suffering that happens as a result of "an act of God" beyond our control, in which no one is exempt. It usually includes death, disease, and disaster. He posed the important question, "Why suffering?" and sought to answer it with five reasons rooted in Scripture. The biblical answers to the question are in ***bold italic print*** right above the questions in this section.

#### ***The world is tainted by sin.***

3. "Sin has permeated everything and is ruining everything". Trace the impact of sin in our world by looking at Genesis 3 and Romans 8:21. Genesis 3:15-17 talks about the consequences of sin – how has the tainting of sin in our produced suffering?

#### ***The end is closer than we think.***

4. In the last decade, there have been 138 earthquakes on planet earth. The earth is spinning out of control. Read Matthew 24:7 and Revelation 6:12-17 and reflect together on the truth of Scripture that appears to convince us that the end is coming and the clock is ticking, bring us into the final quarter.

#### ***It helps us identify our need for God.***

5. Many cry out that they do not want suffering because they think they can figure out all the need to know on their own. What does God want to accomplish through all of the pain and suffering? The book of Revelation gives evidence of a couple different responses. Look at Revelation 9:20-21; 16:9-11; and 11:13. Compare and contrast the responses and their implications for individuals and the church.

#### ***It forces us to deal with our own mortality.***

6. God wants our attention and He wants more of it than we are giving to Him. Examine Psalm 90:10 and James 4:14. In light of the truth found in these passages, what must be our focus and responsibility in the midst of suffering?

*It's our opportunity to glorify God.*

7. The Gospel makes a difference in the lives of individuals and even in the life of a country like Haiti. A challenge is offered to us in Titus 3:14 and in Galatians 6:10. What can we do to glorify God in the midst of the suffering that is going on? How does the Scripture encourage us to action?

***Applying the Truth***

8. In the midst of your questions about the tragedy in Haiti this week, how has this message encouraged you and offered new insights to you?
9. How do you plan to leverage the pain you have seen and felt this week and reveal the love of Christ to others around you?
10. Find a map and locate exactly where Haiti is in the world and then spend some time praying with others for this country and her people by using the following prayer points:
  - President Rene Preval and the government officials as they seek to “put their country back together”
  - The families of those who have died or are still missing – that God will grant comfort and grace during these days of shock and grief
  - The agencies and workers that are seeking to provide humanitarian aid, food, medical supplies, and general assistance in the wake of the earthquake
  - Those who were in abject poverty prior to the earthquake and those who have lost literally everything
  - Food, water, medical supplies, temporary shelter and housing for thousands who have been rendered “homeless”
  - More than 500 permanent missionaries and 80+ agencies that have lived and served in Haiti by proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ on a regular basis
  - Freedom from the bondage of the powerful spirits that underly the voodooism that has been such a part of Haiti's ‘cultural heritage’ for years and years
  - The penetration of the Gospel through the ministry of the evangelical churches in the country which make up about 30% of the population
  - Christian broadcasting to continue to be an effective tool in the country
  - An ability to rebuild the country and positively impact the morale of the Hatians
  - For the glory of the Lord to be revealed in powerful ways

***Memorize***

*So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.*  
*Galatians 6:10 (ESV)*

**FAMILY QUESTION GUIDE: ASK YOUR KIDS**

*Did you know that your kids are also discussing the tragedy in Haiti? If you have a student in 4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> grade, we're providing you with additional questions to ask them this week.*

4<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> graders:

1. Do you know about the tragedy in Haiti? (View pictures online with your child this week.)
2. How does this tragedy affect you and your family?
3. List some things that you can do to help the children in Haiti. What can we do above giving to the church this week?
4. Make plans now for how you will respond when tragedy or trials enter your life.