

The God of All Comfort -- 2 Corinthians 1:3-11
Restoration Fellowship

1. Share about a time when you experienced affliction or suffering. What happened, and how did it affect your relationship with God? How did it shape your sense of identity or how you understood yourself? Looking back, how did you move through that season? If you are still in it, what questions or struggles are still on your mind and heart?
2. Have you ever experienced a way that God brought you comfort? Explain the way comfort came to you. As a group create a list of ways, based on Scripture and informed by your experience, how God brought you comfort in a time of trouble.
3. Consider the different ways worldviews explain suffering. What stands out to you in that comparison? What feels helpful or unhelpful in it? When talking with someone who is suffering, what part of that conversation comes most naturally to you, and what part feels most difficult?

Worldview	Basic view of suffering	Typical response	Christian contrast
Buddhism	Suffering is ultimately tied to illusion, attachment, and desire	Let go, detach	Evil and suffering are real, not imaginary
Hinduism	Suffering is tied to karma; you receive the results of what you have done	Improve yourself, do better	Some suffering is innocent and undeserved; the innocent suffer too much, the wicked too little
Islam	Suffering is the will of God and should be accepted	Submit, accept your fate	Scripture teaches that lament is a faithful response; God grieves and cares about our suffering
Secularism	Suffering has no ultimate meaning or purpose	Endure it and try to make life better for others in the future	Scripture teaches that God can bring meaning and redemption through suffering
Christianity	Suffering is real, often undeserved, and can be used by God with purpose	Lament, trust God, receive comfort, comfort others	Suffering does not mean God is absent; he meets us in it. The cross is the theological key to all suffering.

4. How might your experiences of affliction or suffering be shaping your calling? Can you imagine ways God may use your pain to help you comfort, serve, or understand others? And as a church, how might Restoration Fellowship be formed by its wounds in a way that equips it to care for people who are suffering?