

Small Group Questions

Power Over - Week 2 - SICKNESS

SCRIPTURE PASSAGES

Matthew 9:2–8 (NIV84) 2 Some men brought to him a paralytic, lying on a mat. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, “Take heart, son; your sins are forgiven.” 3 At this, some of the teachers of the law said to themselves, “This fellow is blaspheming!” ... 5 Which is easier: to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Get up and walk’? 6 But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins....” Then he said to the paralytic, “Get up, take your mat and go home.” 7 And the man got up and went home. 8 When the crowd saw this, they were filled with awe; and they praised God, who had given such authority to men.

John 3:14–15 (NIV84) 14 Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, 15 that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life.

Numbers 21:4–9 (NIV84) . . . But the people grew impatient on the way; 5 they spoke against God and against Moses, and said, “Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the desert? There is no bread! There is no water! And we detest this miserable food!”

6 Then the Lord sent venomous snakes among them; they bit the people and many Israelites died. 7 The people came to Moses and said, “We sinned when we spoke against the Lord and against you. Pray that the Lord will take the snakes away from us.” So Moses prayed for the people.

8 The Lord said to Moses, “Make a snake and put it up on a pole; anyone who is bitten can look at it and live.” 9 So Moses made a bronze snake and put it up on a pole. Then when anyone was bitten by a snake and looked at the bronze snake, he lived.

Warm Up

This series is all about God’s power. Just for fun, what is one miracle you’d love to see God perform in your lifetime?

DISCUSSION

1) Toward the beginning of his message, Pastor made this statement: People expected Jesus to use his power to rid them of their circumstances and he didn’t.

What might be some of the dangers of this perspective? Have you ever seen this unmet expectation in the life of someone you know? If so what did it look like?

2) How do you reconcile the goodness of God with times when God does not use his power to change our circumstances?

3) Read Matthew 9:2–8.

What causes the crowd to praise God? Which miracle in this passage is the most impressive and why? What reason does Jesus give for the healing here and what does that teach us about healing in our circumstances?

4) Excerpt from Pastor Tom's Message:

Our biggest problem is not the presence of pain in the world, it is the presence of sin in us.

What are some of your reactions to this quote? What are some ways you have seen the truth of this in your own life or the lives of others around you?

5) Read Numbers 21:4-9.

What is happening in these verses? How do the people experience healing? What do the people pray for? What response do they get to their prayers? What might we learn from this?

6) Read Numbers 21:4-9 and John 3:14-15.

Pastor Tom explained how in these verses the people had to look at the embodiment of their suffering to be healed.

Based on this explanation and what you see in these verses, what might Jesus have meant in John 3:14-15? How is Jesus' death and resurrection similar to the story of Moses and his people looking at the snake?

7) Toward the end of the message, Pastor Tom made this statement: "The source of our suffering is our lack of trust in God."

How might our trust in God reduce suffering and our lack of trust in God create more suffering? What are some examples of this that you have seen?

8) In this message, Pastor Tom deals with the problem of suffering.

What are some ways you have tried to make sense of the problem of suffering in your life?

What one or two insights from today's message that you found encouraging or challenging as you think about the problem of pain and suffering?

Next Steps:

"He has chosen not to heal me, but to hold me. The more intense the pain, the closer his embrace."

Joni Eareckson Tada

What kind of healing are you hoping for?

What are some things you hope Jesus does for you? What might it look like for you to trust God to use His power however He wants to in your circumstances?