

**Crosswalk Communities Discussion Guides**  
**March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2024**

**Icebreaker Questions (Pick at the least one question, but use as many as your group feels comfortable)**

1. What is your favorite candy bar?

**Bible Study Questions**

1. Have you ever had an experience in which you felt as if God was indifferent to your problems? How did you work through that?
2. Read 1 John 4:9-10, Luke 12:6-7, and Romans 8:28-30: What do these verses teach us about how God views us.
3. One of the problems is that God's vision for our future is often different than our own vision. If you were to fully design what your life would be like ten years from now, how would you design it?
4. There are many prominent pastors who talk about God wanting to grant us wealth and occupational success. What is correct and what is dangerous about that view?
5. Read Romans 6:5-7 and Galatians 2:20
  - Pastor Michael quoted a friend who said, "God loves you, and he wants to kill you." What role does death to self have in God's plan for our lives?
  - How does pain come into play with God's plan?
  - How does the idea of pain and death differ from what we often regard as the "best" future?
6. Read James 1:2-4. How is suffering a part of God's design?
7. Think about your future. Where have you decided your future and where have you been seeking God to direct your future?

8. Is there something that God has been leading you to do that you have been holding back on out of fear of discomfort?

March 17<sup>th</sup>

## He Wants What Is Best For Me Knows What That Is

Steve Jobs (founder of Apple), grew up in the church. He ended up embracing atheism because no one would answer his question about why God would allow suffering to exist in the world. In the face of suffering, we often wonder about who God is. Is he indifferent or uncaring to our needs? Is he unable to come to our rescue? The truth is that God does want our best and knows what is best for us. While there are many reasons for pain, pain is one of God's tools to help bring about our best.

### I. Reality of God

- **God wants what is best for you:** This theme runs throughout Scripture. The Old Testament reveals the God who lavishly pours out kindness on undeserving people. The ultimate example through God's gift of Jesus so that we may find life (1 John 4:9-10). Like a good father, God desires that his children flourish.
- **God knows what is best for you:** God not only wants our best but knows what is best. He knows all things and knows us even better than we know ourselves. (Luke 12:6-7)

II. **The problem: Our vision often differs from God's:** While we either know or hope that God knows what is best, we are often surprised when we discover God's plan. Our vision of

"best" often involves success and prosperity. God often takes his people down a different path

- **God cares more about growth than our comfort:** God desires to transform us, killing life in the flesh and replacing it with life through his spirit. (Romans 6:6-7, James 1:2-4))
- **God cares more about our purpose than our success:** God cares less in us achieving our life goals than for us to be partners with him in his grand mission of redemption.
- **Growth and purpose rarely come without cost:** Pain is the tool that God most often uses in developing us. He told his disciples to pick up their crosses, the ultimate form of torture and death, and to follow him (Matthew 10:38).

### III. Action steps

- **Seek God's best for your life:** If we really trust God, then we should be looking for his "best". For some it is a season of prosperity and for others it may be a difficult season of growth. God's best may take us into uncomfortable ministry situations where we get to work alongside of God in his work.
- **Embrace God's lead:** The final step is to follow wherever God leads.