

AMPLIFY

GROWING A
FAITH THAT LASTS

AMPLIFY: SUFFERING
LESSON 1: IT'S ON US

What we want students to learn: That while God is in control of all things, suffering is a result of our rebellion against Him.

What we want students to do with what they've learned: To flesh out what clinging to God in the midst of suffering looks like in their own lives.

Scripture Focus: Genesis 3:14-19; Job 1:9-12; Deuteronomy 32:4; Psalm 34:8; Job 1:20-21; Job 19:25

Overview: How can a loving God allow so much suffering? It's a question that people have wrestled with for a long, long time. It's one that almost all of us have or will ask at some point in life. And as Christ-followers, it's a question we're going to be asked as people we know and love, maybe even our students, struggle with it themselves. Let's face it: it's a tough question. But it's one that we don't need to be scared of or shy away from. For the purposes of these lessons, we'll define suffering as the pain, turmoil, and darkness that exist in our world because of our sin and rebellion against God. In Lesson 1 we'll take a look at how suffering entered the world and also examine God's role in suffering. In Lesson 24 we'll see how Jesus stepped into our suffering to ultimately free us from it. Finally, in Lesson 25 we'll look at how God uses suffering in this life for His glory and our good.

TEACHER PREP VIDEO

Each **Amplify** lesson comes with a Teacher Prep Video. These are short videos designed to help you grasp the main point of the lesson as you prepare to teach.

To access your **Suffering** lesson 1 Teacher Prep Video, login to your Lesson Manager, navigate to lesson 1 and click on the "Background" tab. You'll notice the Teacher Prep Video near the top of the Lesson Manager window.

BIBLE BACKGROUND

The **Bible Background** is designed to help you provide some context for the Scripture you'll be studying. The Details gives you background info for each book, The Setting informs you what's happening in and around the passage, and The Main Point gives you an overview of how the passage will be used in the lesson.

- **What do we mean by "context"?** In every **YM360** Bible study lesson, you'll notice we make a point to encourage you to provide the context for the passages you study. By "context" we mean at the very least helping students know **who** wrote the book, **when** it was written, and **why** it was written.
- **What's the big deal?** When we teach the Bible without giving context, students don't get a "big picture" understanding of the story of the Bible. But this view is vital to grasping the story of God's plan of redemption for humankind. As you teach, use the **Bible Background** to help summarize the context.

THE DETAILS

Genesis

- **Author:** While there's no specific author named within the text, Moses is the accepted author for Genesis,

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with some editing and additions done after his death (such as the account of his death!).

- **Timeframe:** It's difficult to establish with any certainty a date for the completion of the Pentateuch (a name for the first five books of the Bible—including Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy—of which Genesis is a part.) Most of the material originated from Moses himself and depending on the date of the Exodus (which is also not known for sure) that would make the date for the writing of Genesis sometime in the 1400s or the 1200s BC.
- **Purpose:** Genesis details the earliest history of our world, including creation and Adam and Eves' fall. It also focuses on the emergence of Israel, not only as God's people, but as the group, God would work through to bring redemption to the world.

Job

- **Author:** There are many traditions about who wrote the book of Job, as the text does not identify its author. It was possibly Job, Elihu, or someone who lived in Job's era.
- **Timeframe:** This book was likely written before the era of Moses, as evidenced from references to a unique type of money (Job 42:11) and the city of Teman (Job 2:11). The timeline is likely from the second millennium of history, during the era of the Patriarchs.
- **Purpose:** Job is a book of wisdom literature that underscores how humanity is unable to see life as God does, especially when facing the nature of suffering. It likewise demonstrates the tension between God and Satan.

Deuteronomy

- **Author:** While there's no specific author named within the text, Moses is the accepted author for Deuteronomy, with some editing and additions done after his death (such as the account of his death!).
- **Timeframe:** The dating of the Deuteronomy is a point of debate. The issue is that no one knows for sure when the Exodus occurred, whether it was in the mid-1400s BC or a later date around the mid-1200s BC. The writing would have occurred around those general dates.
- **Purpose:** *Deuteronomy* means "second law." It was a reminder of the law of God for the second generation of Israelites in the desert before they entered the Promised Land. It reminded the people that the Lord is God. He is faithful to keep his promises to His people.

Psalms

- **Author:** God inspired various authors to write a majority of the Psalms in their era, including seventy-three by David, twelve by Asaph, eleven by the Korahites and two by Solomon. Heman, Ethan, and Moses each wrote one, while the authorship of fifty other Psalms remains unknown.
- **Timeframe:** The Psalms were written during different eras of Israel's history, spanning from 1100 BC (i.e., Psalm 29, 68) to 400 BC (i.e., Psalm 119).
- **Purpose:** The Psalms are inspired by God to poetically reflect humanity's journey with Him. Each psalm serves a different purpose, such as a personal or communal lament, hymn, song, reflection or declaration. Many of these were set to music and intended to be shared publicly, even when sharing a revealing confession (i.e., Psalm 51).

THE MAIN POINT

All of the passages used in this lesson are to lead learners to see a couple of things. First, suffering exists in all elements of our world: the physical, spiritual, and natural. All suffering is the result of sin and rebellion of humans. While not every form of suffering is the direct result of sin, the presence of sin is the ultimate reason. We also see God's

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sovereignty and control in the midst of suffering. His faithfulness and presence never waiver in the lives of His children. He is a refuge and strength in time of suffering. As Job says, our Redeemer lives and His name is to be praised!

LESSON PLAN

The **Lesson Plan** contains three elements: An introductory activity called **The Lead In**; the Bible study section called **The Main Event**; an application-focused segment called **The Last Word**.

THE LEAD IN

- **Goal:** Given a scenario of a “cause” students will determine the effect of the action.
- **Set-Up:** None

FIRST, inform students that they all understand the concept of “cause and effect.” This first activity will put this understanding to use! Inform students that you will read a narrative to them. After you read the narrative, their challenge is to determine the possible outcomes for every situation. Feel free to use the stories below or some of your own, especially if you can incorporate some of your students into a story.

- **Eric has a busy day ahead of him tomorrow. He knows to get everything done he must wake up early and get started. As he prepares for bed, he forgets to set his alarm clock to go off the next morning. What could happen?**
- **Ashley is washing her clothes. As she separates them into piles, she forgets to check her pockets. When she pulls them out of the dryer, she realizes her iPod was left in a pocket. What could have happened?**
- **Crystal saw a puppy at the mall she couldn't say no to, even though her parents had repeatedly shut down her puppy dog dreams. Not only does she buy the puppy on her dad's credit card, but she also sneaks him home in a backpack. Crystal leaves for cheerleading camp tomorrow with no real plan for what to do with Foo-Foo, her new French poodle. What could happen?**
- **Alex is out driving his mom's car one day. His favorite song comes on Pandora and does his best Harry Styles impersonation, singing at the top of his lungs. His awesome singing distracts him, and he doesn't see his neighbor backing out of the driveway until he slams into her car, sending her back bumper sliding across the street. What could happen to Alex?**

THEN, after students have had some time to discuss possible outcomes, continue the discussion with the following questions.

- **What is one of the worst consequences you've experienced for something you did? What did you do and what happened as a result?**
 - Answers will vary
- **What are some things we can learn from the consequences of our behaviors?**
 - Answers will vary

FINALLY, transition to “The Main Event” by saying something like:

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- While not all behaviors and consequences are bad, every action leads to some type of outcome. In fact, sometimes the things we experience aren't even the result of our behaviors; they are the result of someone else's. Today we are going to begin a study on suffering by taking a look at how suffering even came to be. There is a reason, a cause, for which suffering is the effect. Let's take a closer look.

Transition into *The Main Event* portion of your lesson.

THE MAIN EVENT

- **Goal:** The point of this lesson is for students to learn that while God is in control of all things, suffering is a result of our rebellion against Him.
- **Set Up:** None

FIRST, explain to students that the greatest of all cause and effect scenarios occurred thousands and thousands of years ago. It's one most are familiar with, even outside the church. As students are turning to Genesis 3 in their Bibles, takes a few moments to review, bullet point style, what occurred in Genesis 1 and 2. Before you spend too much time talking about the "cause" (the fall), read or have a student read Genesis 3:14-19. Say something like:

- **Here we see the effect of something that has happened. God has thrown some pretty harsh words to His creation here on earth. What has happened to cause this?**
 - Answer: Adam and Eve disobeyed the command God gave them. (NOTE: Make sure students understand the ultimate sin was rebellion against God. This is very serious....more serious than just eating a piece of fruit, as some may see it.)

Say something like:

• **God takes disobedience VERY seriously. In this one moment, everything in the world changed. The peace and harmony, the absence of shame and insecurity, the freedom, and the fellowship found in the Garden of Eden were gone, never to be experienced again. Now, our world contains war and hatred, pain and sickness, strife, and death. While sin entered the world through Adam, suffering exists in this world because we've all rebelled against God and live in a fallen world.**

Then lead students in a brief discussion. Ask:

- **According to Genesis 3, what were the results of this sin for Adam?**
 - Answer: The ground would be cursed and difficult to work, he would have to work hard to gain food from it; hard labor and work would become a way of life.
- **What were the consequences for Eve?**
 - Answer: Pain in childbirth; a desire to rule over rather than follow her husband.
- **God also handed down some consequences to Satan, the serpent. Why?**
 - Answer: He tempted and deceived Eve, because of his evil actions, Adam and Eve were led astray (though they are still responsible for their actions).

NEXT, lead to the next point of discussion by explaining that the way God intended the world to be was completely disrupted by sin. His created order was completely thrown off. With the entrance of sin in the world, suffering came with it. Then, ask:

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- **Knowing this, can we place all the blame on Adam and Eve for the suffering in the world?**
 - Answer: No, while they introduced sin to the world, it has continued and will continue as long as this fallen world exists.
- **As we consider this idea of cause and effect, can we accurately say that every form of suffering is the direct consequence of an individual's sins?**
 - Answer: If discussion ensues, allow students to talk this through. Ultimately, you want them to conclude that the answer is no; not every specific incident of suffering, for example, a disease of some sort is a direct result of an individual's sin. However, all suffering exists because of sin's entrance and presence in our world.

THEN, transition to the next point by explaining that often when people face suffering, the first question we ask is "Why?" We wonder why bad things happen to good people. We question the suffering associated with natural disasters such as hurricanes, tornados, and tsunamis. We get angry following disasters like 9/11 and the Boston Marathon bombing as we see innocent people suffer because of the deliberate sins of a few. Explain to students that the reality is suffering rarely makes sense at the moment. Remind them that we may never know the answers to our whys.

NEXT, have students find Job 1 in their Bibles. As they do this, use the Bible Background information to give some context. Once they have all found it, read or have a student read Job 1:9-12. Then lead students in a brief discussion. Ask:

- **Based on this passage, how would you describe Job? What do you know about him?**
 - Answer: He feared God, God protected him and his family, he was blessed with land and livestock
- **Job was a good guy. Satan recognized this. He blamed Job's reverence for God on the good life Job apparently experienced. How did Satan plan to prove his point?**
 - Answer: He believed if Job lost everything he had he would turn from God.
- **What was God's answer to Satan?**
 - Answer: He allowed Satan to do what he wanted without harming Job's body or taking his life.
- **Based on this passage, what are some things you learn about God in regards to suffering?**
 - Answer: Answers may vary, but, again, allow them to discuss their thoughts

THEN, before responding to their answers, have students keep their place in Job but turn to Deuteronomy 32:4. Once they have found it, have them read it silently to themselves and allow a brief moment for them to think about it. Then read or have a student read it aloud. Say something like:

- **There is so much about suffering we don't understand. There is so much that doesn't make sense. If everyone were honest, you probably would not find anyone who truly finds joy in suffering. We don't always know why things happen that cause us to suffer and we may not know how it will be used in God's plan for our lives, but there is something we can be sure of. God allows, uses, and even ordains suffering. But He never sins or does evil.**

Continue the discussion by having them go back to the Job passage. Ask the following questions:

- **Who was ultimately in control of this situation and the suffering Job was being set to experience?**
 - Answer: God was. Satan had to receive permission from God before he could touch Job. God also set the parameters and Satan had to obey. GOD WAS IN CONTROL!
- **From all of this, what do we learn about God?**



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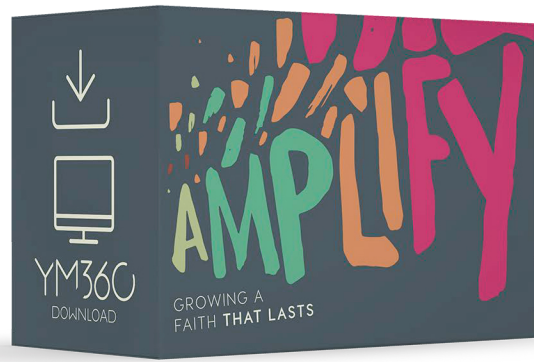
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We hope you have enjoyed this sample of this **Amplify: Growing a Faith That Lasts** study. Each **Amplify** lesson has a Leader Guide in PDF and DOC format that you can adjust to fit the needs of your group.

Do you have questions about this study? We're here to help! Contact our world-class Customer Care team at (888) 969-6360, email us at customercare@ym360.com, or Live Chat us through our website.



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HUMILITY
KNOWING GOD
PRAYER
STEWARDSHIP
THE UNCHANGING GOD



This study is one of the 3-lesson studies in the Amplify curriculum.

Amplify is a 52-lesson youth ministry Bible study curriculum that will help your students lay the foundation of a lasting relationship with God through a study of the core concepts of their faith.

Included in each Amplify 3-lesson study:

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