



Growth Group Reflection Questions—July 4-July 10

1. Pick a color that describes your past week, and then share it in your growth group.
2. Let's read our sermon passage out loud, Colossians 1:24-29. Then invite a volunteer to pray for insight into this complex but compelling passage.
3. Think back to when you first met Jesus Christ. What did you expect when it came to pain and difficulty? *Less* pain and difficulty because of union with Christ? *More* pain and difficulty? Something else? Discuss.
4. Read Romans 5:4 and consider the Apostle Paul's teaching on how believers should react to difficulties, both big and small.

First follow up: What awesome chain reaction occurs when believers respond to suffering in the right way?

Second follow up: Have you ever experienced the kind of victory (or even partial victory) that Paul is talking about in this verse? Consider sharing the experience in your growth group.

5. The great Christian journalist Malcolm Muggeridge once said: *"Contrary to what might be expected, I look back on experiences that at the time seemed especially desolating and painful with particular satisfaction. Indeed, I can say with complete truthfulness that everything I have learned in my 75 years in this world, everything that has truly enhanced and enlightened my experience, has been through affliction and not through happiness."* How do you respond to this amazing statement?

6. Pray for believers who are experiencing pain and suffering. Here's a guide.
 - Lift up those who are suffering for Jesus in oppressive countries.
 - Lift up those who are suffering because of persistent temptation.
 - Lift up those who are suffering because of emotional problems.
 - Lift up those who are suffering because of financial stress.

Ask God to help them become like the Apostle Paul, who served others and shared the gospel even in middle of pain and problems.

Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I do my share on behalf of His body, which is the church, in filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions. Of this church I was made a minister according to the stewardship from God bestowed on me for your benefit, so that I might fully carry out the preaching of the word of God, that is, the mystery which has been hidden from the past ages and generations, but has now been manifested to His saints, to whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. We proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man complete in Christ. For this purpose also I labor, striving according to His power, which mightily works within me.

Colossians 1:24 - 29

1. **Rejoice** _____ **in your sufferings.**

Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake . . .

Colossians 1:24

2. **Do your part** _____ **even though you're suffering.**

. . . and in my flesh I do my share on behalf of His body, which is the church, in filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions.

Colossians 1:24

3. **Share** _____ **the Good News as you suffer.**

Of this church I was made a minister according to the stewardship from God bestowed on me for your benefit, so that I might fully carry out the preaching of the word of God, that is the mystery which has been hidden from the past ages and generations, but has now been manifested to His saints, to whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

Colossians 1:25 - 27

We proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man complete in Christ.

Colossians 1:28

"The Mission of SCBC is to introduce people to the love of Jesus and grow them into fully devoted followers of Him."

4. **Work hard** _____ **even though you suffer.**

For this purpose also I labor, striving according to His power, which mightily works within me.

Colossians 1:29

Labor = To work hard to the point of exhaustion or collapse.

Striving = To give your best effort in the midst of pain.

"Whoever wishes to save his life shall lose it; and whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's shall save it."

Mark 8:35

And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

Romans 8:28