

# The Easter Experience 2026

Session 4 – March 11, 2026

My Pain Has a Plan

When you were little, what did you dream of being or doing when you grew up?

## **DISCUSSION:**

1. How has your life been different from what you expected?
2. What do people usually expect in life? What don't they expect? What leads people to expect life to be fairly smooth and easy?
3. Do you see any difference in what believers in Jesus expect in life and what nonbelievers expect?
4. The most common reason people turn their backs on God is because He doesn't do something they expect He should, such as heal their best friend or stop the bus accident that killed their daughter. What can we expect from God?
5. If God will let His own Son not only die but also suffer horrifically, what does that imply about our lives?
6. Read each of the scriptures below. Have you ever seen these verses on a plaque or greeting card, or have you ever personally tried to memorize them?
  - a. "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened" (Matthew 7:7-8)

b. “But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.” (Matthew 6:33)

c. “I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full” (John 10:10)

7. Why don’t we put verses like these bottom three on plaques? Would it be good for us to do so?

a. “Dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed” (1 Peter 4:12-13)

b. “Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory” (Romans 8:17)

c. For it has been granted to you on behalf of Christ not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for him” (Philippians 1:29)

## **FOR REFLECTION:**

Read these three New Testament passages every day this week. Circle, underline, or write in the margins whatever words, phrases, or thoughts stand out to you.

1 Peter 4:12-13

Romans 8:17

Philippians 1:29