

Romans 8:28-29: These Pieces Have Purpose
Discussion Guide - 08/13/2023

1. Growing up or currently, is there a type of puzzle or mystery you enjoy? (a mystery novel, puzzle game, escape room, thriller movie, etc). What do you like about it?
2. As a group, take some time to practice "Lectio Divina", Latin for "Divine Reading". Lectio Divina is a spiritual practice of meditating on the Scriptures, by taking a few passes to slowly read it. Follow these steps with Romans 8:28-29.
 - First, begin with a minute of silence to recognize and accept God's love and presence.
 - For the first reading, as you hear the text, listen for words or phrases that jump out to you. At the end, take 30 seconds to consider what you heard.
 - For the second reading, listen again, considering what stuck out during the first reading. How might God be speaking to you through what is being highlighted as you read.
 - After the 2nd reading is done, take some time to share in your group the words and phrases that stuck out.
 - In the final reading, simply rest and be still as you hear the passage. Once again, recognize and thank God for his words and love for you.
3. In Romans 8:28-29, what does it mean that "God causes all things to work together for the good of those who are called"? How does that make sense with the realities of suffering and pain in our lives?
4. In your own life, have you ever felt that an experience of suffering, hardship and difficulty had a greater purpose or meaning? Take some time to share about it.
5. Understanding God's purposes for our lives is less about individuals and much more about a community, as Romans 8 was addressed to a people, not a person. What role does community play when individuals are experiencing suffering?
6. In your life now, is there an experience of suffering or confusion that you feel like you can't make sense of? Take some time to share with a partner and afterwards pray for each other.