

Suffering Is Never for Nothing

by Elisabeth Elliot

Chapter 1: The Terrible Truth

Discussion Questions

1. Were you already familiar with Elisabeth Elliot before this book club? If so, when were you first introduced to her, and what impact has she had on you?
2. In the opening paragraph, Elisabeth wrote, “I prayed silently, Lord, let not the waters overflow. And He heard me and He answered me” (p. 1). Have you ever spoken a prayer of desperation like this? How did God answer?
3. “The deepest things that I have learned in my own life have come from the deepest suffering” (p. 9). What lessons has God taught you through suffering?
4. Who makes you feel like you’re “in kindergarten” in the school of suffering (p. 2)? What do you admire about how they respond (or responded) to their circumstances?
5. Elisabeth told us a “terrible truth” in this chapter: the fact “that suffering is not for nothing” and has “an eternal and perfectly loving purpose behind it . . . [is] not obvious” (p. 7). What is your reaction to this idea—that God’s providence is often hidden behind our suffering? How have you seen this in your own life?
6. What truths (“terrible” or otherwise) from Scripture help you to stand fast and find hope when suffering hits?