



## Part 1 // Jeff Brodie // August 16, 2026

This week, we explore the difficult but deeply hopeful promise that God can use problems and trials to produce endurance, character, and hope in our lives. When suffering makes us question God's goodness or wonder if he is still with us, the apostle Paul points us back to what God has already done. The cross reminds us that we are deeply loved, the resurrection reminds us that suffering will not have the final word, and the Holy Spirit reminds us that we are not alone. When we can't understand what God is doing, we can trust what he has already done.

**Scripture:** [Romans 5:1-8 NLT](#)

**Bottom Line:** God can still be doing good when life doesn't feel good.

### Digging In:

1. What's one comfort in your everyday life that you've become ridiculously dependent on? Heated seats? Food delivery? Air conditioning? Your phone? Other?
2. When life gets difficult, what's your natural instinct: fix it, avoid it, control it, talk about it, isolate yourself, pray about it, or something else?
3. Read Romans 5:1-8 together as a group. The apostle Paul says suffering can produce endurance, then character, and finally hope. Does that progression resonate with anything you've experienced in your own life? Why or why not?
4. Jeff suggested that we can sometimes mistake comfort for God's presence and suffering for God's absence. Where do you see that assumption showing up in your own thinking or in our culture?
5. Paul calls us to "rejoice" in our suffering. What do you think he means by that, and what do you think he definitely does *not* mean?
6. What category of hardship in life has most challenged your trust in God? What made it spiritually difficult? *Share only as much as you're comfortable sharing.*
7. When you're under pressure, what tends to happen inside you and in your relationships? What emotions or behaviours do you often exhibit? What might this reveal about where you look for security?
8. Our culture generally assumes that a good life should be as comfortable and pain-free as possible. How might making comfort our highest goal actually keep us from becoming the people God wants us to become?

9. Read verses 5-8 again. Beneath the question of “Why would a good God allow this?” is often a more personal question: “Does God still love me when I suffer?” Why can our circumstances make us question God’s love? How does Paul answer this concern? How does this resonate with you?
10. Is there a problem or difficult reality in your life right now that you’re tempted to avoid? What might leaning *toward* God in this situation look like? What is one step you could take, not necessarily to fix your circumstances, but to trust God within them?

### **Moving Forward:**

Take five quiet minutes each day this week and pray: *Holy Spirit, show me where I’m leaning away from you because of what I’m facing. Help me bring you what I honestly feel and trust what you have already done.*

Then reflect on one or more of these:

- The problem I’m tempted to avoid is...
- The emotion I need to honestly bring to God is...
- The truth about God I need to remember is...
- One safe person I can be honest with is...
- One faithful action I can take is...

Finish by reminding yourself:

- The cross says: *I’m loved.*
- The empty tomb says: *This is not the end.*
- The Holy Spirit says: *I’m not alone.*

### **Prayer Prompt:**

- *For honesty:* Ask God to help you bring your real questions, disappointment, anger, fear, or confusion to him, rather than pulling away from him.
- *For God’s presence:* Pray specifically for people walking through suffering or uncertainty, asking that they would experience the loving presence of God in the midst of their difficult circumstances.
- *For deeper trust:* Ask God to produce endurance, proven character, and hope in you—and to help you trust what Jesus has already done in the past, when you can’t understand what God is doing in the present.