



The Life of Job

The topic of suffering poses some the deepest questions human beings struggle with. Why is there suffering? Why does God allow it? Does the fact that we suffer mean there is no God? Or, that He is not good?

When pain comes our way, we are not prepared; it takes us by surprise because we expected (even thought we were entitled to) an easy life. In the midst of our pain, we are impatient, looking for a quick fix. Seeking escape, we anesthetize ourselves. When pain comes to others, we have no idea how to help, so we isolate and avoid them, or add insult to their injury with meaningless platitudes.

Where do we find wisdom to help us make sense of suffering? What does the Bible have to say on the subject? Should Christ-followers expect a life that is free from suffering? Isn't it God's job to protect us from pain? The story of Job offers an unexpected perspective.

Week Three: How To Support Those Who Are Suffering

Text: Job 2:1-13

Discussion Questions:

The following are based on the “My Application” Questions found in the bulletin this week. (Leader urge your group members to attend worship—or watch the sermon online—and to spend time considering and answering those questions before coming to the group. This will produce a richer discussion time.)

- Share a time when you were around someone who was hurting or in pain. What emotions were you feeling? What was most challenging?
- What are some ways of responding that have good intentions but are not helpful in the moment of grief? Can anyone think of a time that you now realize your response wasn’t helpful?
- What does it mean to be intentional rather than passive with people who are hurting?
- When you are with people who are hurting or in grief, what does it look like to respond well emotionally?
- What does it mean to “be ok with it not being ok”? How can we practically live that out when walking with someone who is hurting?
- How is our weakness an opportunity for God’s strength when we walk with people who are hurting? How is that a comfort or an encouragement to you?

Prayer:

Probably everyone in the group knows someone who is experiencing significant pain. Each of you focus on that person as you pray:

- Ask God to comfort that person.
- Ask God to send comforters to that person.
- Since God brought that person to your mind, YOU might be a comforter sent by God into that painful situation. Ask Him to
 - show you how to engage with the suffering one in a way that is intentional and emotionally appropriate
 - help you conquer your fear or uncertainty
 - teach you to be OK with it not being OK, and for His strength to be demonstrated through your weakness

Application:

Look for opportunities to be intentional in the lives of suffering people around you. Some of those people may be far from God. This is a perfect opportunity to BLESS them. Be prepared to tell the group what happened.

Scripture Memory:

Praise be to God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God.

2 Corinthians 1:3-4