

CAC LIFE GROUP QUESTIONS

Where Were You? – October 29, 2023

Series Overview: Where Were You?

Can God alone satisfy you? This question matters for anyone who pursues God because everyone experiences adversity in some way in their life. We all, at some point, find ourselves in the midst of difficult times – currently, recently, or looming on the horizon. When we go through pain and suffering, we often wonder, “God, where were you?” As we dive into Job's story, we're eager to find an answer to that question, knowing that it's something we've all asked in our own lives. As you wrestle with it, you are encouraged to find a friend in Job, and you will discover you do not wrestle alone.

Big Idea: God uses our suffering.

Ice-breakers: 1) How were you disciplined as a child? 2) Have you ever witnessed an interesting example of what some would call “karma”?

Key Points

Take a few minutes to review the key points from this week's sermon.

- God uses suffering to discipline us, to refine us, to impact others, and to save us
- One commonality all humans have is they will all experience suffering
- Even though suffering is not always explainable, it is also not random or pointless
- Jesus suffered for His ultimate goodness so we don't have to suffer for our badness
- Job was always a passionate *follower* of God, but suffering refined him into a passionate *lover* of God

Discussion Questions

Based on the sermon, discuss the questions below.

- What was your biggest takeaway? What stuck out the most or moved you on a personal level?
- Did anything bother you? What questions did you have? What would you like to learn/study more about?

Making it Personal

Review with your group the impact this week's sermon made on you personally.

- What situation in your life are you facing or have you faced that brings this topic to life and makes it real to you?
- Have you ever experienced a time when life seemed to contradict your core beliefs?
- Can you think of a time God used your suffering to teach you something? What was the lesson?
- Has someone else's suffering ever impacted you? If so, how?
- Have you seen where your suffering and pain has been able to impact others? Or refined you?
- Are you still wrestling with the purpose of your pain? How so?

Scripture Review

Revisit some of the scripture passages from this week and discuss the questions below.

- Various passages from Job (Job 7:5, Job 19:13-17, Job 23:3, 8, Job 22:21-23, Job 8:6, Job 11:13, 17, Job 13:23, Job 28:1-2, Job 7:17, Job 9:15, Job 10:8-9, Job 12:5)
- Proverbs 3:7-8, Proverbs 3:12, James 5:11
- In your own words, what do you think each of Job's 3 friends was saying to Job for the reason for his suffering?
- Job's friends invoke the Retribution Principle when trying to explain Job's suffering. This was a common viewpoint in Job's society. “If you are a good person, good things will happen to you. If you are a bad person, bad things will happen to you.” Does this sound similar to what many in our world believe today, i.e. “karma”?

- How do you respond or react when people offer advice during a painful season? Did you ever have well-meaning friends give you poor advice or misread a problem you were facing? What was the outcome?

Diving Deeper

Use the verses below to dive into other passages of scripture that relate to the primary scripture passage from this week's sermon.

Old Testament

- Isaiah 53:5, Proverbs 10:17, Psalm 27:14, Job 23:10, Genesis 50:20 (Joseph's story), Deuteronomy 8:2

How do these scripture passages align with the scripture from the sermon? Do you see any contradictions between passages? If so, can you explain why this is?

New Testament

- 1 Peter 1:18-19, Revelation 3:19, Romans 5:3-5, Romans 8:28, 1 Peter 4:12-13, James 1:2-4, 2 Corinthians 1:3-4

How do these scripture passages align with the scripture from the sermon? Do you see any contradictions between passages? If so, can you explain why this is?

Application & Action

It is important to take the knowledge you gain and see how it can become an actionable step that the Holy Spirit can use to produce transformation in your life.

Suffering can have a purpose. God can use suffering to discipline us, to refine us, to impact others, and to save us. As a result of times of suffering, maybe you have felt God pulling closer to you, and you closer to Him. Just like God uses the story of Job and the story of the Amish community extending grace in a schoolhouse shooting, He can also use our stories and how we handle our trials and pain to impact others. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you refine your story and prepare it to be shared with someone else when the moment is right. Ask God to use your story to help someone else. Even though it's human nature to want to "bury" Job times in our lives, it's better to let them be used for another's benefit and in a way that brings glory to God. It's also healthy and healing to talk about your painful experiences. This week, seek out a person who is hurting and see if you can find a part of "your story" to share with them to help bring them encouragement or healing.

Two-minute Takeaway

In response to this week's message, commit to taking two minutes each day to take a step closer to God.

The reason Job went through so much pain and suffering was because he was so good. God allowed immense pain and suffering to come upon not only Job, but also His own son, Jesus, who lived a blameless, perfect life. The suffering of Jesus on the cross is what has saved us. Jesus suffered for His ultimate goodness so we would not have to suffer for our badness. God Himself knows what it is to suffer. So none of us ever suffers alone. Consider this when you are struggling with anger, grief, confusion, pain, or other similar emotions. Thank Him for enduring the pain and humiliation, undeserved, of His death on the cross. Thank Him for the gift of salvation.

Remember that a short devotional has been created to accompany the reading. Sign up to receive the devotional via text each morning by texting "JobDevo" to 94000. You can also view the devotional at www.butlercac.org/job.

Prayer

Close your group time together with prayer.