

CAC LIFE GROUP QUESTIONS

Where Were You? Suffering – November 5, 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: What to do with others’ and our own suffering

- Ice Breaker: What’s the worst advice you’ve ever given or received?

Key Points

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

- Suffering is a journey and it looks different for everyone
- 3 don’ts when someone is suffering are: don’t try to figure out why, don’t try to tell the person what God is doing, and don’t immediately jump to quoting scripture
- You can be an encouragement to others who are suffering by praying for them, visiting them, and serving them
- When you are suffering, be honest with God, and as doubts arise, ask him to increase your faith
- Connecting with others is a key step in recovering from suffering

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 your personally.

- Have you ever been guilty of the 3 don’ts (see Key Point above) when trying to help someone through their season of suffering?
- Is it difficult for you to sit quietly with someone who is suffering? Why or why not?
- In the midst of suffering, have you doubted God? Were you able to express this to Him? Why or why not?
- Why do you think we are naturally inclined to want to find a reason or explanation for suffering?
- Discuss why it’s not often a good idea to quote Scripture or tell a suffering person what God is doing during their difficult time.

Scripture Review

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

- Job 2:11-13
- Have you ever been in the position of Job’s friends? How did you choose to respond?
- Have you ever been in the position of Job? Describe a meaningful action someone took to help you during a season of suffering.

- Though Job's friends are rightly criticized for being presumptuous and not understanding his situation, can you identify how they can actually be admired for several things?

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

- Psalm 34:18, Psalm 22:1-24, Isaiah 53:3, Isaiah 43:1-2, Proverbs 17:27-28, Ecclesiastes, 3:7

New Testament

- 2 Corinthians 1:3-4, Romans 12:10-13, Hebrews 11:1, Hebrews 10:24-25, John 15:5, James 1:19, Philippians 4:6-7, Romans 8:18

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.

We all experience suffering at one time or another. During those times, we may doubt God's existence, his goodness, and his love for us. In those dark times, God may speak to us directly or use other people in our lives to be an expression of his existence, goodness, and love.

Is there someone in your life right now who is suffering? Which of the steps below can you take to be an encouragement to them?

- Pray for them
- Visit them
- Listen to them
- Serve them

Are you in a season of suffering? Which of the steps below could you take during this time?

- Ask God for help and let him define that anyway he wants
- Talk to others who have been through a time of significant suffering and ask them how they made it through
- Talk to a pastor or counselor
- Ask trusted friends to pray for you

Two-minute Takeaway

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

At the beginning of this series, Pastor Joe issued a challenge to read one chapter of Job per day. A short devotional has been created to accompany the reading, and it's not too late to start. Sign up to receive the devotional via text each morning by texting "JobDevo" to 94000. You can also find view the devotional at www.butlercac.org/job.

Prayer

Close your group time together with prayer.