

Small-Group Notes - Week 5

Skeptic: Why Do Bad Things Happen?

Sometimes we see all the pain in the world and think God must not be good. Or if He is, He must not be all-powerful. Or maybe he doesn't exist at all. But if God is real, doesn't it make sense He would do things we don't understand? God is not heartless. He is good. Sin is heartless and we live in the broken world of free will and consequence. Life is hard. God is good.

CONVERSATION STARTERS

1. Have you heard the statement, "you'll look back on this and laugh one day?" Do you have some moments you laugh about now that were not funny at the time? Share those moments with your group and why you can laugh about them now.
2. Open your group in **prayer**. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide your conversation and deepen your faith.

SERMON NOTES REVIEW

Looking back at your sermon notes from this weekend's teaching, was there anything said that caught your attention, challenged you, or confused you?

WATCH THE VIDEO (4:10) <https://youtu.be/dPrBBJnxsck>

GROUP DISCUSSION

1. "There are a million reasons to believe in God, but we often look for the one reason not to." Have you found that to be true? Share an example.
2. We gain little and we lose so much when we blame God for bad things that happen. Why do most people think God is responsible for the bad things that happen to us? How do you know this is not true?
3. Read aloud **Philippians 4:8** as a group. Why is it so hard to keep our eyes on Jesus and not allow our thoughts to be consumed with the problems we go through? How do we live out this scripture?
4. At Sun Valley, we talk about the idea that "what you focus on is what you move towards." How have you seen that play out in your life, both positively and negatively?
5. The story of Job tells of a righteousness man, his pain and suffering, and shows perseverance during hard times. What are some things we can do today to persevere in times of struggle?
6. "Pain creates fertile ground for radical change." Do you believe this statement? Why or why not?

7. This weekend, Chad said, "The cross was what nobody wanted but it was what everyone needed." Put yourself in the shoes of those who were close to Jesus at that time. What do you think it would have been like to process his death and resurrection?
8. What stories have you observed over the last couple of months that display God's work in the world? Has this strengthened your belief and faith in God?

PRAYER:

Close your group in prayer. Thank God for His grace and mercy and all He has done for us. Thank Him for overcoming the broken world we live in through Jesus. Ask Him to change the way in which we see the world and to find blessings in all situations. Thank Him for the better life He gave us and for the free will we have in following Him.