Initial Answers (about suffering)

Small Group Questions



The following questions are intended to start conversations.
Use only the ones your group finds helpful. Explore others as they come up.

Our preaching series this fall is on Wisdom. Questions will be provided each week to help you think about themes BEFORE you listen to the sermon. It is our hope that this will encourage your own study and prepare you for the upcoming sermon.

- Have you ever asked the question: Why is this happening to me? What did you do with that question?

- Theodicy is the theological attempt to defend God's goodness, justice and omnipotence in the face of suffering and evil in the world. Why do innocent people (e.g. refugees) suffer? Why doesn't God intervene?

- Read **Job 8:1-22**. What does Bildad suggest is the reason for suffering?

- Bildad assumes that a person cannot experience suffering to such a degree as Job unless he has sinned greatly; conversely, all righteous people are rewarded by God with prosperity and happy circumstances. This idea lies at the heart of the dialogue between Job and his friends. What do you think (see Deuteronomy 30:11-20)?

- One of the tricky elements when it comes to dealing with the words from Job's friends is that they say both correct and woefully incorrect things within the same speech. How can you tell which is which? What parts of Bildad's speech do you disagree with?

- Read **Luke 13:1-5** and **John 9:1-5**. How do these stories shed light on Bildad's speech?

- How does Job understand his suffering? What does he do?

- The book of Job doesn't unlock the puzzle of why bad things happen to good people. Instead of trying to figure out the "reasons" for suffering, we are invited to trust God's wisdom. How might this story be helpful as we comfort others?