



SERMON STUDY GUIDE

ANSWERS FOR THOSE WHO ASK

May 3 & 4, 2014

How Can a Good God Allow Bad Things to Happen?

Habakkuk 1:1-4

OPENING QUESTION

If you could ask God any question and know that you would get an immediate answer, what would it be? Why would you choose that question?

READ TOGETHER

Habakkuk 1:1-4

BIG IDEA

While God is not the author of evil, He is uniquely able to turn bad into good in our lives.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1) Habakkuk is an Old Testament prophet who lived about 2600 years ago. What is going on around Habakkuk that he takes the time to complain to God about?
- 2) Do you find that you find anything in common with Habakkuk's frustrations? What are they?
- 3) Throughout the Scriptures, we find nuggets of truth that help us to understand the relationship of a good God to bad things. Take the time as a group to read the following passages. As you read each one, take the time to discuss the statement that goes along with it. Do you agree or disagree?
 - Genesis 1:24-31: All that God created is good.
 - James 1:13: God is not the source of evil.
 - Luke 4:18: God sent His Son to overcome pain, suffering and evil.
 - Romans 8:28: God works to take the bad things in our lives and turn them into good for us.
 - Revelation 21:1-5: What God has prepared for us far outweighs the pain and suffering we experience on earth.
- 4) Read 1st Peter 1:6-7 and James 1:2-4. What are the end results of walking with God and trusting in Him in the midst of pain and suffering?
- 5) Read Matthew 11:28-30. What does Jesus tell us to do when we are in hard times?
- 6) Read Romans 12:15. What do you think it means to "weep with those who weep"? How has someone done this with you?

CHALLENGE

This week take the time to look around you for someone in your world who is going through a difficult time. Find a way to encourage them as they walk through their journey of pain.

PRAYER

As a group, take some time to share about the place of suffering and pain in your life right now. Think about physical, relational, family, financial, vocational pain. Are any of you in the place of pain right now? Are any of you walking with others who are in that place right now? Take the time to pray for any prayer concerns those in your group share about. Ask for God's peace, for discernment, for endurance and for healing.

NEXT STEP

You may want to take the time to read C.S. Lewis' well-known book on pain - *The Problem of Pain*. In it, he examines an applicable question to all of us - *If God is good and all-powerful, why does he allow his creatures to suffer pain?* You will find it to be a valuable resource.