

When Bad Things Happen to Good People

PRAYER

- Begin with a few moments of sharing thanks and praises in prayer

OPEN

- What's the saddest story you've seen or heard in the news lately?
- Have you ever wondered why God was permitting you to suffer?
- Which was worse for you, the uncertainty (dealing with the why), or was it the suffering itself?

REFLECT

The Book of Job has to do with the most painful and unavoidable questions which can arise in human experience. Job invites us to struggle with the age-old question of why suffering occurs. Is it caused by human sin? Does God cause people to suffer, and if so why? The Book of Job helps us to see that the mysterious ways of God are sometimes beyond our human understanding, but that God's presence with us in times of suffering can give us the strength to go on and face the future.

READ: Job 1:1-14

APPLY

Why does God allow us to suffer?

- #1) To **MATURE US** See Romans 5:3
- How has suffering helped you grow and mature as a person and Christian?
- #2) So we can **COMFORT OTHERS** See 2 Corinthians 1:4
- How has your suffering helped you relate (empathize) to others who are suffering?
- #3) To **TEST US** See James 1:12
- How has suffering been a challenge your commitment to God and others?
- #4) To **APPRECIATE JESUS' SUFFERING** See Philippians 3:10
- How does your own suffering help you appreciate the suffering of Jesus? (and vice versa)

PRAYER

- Spend some moments in specific prayer for the struggles and suffering being experienced by persons in your group.