

COMMUNITY GROUP QUESTIONS – March 19, 2017

“Why do Evil and Suffering Exist?”

Genesis 3

GETTING TO KNOW ME

Has the problem of evil ever caused you to question the goodness or even the existence of the Biblical God?

INTO THE BIBLE

1. Read Genesis 2:15-17. Then read Genesis 3:1-5. What do we learn about the nature of temptation and how it could affect us?

How do you proactively fight against temptation: immediate prayer? quoting Scripture? speaking audibly?

2. Why did God call out “where are you?” in Genesis 3:9? Was He simply confused and anxious, or is there a deeper significance?
3. Read Genesis 3:16-19. What was the content of God’s curses upon the man and woman? How do we still observe God’s curses in our present day?
4. Read Romans 8:18-25. Compare to Genesis 3 and discuss how these passages are connected. What is the same and what is different on our planet after sin entered our world? How does this explain so many things?
5. Read Revelation 21:1-8. Discuss what God will do one day to set the world right again. Describe how this passage impacts you personally. Discuss the connection between Genesis 3 and Revelation 21. Why is this so important in a Christian worldview?
6. God, who possesses perfect knowledge of all time, knows with complete certainty every despicable action that will come to pass on the earth before it has happened. Yet so often, He chooses not to intervene. Is God ultimately responsible for the rampant evil and suffering that humanity has experienced for thousands of years (e.g. genocide, plague, sexual exploitation and tornados)? Why or why not? Ensure that your answer is consistent with the full testimony of Scripture.

Can you cite specific Biblical texts? Would you answer differently if discussing this issue with an atheist?

“Family Focus” Community Group questions for 3/19/17

FAMILY FOCUS

Parents, we are pleased to include a family-oriented section to the Community Group questions. Our goal is to assist you in taking what you have learned through the sermon and discussed in your group and “bring it home” to your family.

The topic of “why evil and suffering exist” is difficult to fully grasp, even for adults. So consideration needs to be given on how we present this to our children. Dr. Bruce Ware, in his excellent book *Big Truths for Young Hearts*, says “When we see in the Bible how great our punishment for sin is, we realize in new ways just how great our sin is before God. And when we see the greatness of our punishment for sin, we also see better the greatness of Christ’s sacrifice to bear our punishment in our place”.

1. See Romans 5:12-19. If you wonder how we can be sinners before we have sinned, consider this illustration. Would you say that a tree bears apples because it already is an apple tree, or does the tree become an apple tree when it produces its first apple? Well, the answer seems pretty clear – the reason the tree bears apples is because it already has been and is an apple tree. Also see Psalm 51:5 and Luke 6:44. (adapted from Bruce Ware’s book).
2. The good news of the Gospel is that Jesus Christ died in our place, taking our sin on Himself. His death and resurrection provides the ground for the forgiveness of sins and the gift of eternal life. Share the gospel message with your children.
See Romans 3:21-24; 10:9-13; 2 Corinthians 5:21; John 3:16-18; Ephesians 2:8-9.