



Message Series: You Asked
Message Title: Why is Life So Hard?
Teaching Pastor: Brian Hughes

Warm-up/Icebreaker: (10 min).

- Would you rather be forced to sing along or dance to every single song you hear?
- Would you rather never be stuck in traffic again or never get another cold?
- Would you rather live on the beach or in a cabin in the woods?

Pray:

Dear Lord, we come before You grateful for Your patience, love and grace. We also approach You with confidence knowing You will help us to seek and find answers to our hard questions about life. Strengthen our faith in You by Your powerful Word and through conversation with others. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Get Started: (10 min.)

"If God is so Good, why is the world so bad and life so hard?"

The truth is, Challenge and tragedy is something we all have in common. Your challenge may be different from mine. We might have different kinds of difficulties and we might rank them as higher or lower in severity, but everyone has them. So, it's natural for a person to try to reconcile this question: If God is so Good, why is the world so bad and life so hard?" - Pastor Brian Hughes

- What is your personal experience with this popular question?

Watch and Discuss Video (running time 7 min., 15 minute discussion)

- What has been your general approach to suffering? Do you retreat and isolate or reach out to others?

Read Galatians 6:2 & 1 Peter 5:9.

- Share about when someone has helped carry your burdens or when you helped carry the burden of others.

Reflect and Commit: (20 min.)

"Jesus asked the 'Why' question that many say should never be asked. Why God? Why did you leave me...abandon me...forsake me. He asked it because it was the way he felt. Jesus wasn't just God, he was also human, like you and me. He could breathe, bleed, and die. He could also hurt. In his humanity, He had to relate to His father God just like we do. Sometimes we feel Him close by...and sometimes we don't. And this is really important, because if Jesus could ask why, we can too."

Read 1 Peter 4:12-13, John 16:33 & James 1:2-4,12.

- How do these verses impact your perspective on suffering?
- What are your strategies for building your faith through trials?
- Which scripture from this guide stood out the most to you? Try to memorize it this week. Write out the verse on an index card and place it in a prominent place. Read it each morning and evening. By the end of the week, you will be able to recite it by memory. And the next time you find yourself in a time of struggle, find comfort in these verses and know that God is with you through everything.

“There is a critical, life-changing, life-altering message here for all of us, one that ought to dramatically affect us and the way we relate to God and to each other. Jesus affirmed his feelings. He named them. He didn’t deny his feelings or pretend they didn’t exist. He cried out his feelings for all to see and hear and for us to talk about today. And yet, he had long before settled on his faith. He had a firm, rock-solid belief - something that he knew to his core - that whether He felt the presence of God or not, God was still working. He knew that God was going to do through Jesus’ faith, something powerful.” -Pastor Brian Hughes

Gather prayer requests and pray. (5-10 min.)

Pray:

Dear Lord, You are good, loving and powerful. No matter our circumstances we know You are present. Through our afflictions, hardships and doubts You produce in us knowledge and understanding, endurance, perseverance and patience through Your Holy Spirit. You work all things together for our good for those who love You and are called according to Your purpose. Deepen our faith, helping us to become mature and complete. Help us to navigate our difficult circumstances, in Your strength, so we can then shine light in a dark world. We trust in You and pray all of this in the name of Jesus. Amen.