

WEEK THREE: WHERE IS GOD WHEN WE HURT

Statement...we live in a sinful, rebellious world that seems bent on self-destruction, intent of ignoring God's will. Yet that may not be what troubles us most: where is God when we need him? Where was he when I prayed and my loved one died anyway?

HOW JESUS HANDLED THIS...we ask, "WHY DO BAD THINGS HAPPEN" and often add the words, "TO GOOD PEOPLE" but Jesus refuted this notion. He said that, "rain fall on the just and unjust" Bad stuff happens to all people, saint/sinner alike. Pain is pain; sorrow is sorrow; it all hurts.

A TIME NOT TO SPEAK...facing our pain, helping others to face theirs, there is a time to speak, ask questions, but there is also a time not to speak. When someone's grief is raw, asking "why" is insensitive. We just sit with people, pray silently, try to be a non-anxious presence. As Paul put it, "to weep with those who weep"

A MAN NAMED JOB...here is a good man, a faithful God-fearing man, who did everything right but got hit by disaster. He lost all that he had and everyone he loved, and he lets God have it for not holding up his end of the deal. Where does Job's story intersect with yours?

GOD ISN'T IN THE PROTECTION BUSINESS...Shouldn't God protect us? Isn't that his job? Shouldn't he prevent our hearts from breaking, or stop us from getting sick? God never accepted a JOB DESCRIPTION that dictates that he should shelter us. God isn't in the PROTECTION BUSINESS; God is in the SALVATION BUSINESS.

THE SCREAM HEARD ROUND THE WORLD...from the Cross, Jesus screamed a cry that has been heard around the world, MY GOD, WHY HAVE YOU FORSAKEN ME? His scream wasn't the absence of faith but faith at its best. So why did he scream? So that when we scream, we'll know that GOD IS STILL GOOD. Where God is? He is present in our sorrow, not by removing our pain, but bearing it. Silence isn't a SIGN OF GOD'S ABSENCE but one of the main ways God speaks. What if he speaks best by not SPEAKING at all? What if there are things we learn ONLY IN SILENCE?

