

Hope In The Dark

Where Are You, God? (Week 1)

LifeNotes

TALK IT OVER

Main Idea

A committed believer can both WRESTLE with honest questions and EMBRACE a genuine faith in God.

Key Scriptures

How long, LORD, must I call for help, but you do not listen? Or cry out to you, "Violence!" but you do not save? Why do you make me look at injustice? Why do you tolerate wrongdoing? Destruction and violence are before me; there is strife, and conflict abounds. Therefore the law is paralyzed, and justice never prevails. The wicked hem in the righteous, so that justice is perverted. Look at the nations and watch—and be utterly amazed. For I am going to do something in your days that you would not believe, even if you were told. I am raising up the Babylonians, that ruthless and impetuous people, who sweep across the whole earth to seize dwellings not their own. They are a feared and dreaded people ... they all come intent on violence ...

Habakkuk 1:2-7, 9

Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. James 1:2-4

"But you can do anything, take pity on us and help us." "If you can?" said Jesus. "Everything is possible for him who believes." Immediately the boy's father exclaimed, "I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!" Mark 9:22-24

Pursuing God in our pain, is the valley we must pass through to reach the summit of intimate faith.

Habakkuk's problems with God:

1. You don't seem to really care.
2. What you are doing, doesn't seem fair.

Start talking.

- How do you respond when God seems silent?
- When you have walked through dark times, what has kept you moving forward?

Start thinking.

- Read Habakkuk 1:2-7, 9. Why is Habakkuk so upset?
- What is the "injustice" and "wrongdoing" he refers to?
- Read James 1:2-4. How does that passage relate to Habakkuk's situation?
- Read Mark 9:22-24. How were "belief" and "unbelief" both present for the boy's father?

Start sharing.

- Describe a time you have cried out as Habakkuk did.
- How have you had similar problems with God like Habakkuk?
- How might the James passage offer us a guide to dealing with darkness, pain, and hardships?
- What does it look like to cling to God through dark valleys?

Start doing.

- Share with the group and/or write down your doubts, questions, yearnings that you are struggling with. Pastor Joel said, "God would rather you yell at Him than walk away from Him." How can you turn those things into a prayer and a cry for help?

Closing prayer.

Jesus we cry out to you. Life is hard and at times it feels as though you are silent. Hear our prayers, our cries, and our broken hearts. Help us to embrace the truth of your love even as we wrestle through darkness, pain, and doubt of our deepest valleys. Please give us the courage to, "consider it pure joy" trusting in you through our pain that we might become mature and complete.