

Caring for one another: When we encounter suffering

While waiting to begin, discuss with your neighbour...

Today we're thinking about caring for one another when we're suffering.

1. Read 2 Corinthians 1:3-7.

- Ask the same question of each verse: Why do we suffer? (What different answers do we get?)
- What do you find particularly encouraging here?

2. The Old Testament saint Job suffered terribly. At the end of his story some friends came to him. Read Job 42:11.

- What did they do?
- What can we learn from them?

Responding to a suffering brother or sister

We'll want to... remember this???

Move towards the other person

Try to understand both their circumstances... and their heart

Put them first

Be there for them (remember Job 42:11)

Offer help that's needed

Pray and speak the truth

But WHAT TO PRAY?

And HOW TO SHARE TRUTH from God?

**** God speaks ABOUT suffering. And he speaks TO sufferers. ****

Learning from the Wilderness (Exodus / Numbers / Hebrews 3 / 1 Cor. 10)

= Things to learn... To help us to pray... To help us to speak

1. The wilderness is hard (Exodus 2:23)
2. The Lord is present (Exodus 2:24-25)
3. The Lord is at work (Exodus 16:4)
4. There are temptations (Exodus 17:2-3)
5. Jesus is our hope (Luke 4, Hebrews 4:15)
6. The wilderness is an opportunity to trust the Lord
 - Pray honestly (e.g. Ps. 130:1-2)
 - Don't believe your eyes
 - Humbly admit that God is God

= Things to learn... To help us to pray... To help us to speak

Discuss:

Consider what we can learn from the Bible's wilderness story. Can you apply any of these points to particular situations in your own life?

Are there other Scripture passages about suffering that have become meaningful for you?