

## God, Are You Listening?

*How long, O Lord, must I call for help? But you do not listen! "Violence is everywhere!" I cry, but you do not come to save. Must I forever see these evil deeds? Why must I watch all this misery? Wherever I look, I see destruction and violence. I am surrounded by people who love to argue and fight. Habakkuk 1:2-3 (NLT)*

What are you to do when life seems to be going from bad to worse?

Option 1: Deny the bad

Option 2: Reject the whole idea of God

Option 3: Wrestle with God

Embrace living in the meantime because the world is not yet what God desires for it to be nor what it's meant to become.

*The Lord replied, "Look around at the nations; look and be amazed! For I am doing something in your own day, something you wouldn't believe even if someone told you about it. I am raising up the Babylonians, a cruel and violent people. They will march across the world and conquer other lands. Habakkuk 1:5-6 (NLT)*

God at times takes a "hands-off" approach so that we suffer the consequences of our own sin.

*Here's what is happening: you attack and criticize others and then turn around to commit the same offenses yourselves! Do you think you will somehow dodge God's judgment? Do you take the kindness of God for granted? Do you see His patience and tolerance as signs that He is a pushover when it comes to sin? How could you not know that His kindness is guiding our hearts to turn away from distractions and habitual sin to walk a new path? Romans 2:3-4 (VOICE)*

Sometimes bad news comes before good news. Sometimes things need to get worse before they can get better.

Hope is found in the reality that God is at work in the world even though we may have trouble comprehending it and may not like it.

### *Talk About It*

1. What is a "believe-it-or-not" fact from your life story that a lot of people do not know?
2. How good of a listener would you say that you normally are? What do you think about that? How would you like to change?
3. What are some things you tend to complain about?
4. How frustrated do you tend to be when you do not get the answers you're seeking?
5. What are a couple of things you find confusing or puzzling about God?

6. What are some questions you'd like to ask God?
7. What do you normally do when life seems to be going from bad to worse?
8. Do you think God is fair? Why or why not?
9. What are some things you are tempted to complain about to God? How do you feel about that?
10. Do you think God listens? Why or why not?
11. How do you think God should determine to set things right when people turn their backs on living in Godly ways while pretending to be faithful and when people think they are living in accordance with God's will while in reality they are not?
12. What do you think of the idea that God at times takes a "hands-off" approach so that we suffer the consequences of our own sin?
13. What do you think of the idea that sometimes bad news comes before good news; sometimes things need to get worse before they can get better?
14. What do you think of the idea that hope is found in the reality that God is at work in the world even though we may have trouble comprehending it and may not like it?
15. What do you think of the idea of embracing living in the meantime because the world is not yet what God desires for it to be nor what it's meant to become?