

These questions are for the September 27, 2026, message, “Why do bad things happen?”
Please read the sermon passage (Genesis 37:2-13, 23-34) out loud.

Passage Outline

Why do bad things happen?

1. Because of the exponential effects of sin (2-23).
 - a) Jacob was a favored son (Gen 25:28), and he sins by having his own favorite.
 - b) His sin created rivalry, hatred and jealousy (4, 5, 8 & 11) between brothers.
 - c) The presence of real forgiveness does not mean the absence of consequences.
 - d) “Why do bad things happen?” Because sin impacts everything in this world.
2. Because of the unfolding providence of God (23-34).
 - a) God is fulfilling promises: “a great name,” and “blessing all the families” (Gen 12:1-3).
 - b) In order to do this, God gave Joseph a dream: “special revelation.”
 - i. That special revelation carried him through rejection, injustice & waiting.
 - ii. That special revelation put God’s grace and perfect timing on display.
 - c) NOTE: Today, God’s Word (instruction and promises) is our comforting hope.
3. To be signposts of the Gospel through Joseph (and us).
 - a) Joseph is a “type” of Christ, meaning he is meant to point to the Messiah.
 - i. He is a beloved son (John 3:16), promised divine exaltation (Phil 2:9-11), sent to His own brothers (John 1:11), but rejected.
 - ii. He was hated without cause (John 15:25), sold for silver (Matt 26:26), stripped of His garments (Matt 27:28), and “buried” in a cistern (tomb, John 19:41-42).
 - b) If God can take the worst thing that ever happened and bring ultimate good from it, then he can take your suffering and redeem it (Rom 8:28).

Life Group Discussion Questions

1. Based on #1, above: We live in a world where all have sinned, and most live in active rebellion against God’s lovingkindness. We should expect “bad things” all around us. Let’s apply that to us. Even though God has assured us of complete forgiveness, how has your sin impacted others? How have your weaknesses made waves for those you love?
2. Based on #2, above: In His providence, God is bringing ultimate good and ultimate redemption. We can’t always see the good results from our current pain. The important thing is that we wait / trust faithfully. How is God teaching you to wait faithfully? What instruction or promise from God’s special revelation (Bible) are you clinging to?
3. Based on #3, above: Like Joseph, when we wait (and suffer) faithfully, we point to the suffering, crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ. God brought ultimate good from the worst thing, and he uses your faithful suffering to “point” to Jesus. Discuss.
4. Based on #4, above: There is no random suffering (God is not absent), purposeless suffering (God is not far), unseen suffering (God is not blind), trivial suffering (God is not uncaring) and no unredeemed suffering (God is not powerless). How does God’s nearness and faithfulness strengthen you in your suffering?