

THE  
GOD  
QUESTIONS

EXPLORING LIFE'S  
GREAT QUESTIONS  
ABOUT GOD

# WELCOME TO GRACE UNION

WHAT'S HAPPENING TODAY  
SUNDAY, JULY 16, 2017

- ➔ Praise & Worship
- ➔ Welcome/Announcements
- ➔ Offering
- ➔ Message: Pastor Bob Poley
- ➔ Small Groups



Thank you for joining us today! If this is your first time with us, please stop by the Welcome table in the lobby for a free gift. We'd love to meet you.

THE  
GOD  
QUESTIONS

We are in the 4th week of "The God Questions!" If you don't have a book yet, please stop by the table in the lobby, and pick one up for \$5. You can also get a gift book to give to a friend or neighbor.

We have several groups meeting today and throughout the week. We also have small groups and programs for all ages Wednesday night beginning at 6:30. **See the enclosed small group information sheet to find the best group for you.**

## NEWS & EVENTS

### MEMORIAL SERVICE - Today, 3 p.m.

One of our members, Tonsie Springer, passed away unexpectedly last weekend. She had been battling with her health for several years, and has two young girls. If you would like to pay your respects and support to her family, there will be a memorial service today at 3 p.m. We are coordinating donations for her daughters. You can see Crystal Myers for specific needs.



**GU Students are going to the City Museum TODAY!** It's \$20 for lunch and admission. See Pastor Patrick if you need to sign a consent form!

### GU SMALL GROUPS

#### KEENAGERS (50+) - Thursday, 7/20

If you are 50 or older, please join the Keenagers small group this Thursday at 11:30 a.m. in the Cafe area. Come enjoy a time of fellowship, good food, devotions and games. Contact Jean Myers at 636.296.4643.

## MEN'S BREAKFAST - Saturday, 7/22

All men are invited out for breakfast once a month to Golden Corral here on Lindbergh. Come on out at 8 a.m. Contact Glenn Adams at [glennmadams81@gmail.com](mailto:glennmadams81@gmail.com).



If you serve in **any area** at Grace Union, we invite you to a night of food & fun Friday, July 28th at 6:30 p.m.



If you are interested in becoming a member of Grace Union or just want to know more about our church, we invite you to stay after service on Sunday, July 30th! You can sign up ahead of time by contacting Pastor Bob at [bobbpoley78@gmail.com](mailto:bobbpoley78@gmail.com).



Please join us for a night of worship Sunday, July 30th. We will have a special time of prayer for our team going to Mission of Hope Haiti next month!



**AUGUST 19th, 10a-3p** - If you are a **STUDENT** grades 6-12, you need to go to **ENGAGE THE CAMPUS**. If you are a **\*\*PARENT\*\***, your student needs to go to this. This is a retreat/worship/campus ministry training event. \$20 gets them 5 hours of worship, training on how to reach their friends at school for Jesus, a t-shirt, LUNCH, a book to encourage and inspire, and even more resources! Please visit [engagethecampus.com](http://engagethecampus.com) for more information.

## OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD COLLECTION

JULY'S Operation Christmas Child Collection Focus is **CLOTHING!**

Clothing is one of the most vital items that you can include in your OCC Box. Most children don't have a change of clothes and some don't own a pair of shoes. Please hit the clearance sections and sales for clothing for children ages 2-14. A lot of stores have flip flops on sale for only \$1 right now!

Remember to drop off your donation each week in the OCC Collection Box near the GU Cafe. Our Packing Party will be in October!! If you have any questions, please contact Carrie Sander at [vocalmusic1@gmail.com](mailto:vocalmusic1@gmail.com).





Everyone has questions about God. How do I know that God is real? Is there really only one way to heaven? We've all grappled with these questions and others like them. The resources in this group will give you the courage to ask the tough questions of God, and the confidence to believe he is big enough to answer all of them!

Our weekly topics are:

- Week 1 - Is God Real?
- Week 2 - Is the Bible True?
- Week 3 - Do all Roads Lead to Heaven?
- ***Week 4 - How Can a Good God Allow Suffering?***
- Week 5 - Which is Right: Evolution or Creation?
- Week 6 - What Happens When I Die?

Whether you grew up in church, are new to your faith, or are questioning what you believe in, this is a great opportunity to ask your toughest questions and discover real answers. Learn more and listen to the previous messages at [www.graceunionstl.org](http://www.graceunionstl.org).

During our mid-week groups, we also have programs for children (newborn-PreK), GU Elementary, and GU Students for kids middle-high school.

**\*\*Additional TGQ home groups near you. If you are interested in joining a home group, contact Jason Myers for complete details at [jscott5157@gmail.com](mailto:jscott5157@gmail.com). \*\***

## **SUNDAYS @ 9 AM**

### **Men's Group - Led by Bill Fain**

314.420.2115; billfain7@gmail.com

### **Women's Group - Led by Karen Fain**

314.846.7194; billfain7@gmail.com

## **SUNDAYS AFTER SERVICE** (*childcare available*)

### **High School/College/Young Adult - Led by Bryan Bochantin**

618.514.9408

### **Adults (Men & Women) - Led by Jason Myers**

314.745.6281; jscott5157@gmail.com

## **SUNDAYS @ 5PM** (*at the Cox home*)

### **Couples/Adults/Families - Led by Shane & Jennifer Cox**

636.575.9061; shanecox198324@gmail.com

## **WEDNESDAYS @ 6:30PM**

### **Women's Group - Led by Crystal Myers & Stacey Bush**

417.619.4399 & 314.280.8599;

crystaldawnmyers@gmail.com & newagainexteriors@gmail.com

### **Adults (Men & Women) - Led by Bob Poley**

314.712.8500; bobpoley78@gmail.com

## **Grace Union Elementary (The Blender)**

This session for our Elementary kids is led by Chris and Lisa Spindler and meets each Wednesday at 6:30 p.m. We will be exploring The God Questions through a "blend" of Science, Bible and Activities. If you have any questions, please contact Lisa Spindler at spindlers@gmail.com.

## **GU Early Childhood (Nursery-PreK)**

Nursery and Early Childhood care is available for children ages 0-2 during our 6:30 p.m. small groups. Crystal Myers is the Early Childhood Director, and you can contact her at crystaldawnmyers@gmail.com. PreK, led by Angela Caldwell, will also be available. You can contact her at angelaparson04@yahoo.com.

3900 UNION ROAD, ST. LOUIS, MO 63125

314.892.2757, WWW.GRACEUNIONSTL.ORG

FIND "GRACE UNION STL" ON 



# OUR MISSION

We are helping people to live in union with Christ by grace.

- Union with God through a relationship with Jesus Christ.
- Union with Others through investing in people through Biblical community.
- Union with Ourselves with a wholeness found in a new identity in Christ.
- Union with our Broken World by being an agent of change in our society by caring for and serving those who are poor, oppressed or marginalized.

We value sharing the love, life and power of God to our communities and world, joining Christ in his mission to rescue fallen humanity.

## WAYS TO CONNECT



For any special needs, please email our Prayer Team at [gucprayer@gmail.com](mailto:gucprayer@gmail.com).

## WAYS TO GIVE



### ENVELOPE

Offering or Giving Box



### TEXT TO GIVE

Text GIVE to 314.888.5188



### ONLINE

[graceunionstl.org](http://graceunionstl.org)

## MAILING ADDRESS

3900 Union Road, St. Louis, MO 63125

Visit us online to learn more about Grace Union at [graceunionstl.org](http://graceunionstl.org).

*All of our message recordings can also be found on our website.*



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# THE GOD QUESTIONS

## *Week 4: How Could a Good God Allow Suffering?*

### I. Head Knowledge

What does Jesus say about suffering?

*John 16:33*

In this world you will have Trouble, but rejoice because I have overcome the world.

#### A. Why would a loving God create a world where suffering is even possible?

- **Compliant World:** To create a world free of evil you would have to create people incapable of choosing evil.
  - A compliant world full of compliant people, while it may be free of suffering is also void of love and beauty.
- **Crazy World:** The other extreme is to create a world where anything goes, there are no rules and no consequences.
- To make this world Real, and Beautiful, and to make Love and Courage, and faithfulness, and Compassion Real, God Set a standard but then gave us the choice.
  - **God did not want a world full of pull string dolls any more than you want to be that doll.**

#### B. What are the sources of our suffering? Who can we Blame?

*John 10:10*

The enemy comes to steal, kill, and destroy but I have come that you would have life and life more abundantly.

- **There is an enemy, an adversary; the Bible calls him Satan.**
- **Another source of suffering is God.**

*Hebrews 12:6*

Because the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and he chastens everyone he accepts as his son.



- **A common source of our suffering Us.**
  - God rarely violates the Law of Sowing and Reaping.

*Galatians 6:7*

Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows.

- God wants to raise intelligent mature, and resourceful people who know how to benefit from the Law of Sowing and Reaping.
  - So for better and for worse God allows the Law of Sowing and Reaping to play out in our lives.

### **C. God is not the creator of Evil and Suffering.**

- God did not create evil and suffering, he created us with the choice, and we welcomed it into the world we were given dominion over.

*Romans 8:20-21*

20 For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope

21 that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God.

- God did not cause what is wrong in our world, mankind did. But God has initiated the cure through Jesus.

### **D. While suffering is not Good, God uses it to accomplish good.**

- **God can use pain to draw people to himself.**
- "God whispers to us in our pleasures, He speaks to us in our conscience, but He shouts to us in our pain. It is His megaphone to rouse a deaf world." – C.S. Lewis
- Suffering brings Priority and Reality into focus; where in good times it is often clouded by the busyness or pleasures of life.
- **Suffering opens a window to Knowing side of Jesus that you would otherwise have no access to.**
- **God can use trials to sharpen our character and make us more like Jesus.**

*Romans 5:3-4*

We also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope."

- While God does not cause suffering he ultimately turns bad situations and uses them for our Good.

*Romans 8:28*

and we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

## II. Heart Answers

### A. We are not alone, God is close to us in our suffering.

Psalm 34:18 says, "The LORD is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit."

- One thing that often prevents us from experiencing the closeness of God is that we associate suffering with God being angry at us.
  - But Psalms tells us is just the opposite.
- When you get past the knee jerk assumption that God must be mad at you in times when life is hard, the clutter is finally cleared out for you to experience the closeness of God to those who suffer.

### B. A day is coming when Suffering will Cease and Evil will be Judged.

*Revelation 21:3-5*

- 3 "And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Look! God's dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God.
- 4 'He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death' or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.
- 5 He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!"

- A day is coming when all the little things that wear you out and the big things that break your heart will become UNTRUE. They will be UNDONE.
- That news may not change your immediate circumstances but it changes how we live within them.
  - One of my prayers this morning is that God gives you a glimpse of the victory that he has already won, which lies ahead.
- **Some people have asked: “If God is going to eliminate evil and suffering anyway why not just do it now?”**

*2 Peter 3:9*

The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

In closing: Let's go back to where we started with Jesus.

*John 16:33*

“I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”

*You can find this, and all of our message recordings,  
on our website, [graceunionstl.org](http://graceunionstl.org).*

# THIS WEEK

Visit us online for information about these events and more.  
[graceunionsil.org](http://graceunionsil.org) or [facebook.com/graceunionsil](https://www.facebook.com/graceunionsil)

## MONDAY (7/17)

Alcoholics Anonymous (GU Family Room) - 7 pm  
(Led by Jeff Hall - 314.620.6635)

## TUESDAY (7/18)

## WEDNESDAY (7/19)

**Drive-By Prayer** (Main Auditorium) - 4-7 pm

### **GU Small Groups - 6:30 pm**

Women's Group (Conf. Room A)  
Adults Group (Conf. Room B)

**GU Students** (Youth Auditorium)

**GU Kids** (Nursery - PreK)

**GU Elementary/The Blender** (Elementary Room)

## THURSDAY (7/20)

**Keenagers (GU Café) - 11:30 am**

## FRIDAY (7/21)

## SATURDAY (7/22)

**Men's Breakfast (Golden Corral) - 8 am**

## SUNDAY (7/23)

### **GU Small Groups - 9 am**

Women's Group (Conf. Room B)  
Men's Group (Conf. Room C)

**Adults/Students Service (Main Aud.) - 10 am**  
**GU Kids (Early Childhood-Elementary) - 10 am**

**Young Adults TGQ** (Youth Aud.)

**Adults TGQ** (Family Room)

**Couples/Family Group** (Cox Home) - 5 pm

## OUR STAFF IS HERE TO SERVE YOU

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