

Some thoughts when you are in the middle of tragedy and when you wonder why God allows tragedies to happen

- Lament to God
- “Lament is the voice of pain, whether for oneself, for one’s people, or simply for the mountain of suffering of humanity and creation itself. Lament is the voice of faith struggling to live with unanswered questions and unexplained suffering.” (Christ Wright, *The God I Don’t Understand*, 53)
 - Scripture shows us that we can lament to God. As FBCers John and Elaine Busch say, lament is an act of protest - protesting all the agony we are going through and demanding that God responds. Lament engages our feelings of pain and sorrow, and presents them to God. As we do this, we acknowledge that He is God and we look to him for hope.
 - Read and pray the Psalms. Start with Psalm 9, 10, 13, 22, or 88. Cry out to God, tell Him your pain, ask Him for help, and affirm your trust in Him.
 - To more fully understand the psalms as a prayer guide, see FBCer Stanford Gibson’s [tremendous analysis and diagramming of the Psalms](#) (click here).
- Turn to friends
- Take your questions and your sorrows to trusted friends, like the people in your homegroup, or a pastor. We are committed to doing everything we can to walk with you through the tragedy and be with you in the questioning.
- Think deeply
- God invites us to not brush aside our questions. In addition to talking with your homegroup and pastor, here are some further companions on your journey of questioning and lament:
 - A sermon by my friend Darrell Johnson (the link is included in the FBC Enews. If you did not receive it, contact info@fbcdavis.org for the link).
 - Ellen Davis’ chapter on Job in her book, *Getting Involved With God*. This book is tremendous, and her chapter on Job is particularly powerful.
 - John Stackhouse’s book, *Can God Be Trusted? Faith and the Challenge of Evil*. This is a thoughtful and thorough discussion of the problem of evil.
- Grieve
- There is no timeline for grief. Whenever you feel the pain of tragedy, you have the permission to express your sorrow. Your community and your God are ready to hear you and be with you.
- Remember truth
- Your current situation is not forever. Your current feelings are not forever. God has shown you his great love in the past, and you can trust His promises for the future. The good news of Christmas is that Jesus is always coming into the darkness of our world to bring His light and joy.

In Christ’s love,
Neil