



THE WESTMINSTER SHORTER CATECHISM

CONVERSATION STARTER

What has been a “low” moment for you this week? What has been a “high” moment?

DEEPER

WSC Question 19: What is the misery of man’s fallen condition?

Answer: By their fall, all mankind lost fellowship with God and brought his anger and curse on themselves. They are therefore subject to all the miseries of this life, to death itself, and to the pains of hell forever.

WSC Question 20: Did God leave all mankind to die in sin and misery?

Answer: From all eternity and merely because it pleased him, God chose some to have everlasting life. These he freed from sin and misery by the covenant of grace and brought them to salvation by a redeemer.

1. Describe a moment or season in your life when you felt like “misery” was the running theme. What circumstances led up to it, and how did you work your way through it? Looking back now, do you feel fully recovered?
2. Which of the three sources of misery (Adam’s sin, your own sin, or the sin of others) is hardest for you to accept or understand emotionally? Why do you think that is?
3. What are some subtle ways you’ve seen people create their own misery without realizing it at the time?
4. How does losing fellowship with God affect someone even if they don’t consciously believe in God? What symptoms of that loss might appear in modern life?

Read Isaiah 1

5. As you think back through the various forms of misery described in Isaiah 1 (guilt, shame, corrupt leadership, broken worship, national instability, physical affliction, etc.), which type of misery seems most prevalent in our society today? Why?
6. Matt highlighted in the sermon that we often attempt to calculate whether disobedience is “worth it.” Why are people so attracted to this kind of thinking? What does it reveal about our view of God?
7. Which part of the idea that “misery can be a mercy from God” is hardest for you to embrace? What objections naturally arise in your thinking about this idea?

8. Can you think of a time when a painful situation ultimately led you toward repentance, growth, or a deeper reliance on God? Talk about it.
9. Jesus took the full misery of sin upon himself on the cross. How does reflecting on Christ's willingness to enter our misery reshape the way you understand God's compassion?
10. **Be a blessing.** Who in your life is experiencing misery that you could reach out to this week? If you're feeling bold and would invite a challenge, who can you call right now before you conclude as a group and pray for them in their misery. If that's too intimidating, who can you send a word of prayer to in a text message? Take a few moments to bless those in your life.

NOTES

PRAYER PROMPT

Take a few moments to reflect on the ways you've experienced misery in your own life, whether from Adam's sin, your own sin, or the sins of others. Bring those moments before God, acknowledging both your need for his mercy and the compassion of Christ. Thank him for the work of Jesus in taking on our sin and misery, and ask him to help you trust in his power to redeem the areas of your life still marked by misery.