Reminders:

- If you are going to use a movie clip, ALWAYS PREVIEW IT! No exceptions! You are responsible for what you show your group! Our writers will always try to provide “clean clips” and warn you of nearby questionable words or content—but all art forms are subjective—only you can determine what to show your group. Number one rule: watch it first.
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Goal:

In troubling times, we find ourselves questioning the way God does or does not handle things in the world. We must learn to trust God and listen to Him, in the midst of difficult situations.
Setting the Stage:

Materials needed:

- Note cards
- Writing utensils

As students are entering allow them to write questions they would like God to answer on note cards. They can be funny, like, “Will Josh ever find a girlfriend?” or serious, “Why does God allow famine?” Collect the cards.

Instruct students to get in group of 3-5 to answer a series of questions. The goal is to get them talking and thinking about the series.

- If you could run the world as God, what’s the silliest thing you’d do?
- What would you do for your country? For the world? For families? For your school? For yourself?

Bring the group back together and arrange a voice off-stage to answer the “Questions for God” on the note cards they completed earlier. You could also have someone dress up like God, or maybe Elvis Presley, a.k.a. the King. This should be a silly time of laughter and fun. End with the more serious questions.

Bruce Almighty Overview:

This four-week series is based on the movie *Bruce Almighty* starring Jim Carrey. The film is about a news reporter who believes God has been very unfair to him in life, so “God” (played by Morgan Freeman) loans Bruce His powers to show him just how difficult it is to run the world.
IMPORTANT NOTE: *Bruce Almighty* is rated “PG-13” for language, sexual content and some crude humor. Based on promo clips, some Christians stayed cleared of this movie thinking it was sacrilegious. In reality, it provides some of the thought provoking theology on God’s interaction in the world and many opportunities for discussion and reflection.

**Scripture:**
Job 13:20-28; 14:1-22; Psalm 55, especially verses 1-8, 16-19, 22-23; Psalm 57

**Movie Clip:**
“That’s What I Get”

**Time:**
Video: begin clip at 17:00; end at 22:21
DVD: start the clip at 17:00; end after the phrase “Answer me!” or 22:21

*Introduction to this Clip*
This scene sets up the basic plot of the movie and gets people thinking about how God runs the world. In this scene, we see Bruce exploding after a series of misfortunate events.

**What Did You See?**
After viewing or discussing the scene, ask the group these questions:

- What words describe what Bruce was feeling?
- Did he have a right to feel that way? Why or Why not?
Is Bruce wrong to question God? Why or why not?

We all feel those same feelings at times, don’t we? Does anyone want to tell about one of those moments in your life?

What Did You Read?

Scripture Introduction

Feeling taken advantage of and beaten up are quite normal feelings for everyone. Even the forefather’s of our faith often had the same feelings. They often felt like God wasn’t listening or paying any attention. In fact, they probably felt like they could run the world better on their own.

Take, for example Job. Job walked with God. He obeyed the 10 Commandments. He took care of his wife and children. He did more than just observe religious rules. Job shares the journey of life with God, walking hand in hand every step of the way. The Lord richly blessed Job making him one of the wealthiest men in the town. Scripture says that one day, all was taken from him—his livestock, his land, his children, and even his own health. Even his wife curses him for his faith in God and walks away. For a time, Job tries hard to remain positive. He refuses to curse God or even to blame Him despite the lonely and desolate circumstances in which he finds himself. But eventually, like Bruce, the despair of Job’s circumstances triumphs. Listen to these angry and bitter words Job directs to God.

Read Job 13:20-28; 14:1-22, then ask:
What do you hear Job saying to God?
Which words or phrases do you think are unfair?
Does Job go too far in his anger? Why or why not?
Why do you think the story of Job’s life is included in the Bible?
What does the story of Job reveal to us about God?

What Does It All Mean?
Tie the movie clip and scripture together by asking the following questions:

How have you responded to God when difficult situations arise in your life?
How do we know we can trust God when hard times come?
How would you compare worldly knowledge to the knowledge of God?
During hardships, what happens to your relationship with God if you turn away from Him in anger? Or, if you turn to Him for strength?

Creative Activity
Materials needed:

Candles (optional)
Scripture note cards with Psalm 55:1-8; 16-19; 22-23 written out

If possible, dim the lights and ask students to lie down and get comfortable. Light a few candles to set the mood. Then, tell your students to quietly bring the disappointment we all feel at times back to God. In your own words say, I’m not sure what the answer is when God disappoints us. But I am certain that He is big enough to handle whatever
anger or bitterness we may possess. I wonder if you can remember a time when you were very angry with God? Examine your heart. Are you still angry?

Pass out the Scripture note cards and have the students spend several minutes reading and meditating on the Scriptures. Instruct the students to just sit and listen, allowing their hearts to be still and hear from the Lord.

After a few minutes, say, Sometimes the world doesn’t make sense. The question is, “Do we believe God is big enough to get us through it?” Read Psalm 57 stopping at various places to ask them to name the “lions” in their lives, etc.

Optional: Close by singing a capella “Your love, O Lord”

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