

## “Why Evil?”

- Why did a man who millions of people worship say, (Mat. 27:46) “My God My God, why have you forsaken me?”
- Why suffering? Why loss? Why COVID 19 and the implemented odious policies?
- I spoke w/ a woman Monday who lost her fiancé and is devastated. Why? She lost her happiness, future plans, and loved one. They were taken from her. So her sadness, pain, and suffering is from a personal loss.
- What about Tuesday when we learned of the three young men slaughtered in Polk County? Not only is there great loss felt – but surreal horrifying injustice?
- What about those starving needlessly, those abducted, raped, and murdered? What about the millions upon millions enslaved, abused, tortured, and killed by communist/socialist dictators? Are you enraged by such imposing atrocities? What about the mass termination of lives in the US today? →
- All of these atrocities are not committed by sociopaths or the insane but by those respected (and even praised) in their societies. My point is that evil resides in our hearts. Evil is not God’s problem but ours! He came to solve it! In fact the point of the Bible is God’s plan to create us, mature us, save us, and reward us with Himself and a perfect creation!
- These contemplations are always inevitably linked to morality? Why? Read Ps. 37 cf. 73
- Do you link suffering, pain, loss, conflict with evil? Why or why not? Jesus said the world was evil e.g. Jn. 7:7.
- Do you see a reason for pain, discomfort, or loss? Difficult circumstances are not presented to us to conquer us but that we may become more than conquerors (Ro. 8:37).
- Malcom Muggeridge: “Contrary to what might be expected, I look back on experiences that at the time seemed especially desolating and painful, with particular satisfaction. Indeed, I can say with complete truthfulness that everything I have learned in my 75 years in this world, everything that has truly enhanced and enlightened my existence, has been through affliction and not happiness, whether pursued or attained. In other words, if it were to be possible to eliminate affliction from our earthly existence by means of some drug or other medical mumbo jumbo...the result would not be to make life delectable, but to make it too banal or trivial to be endurable. This of course is what the cross signifies, and it is the cross more than anything else, that has called me inexorably to Christ.”
- Hugh Ross rightly concludes: The Bible teaches that God is all-powerful, all-loving, and all-knowing. It also says that God is in complete control of everything that happens. Yet God often seems to be standing idly by while hundreds and even thousands of innocent people suffer or die from the ravages of a natural disaster. Why would a loving God who is also sovereign allow the forces of nature to shatter so many lives? First, natural disasters really are, in one sense, “acts of God.” In the context of the laws of physics and space-time dimensions, the forces behind such disasters are all designed to deliver significant benefit for humanity. For example, God could easily eradicate hurricanes. Such elimination, however, would drastically reduce the input of sea-salt aerosols<sup>1</sup> and bacterial and viral particles<sup>2</sup> into the atmosphere. That reduction would lead to a decrease in rainfall. Hurricanes also regulate tropical ocean temperatures.<sup>3</sup> Given the laws of physics and space-time dimensions chosen for the universe, both the frequency and the average intensity of hurricanes are set to maximally benefit humanity and human civilization. Likewise, tornadoes, earthquakes, volcanoes, wildfires, ice ages, floods, droughts, and disease are all set at levels that deliver the maximum benefit and minimum damage to humans and their civilization.<sup>4</sup> But humans don’t always make wise choices about where and how to build their dwellings. Second, no human being can claim true innocence before God. All have sinned (see Rom. 3:9–12). All have defied

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God’s authority in one way or another. All have fallen short of God’s standard of moral perfection (see Rom. 3:10–20). So while people may be “innocent” of any specific offense related to the disaster they face, they are not innocent in any absolute sense that justifies accusing God of injustice.<sup>5</sup> Third, God does not stand idly by. Often we’re stunned at how many people survive nature’s outbursts. We have no way to determine how catastrophic an event “might have been” apart from God’s restraint. On some occasions it appears he miraculously intervenes to rescue people from disaster. {not to mention the spurred compassion that leads many to relief action} However, if God intervened in natural calamities in an overriding way, he would abrogate their benefits, including the disciplinary benefits of physical laws and space-time dimensions. What could explain God’s “failure” to rescue all “innocent” people from criminal acts? If “good” people were never harmed by criminal acts or abusive treatment, human authorities might never take action to restrain evil or even to take evil seriously.

- Suffering now is but less than a micro decimal on a line of eternity (see Ro. 8:18; 2 Cor. 4:17; 1 Pet. 1:5 ff. Clay Jones likened our sufferings as unto an inoculation shot which only hurts for a second or so but protects a lifetime. It is worth it?
- God has designed us with the capacity for pain for good reasons. With evil (a perversion of goodness) comes pain, loss, and death. When we pervert the laws of God for our pleasures/selfish desires (fallen nature), we find that the pain of suffering and loss hits us in order to redirect us to correction and redemption as He is the great Physician.
- An analogous example: CIPA (congenital insensitivity to pain with anhidrosis).
- The problem of pain or the problem of pleasure? Ravi: “Pathway of Pain”
- Is pain immoral? Why or why not?
- The task master that is pain and death teaches us multiple things:
  - Ro. 6:23. Death stems from evil which produces sin in man. Why does God allow evil? Why does God allow men?
  - It teaches us about morality and injustice.
  - It teaches us to look to and trust the Redeemer and Great Physician!
  - It teaches us to act responsibly. If you suffer for being a fool, you’ll hopefully learn and not let the same dog bite you twice. Not paying attention or texting and driving or adultery has natural consequences. Even Jesus was subjected to temptation, accusation, loss, torture, and unjust execution. Even Jesus learned through conflict (Heb. 5:8). God did not supernaturally protect the perfect Jesus. It is impossible to live a real life if knives turned to rubber and bullets to cotton in order to protect.
  - It teaches us to hate evil.
  - It teaches us we are not in control.
  - It teaches us a government run by men is never perfect – and often totally corrupt.
  - It teaches us that justice is necessary. Note\*\*\* God is not wrathful in spite of His being love – rather, He is wrathful precisely because He is love! \*Hell not only just but necessary.
  - It teaches us not to cling to this world.
  - It teaches us that we are free to choose and that God hides in just enough darkness to be hidden from those who will not look; but He reveals Himself in just enough light so that the earnest will have enough evidence to see Him. →
- You see, this world (in its state) offers little glimpses of both heaven and hell. Therefore faith is the necessary vehicle for a relationship. Faith filters out phonies and funnels in the earnest. →
- If God ‘went around immediately punishing (on the spot) the perpetrators for any and all crimes, of course the perps would feign loyalty and thus all would be funneled in. However, Rev. 22:11 proves

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the God of Scripture gives each the volition to do what is in his heart. Faith, then, is how we live and it funnels or filters in either good or evil. God has set up the world the way it is for a reason. God has set you up where you are for a reason! Acts 17:26!

- Let’s go back. Just as if God was a helicopter judge and executioner on the spot would produce feigned loyalty. So too if God were a helicopter parent preventing perpetrators from committing crimes in the first place. Even more – preventing children from getting harmed. Why does God allow the harm of children?
- But why do children suffer? Clay Jones explains: Read p.141-2 Why Does God Allow Evil?
- If He shouldn’t allow such, to what age should they be unnamable or indestructible?
- The same people who complain that God ought to stop such occurrences are the same people who demand He not interfere with their free will. E.g. drinking and crashing, licentiousness and disease, etc.
- Do you demand God get rid of all evil or just some? If all, He must get rid of you!
- The same fire that warms and cleanses also burns. The same water that gives us life and beaches can drown us.
- Now make no mistake, many things can be avoided e.g. living in New Orleans (a literal example of Jesus’ warning about building on the rock). Nevertheless, God doesn’t even waste our bad decisions in order to teach us maturity (see below). If we all chose to live by Scripture STDs would be gone in a generation or two. When healthy boundaries are broken we are broken via consequence.
- It is abundantly clear (and an indispensable component of our salvation) that people are held responsible for their actions – from Adam and Eve, to Cain and Abel, to David, and Solomon, to Judas and Pilate, etc. God has omnisciently provided (providence) the laws of nature/physics and morality to aid us as a schoolmaster (see Gal. 3:24 w/ regard to the moral law).
- If God could just change the rules of good & evil, pain & pleasure, reality & deception; Jesus needlessly suffered on the Cross and died...
- TRANS> rather than supernatural oppression or supernatural prevention, God has wisely made all things the way they are!

## Pain and Morality

- If pain is linked with morality/immorality – how is moral law measured? Can there be a moral law w/o a moral law giver? Can there be gravity w/o a physical law giver?
- Morality is always linked with people and the question of morality is always posed by a person.
- If anything is bad – something must be good. Can’t know a crooked stick unless a straight stick is assumed/established. You can have a rust free car but not a car or metal free rust. You can take the rust from a car but not a car from the rust! One cannot have evil unless there is an understanding of good.
- An acknowledgment of good is not the same as the source of good.
- Atheists have no legitimate complaint about evil and – in fact, cannot define evil in a moral sense because they have given no chance for a law giver. Anything goes w/o moral responsibility if there is no moral law giver to which we are responsible.
- I find it amusing that Atheists complain about the ‘fictional’ god who allows evil. And then they condemn him for punishing such.
- Prov. 19:3 – build New Orleans in a bowl and blame God for flooding. Vote for big government and complain about fleeting rights.

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- When people abort babies it is their prerogative but when God judges the Canaanites for doing so, He is a murderer.
- If a mother can see the need for pain how much more God?
- If we can see the benefits of suffering and loss how much more God? Turek’s friends.
- Don’t stop a movie in the middle of conflict and complain it has no redeeming qualities.
- There is purpose in pain and as Ravi called it, pain is a pathway.
- C. S. Lewis said, “God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks in our conscience, but shouts in our pains: it is his megaphone to rouse a deaf world.”
- If she can bring good from evil then so can God!

Justice requires hell to deal with evil not taken to the Cross.

- All sin is against God = cosmic treason (Sproul).
- The unrepentant: Jn. 16:8 cf. Eph. 4:30; 1 Thes. 5:19.
- Justice for the victims
- A glimpse at the eternally unrepentant. Rev. 16:9-11; 9:20-21; 22:10-11.
- Lk. 16 parable of heaven and hell
  - Hell not torture but torment
  - Rich man able to converse yet in a kind of agony. Not a physical agony where you cannot even communicate e.g. cramp, tooth nerve, extremely sharp pain.
  - Note: torment is self-inflicting e.g. gnashing of teeth. Weeping is often indicative of sorrow and turning is a sign of repentance.
  - The problem with the rich man is there is no remorse, repentance, and he still presumes Lazarus is a servant.
  - Jesus answered the man and acknowledged that even if Lazarus came from the dead, he would not be heard by the unrepentant. Actually Jesus did bring back a Lazarus (God’s humor) and, as Jesus, predicted, they tried to kill him and Jesus (Jn. 12:9-10)! How’d you like those in heaven?
  - Those who hate God’s rules and ‘oppression’ in this life will loathe such in the afterlife.
  - Hijacked divorcees. Cowards, adulterers, liars, etc. Can’t enjoy heaven with ingrates.
- What about those who haven’t heard of the remedy (Christ) for evil, sin, loss, suffering, death, and hell? I’ve heard people say that Caucasian Westerners can’t be the only primary recipients of God’s forgiveness could they? Jones pp. 79-81.
  - Angel from heaven or vision w/ the Gospel.
  - A lack of revelation can be gracious as the more one is given – the more is expected. Lk. 12:48
- Rejecting heaven – Jones pp. 103-104
- Ro. 8:18; 2 Cor. 4:17; 1 Pet. 1:5 ff