



ANSWERS TO LIFE'S 7 MOST IMPORTANT QUESTIONS

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HOW CAN I KNOW GOD IS GOOD WITH ALL THE SUFFERING IN THE WORLD?

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Introduction: The late British pastor John Stott wrote, “The fact of suffering undoubtedly constitutes the single greatest threat to the Christian.” Today we are going to reconcile the reality of evil and suffering with the certainty of a good and loving God.

- I. The Difficulty Of Reconciling God And Suffering
 - A. God Exists
 - B. God Is All-Powerful
 - C. God Is Good
 - D. Evil Is Present In the World

“Is [God] willing to prevent evil, but not able? Then He is impotent. Is He able, but not willing? Then He is malevolent. Is He both able and willing; whence then is evil?” David Hume

- II. Popular Attempts To Reconcile God And Suffering
 - A. “Suffering Is An Illusion”

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Romans 8:22-23 “²² For we know that the whole creation groans, and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now. ²³ And not only this, but we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body.”

John 16:33 “These things I [Jesus] have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage, I have overcome the world.”

B. “The God Of the Bible Does Not Exist”

Psalm 14:1 “The fool has said in his heart, ‘There is no God.’”

C. “God Is Limited”

Job 38:4-8 “⁴ Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell me, if you have understanding. ⁵ Who set its measurements? Since you know. Or who stretched the line on it? ⁶ On what were its bases sunk? Or who laid its cornerstone, ⁷ When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy? ⁸ Or who enclosed the sea with doors when, bursting forth, it went out from the womb?”

Job 38:12-13 “¹² Have you ever in your life commanded the morning, and caused the dawn to know its place, ¹³ That it might take hold of the ends of the earth and the wicked be shaken out of it?”

Psalm 139:16 “Your eyes have seen my unformed substance; and in Your book were all written the days that were ordained for me, when as yet there was not one of them.”

John 19:11a “You would have no authority over Me, unless it had been given to you from above...”

John 7:30 “So they were seeking to seize Him; and no man laid his hands on Him, because His hour had not yet come.”

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Romans 9:18 “So then He [God] has mercy on whom He desires, and He hardens whom He desires.”

Psalm 34:18 “The Lord is close to those whose hearts are breaking.” (The Living Bible)

III. Four “Lights” To Guide Us Through The Tunnel Of Suffering

A. God Is Both Good and All-Powerful

Exodus 34:6 “Then the Lord passed by in front of him [Moses] and proclaimed, ‘The Lord, the Lord God, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness and truth.’”

Job 34:10b “...Far be it from God to do wickedness, and from the Almighty to do wrong.”

2 Chronicles 20:6 “O Lord, the God of our fathers, are You not God in the heavens? And are You not ruler over all the kingdoms of the nations? Power and might are in Your hand so that no one can stand against You.”

Job 42:2 “I know that You can do all things, and that no purpose of Yours can be thwarted.”

B. Evil and Suffering Are Not Attributable To God

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Genesis 3:17 "...Cursed is the ground because of you..."

Romans 8:20-22 ²⁰ For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope ²¹ that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God. ²² For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now."

C. God Can Use Suffering For **Good**

Matthew 27:46 "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?"

Acts 2:23 "This Man [Jesus] delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death."

D. God Will Ultimately **Defeat** Evil and **End** Suffering

2 Peter 3:9-10 ⁹ The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance. ¹⁰ But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up."

Conclusion

Next week: How Can I Know Christianity Is The Right Religion?