

Why Worldview Matters

Why Would a Loving God...?

Genesis 2:15-17

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Introduction:

- Today we look at two of the hardest subjects for people to deal with:
 - Pain and Suffering
 - Eternal Punishment
 - When someone deals with any of this, unless they are rooted in Christ, the questions immediately come:
 - *Why would a loving God allow pain and suffering?*
 - *Why would a loving God send someone to Hell?*
 - The problem lies in those five words – “*Why would a loving God...*”
 - In anger, frustration, and hurt, people assume, that if there is a God He must be cruel, vicious, or He likes to play games with us. Sometimes they even think this is God getting even with us for something.
 - Please know this today:
 - God loves us with a passion.
 - It was never His desire that we should suffer.
 - It was never His desire that we should die.
 - It was never His desire that someone should live eternity away from Him.
 - It is not fair to project the blame of all things evil on a Benevolent God.
 - It is most certainly not fair to ask the questions with no desire to listen or investigate the answers.
 - So far, we have covered:
 - The Bible is the Infallible, Inerrant, Inspired Word of God.
 - How do we know that God exists?
 - Is Jesus God?
 - Today, we will be talking about three things, but only two questions:
 - *Why would a loving God allow pain and suffering?*
 - *Why would a loving God send someone to Hell?*
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1. Why would a loving God allow pain and suffering?

- a. When God created the Heavens and the Earth, He said it was good. But when God created mankind in His image, He said it was very good.
- b. What does it mean that we were created in the image of God? We have:
 1. *A Spiritual Nature* –
 2. *A Moral Nature* –
 3. *An Eternal Existence* –
 4. *The Ability to Reason* –
 5. *To Rule Over the Earth* –

- 6. *We have Free Will* –
- 7. *Relationship Capacity* –
- c. Even though God created us with Free Will, to love Him or reject Him, we were still worth creating to Him.
- d. God warned Adam – But listen to the wording that is used. Even though God knew what Adam would do, He still loved him dearly.
- e. **Genesis 2:16-17** – “For WHEN you eat of it, you will surely die.”
- f. Adam and Eve disobey God for selfish reasons, and it not only affects them, but every generation after them, because it opens the door for evil and all that comes with it, to enter.
- g. Pain, suffering, death (Both physical and spiritual) are all part of the evil that has now been allowed to enter.
 - 1. The only way this could have been unfair is if God never warned Adam – but He did.
 - 2. It may have been undue temptation if God had created only one tree, but He created many trees – including the Tree of Life.
- h. Evil is the opposite of God:
 - 1. God creates life – Evil brings death.
 - 2. God offers love – Evil brings hate.
 - 3. God offers harmony – Evil brings division.
 - 4. God offers freedom – Evil brings bondage.
 - 5. God offers grace and mercy – Evil offers hopelessness.
- i. So, every time you see pain and suffering, remember what SIN and EVIL has done to mankind.
- j. Every time you drive past a graveyard, remember what SIN and EVIL has done to the body.
- k. Every time you read about a horrific crime where people have been taken from their families or whenever you see rioters pulling people from their cars to beat them, remember what SIN and EVIL has done to love, harmony and compassion.
- l. BUT ... Every time you see someone respond to the Terms of Pardon in Christ, REMEMBER, what God has done to SIN and EVIL!
- m. Pain and suffering were never God’s plan for us – **Jeremiah 29:10**
- n. When this is said to people – The natural question is – “*Does God really understand how terrible the pain and suffering are?*”
- o. **John 3:16**
- p. Harold Kushner – In the 1980’s wrote – *Why Do Bad Things Happen to Good People?*
- q. **Mark 10:16**
- r. The better question would be – *Why do good things happen to bad people?*
- s. Jesus understood pain – He knew it on its deepest and personal level.
 - 1. He saw what leprosy and other disease did to the body – (**Matt. 26:6**)
 - 2. He saw the broken hearts of parents when a child died – (**Mark 5**)
 - 3. He saw family and friends weep over Lazarus – (**John 11**)
 - 4. He saw evil degraded His creation through possession – (**Mark 5**)
 - 5. He saw hunger and all that it did to people – (**Matt. 15**)
 - 6. He saw an oppressed people physically and spiritually – (**John 3**)

2. Will God help me when I am in pain and suffering?

- a. The answer is yes. If you are in Christ, He will never leave you or forsake you.
- b. **Malcolm 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 experience, has been through affliction, and not through happiness.”*
- c. **2nd Corinthians 12** – Paul asked that the “Thorn in his Flesh” would be removed. Paul asked three times – Jesus said, no.
- d. **Psalm 23**
- e. **Hebrews 13:5**
- f. **Isaiah 1:18**

3. Why would a loving God send people to Hell?

- a. To really answer this question or statement, we must break it down into two questions:
- b. Does God send people to Hell? – NO! – God has never sent anyone to Hell. This may shock you.
- c. God has never sent a person that has responded to the Terms of Pardon to Hell.
- d. Then they will say, “Okay, if they do not choose to follow Jesus, then God sends them to Hell?” and I say NO!
- e. Then who sends them to Hell? – They do by their own choice.
- f. It is God’s deepest desire that everyone would be saved in Christ by responding to the Terms of Pardon.
- g. **2nd Peter 3:9**
- h. **John 3:16**
- i. When given the choice, people will often choose the good deal over the bad deal. BUT for some reason, that same logical reasoning does not always apply to the Spiritual things of our life.
- j. You see, most of the time LOGIC rules in our decision making until it becomes a spiritual matter. Then logic seems to be overruled.
- k. God does not send anyone to Hell. People send themselves to Hell by not surrendering to the Terms of Pardon.
- l. What are my other options? – One – Respond to the Terms of Pardon in Christ.
- m. **1st Corinthians 2:9**
- n. **Revelation 21:6-7**
- o. **Acts 8:26-39**
- p. **Philippians 4:13**
- q. **Revelation 21**
- r. We will have to face things in this world that we do not like – but we do not have to face them alone.
- s. Who do you say Jesus is?