

blind faith?
“What About Evil & Suffering?”
June 19, 2011

Questions: Is Christianity based on “*blind faith*”? What about evil and suffering? How can a good God let that happen?

*In your heart set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an **answer** (apologetic) to everyone who **asks** you to give the **reason** for the **hope** that you have. But do this with **gentleness** and **respect**, keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander. 1 Peter 3:15-16 (NIV)*

As Christians are we must not be uninformed or unloving?

MESSAGE: “God is great, God is good...but is He really?”
TEXT: Romans 8:18-39

1. Where does evil come from?

- a. Evil is an option inherent in being created in the image of God with free will (unforced decision). God cannot get rid of evil without taking away our moral free will. Genesis 1:27
- b. God created the angel Lucifer with great capacity for beauty and love but he chose against God. He led a rebellion of other angels who were expelled from heaven, and roam the earth. Lucifer (Satan) desires to destroy God’s creation, especially us! 1 Peter 5:8; Ezekiel 28:12-17; Revelation 12:9
** ***We are at war!***
- c. God created Adam & Eve with free will (Gen. 2:16 *free to eat*). Lucifer came and introduced the idea that God was not good and loving. They chose to disobey God (sin) and their choices affected all humanity. We all have a sinful nature, evidenced by our selfishness, and sin. Gen. 3; Rom. 3:23

- d. God’s design for perfect harmony between humanity and creation was destroyed. Natural disasters bring destruction. Creation itself waits to be restored to its original design. Romans 1

2. If God was really GREAT (all powerful) and GOOD (all loving) why doesn’t he just “destroy” evil and end our suffering?

- a. God has NOT chosen to “**DESTROY**” the capacity for evil - it would take away our moral free will.
- b. God HAS chosen to “**DEFEAT**” evil - Col. 2:15
* He empathizes with our suffering – Hebrews 4
* He is filled with compassion – Mt. 20; Mk. 1:41
- c. God HAS chosen to **END** all suffering - Rev. 20:10
* All suffering is temporary! 2 Cor 4:17
- d. God HAS chosen to “**REDEEM**” suffering until that day – Rom. 8:28-31
- e. Satan has chosen to use evil and suffering to **TEMPT** us to turn away from God until the end.
John 10:10, 1 Peter 5:8

C.S. Lewis “God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks to us in our conscience, but shouts to us in our pain; it is his megaphone to a deaf world.” *The Problem of Pain*

3. Prayer: “*Lord, I choose in faith to align myself with your good and loving purposes, even in suffering. I will not align myself with Satan’s purpose to use suffering and evil to turn my heart against you. I ask for the grace, mercy, and perfect strength you promise for my good and your glory!*” 2 Cor. 12; Heb. 4

Additional Resources:

Starting Point by Andy Stanley

10 Most Common Objections to Christianity by Alex McFarland

Letters From A Skeptic by Dr. Gregory A. Boyd

When Skeptics Ask by Norman L. Geisler

Mere Christianity by C.S. Lewis