

Frequently Asked Questions About God

If God is so good and loving, why does He allow evil?

This is a flawed premise since it implies that we are in a position to say what is good and what is not good about God. We ourselves do not know what good is naturally, for we are not basically good. How then can we judge God?

Still, the question of evil persists, and we often hear the question "why?" in the aftermath of some tragedy. Remember, when God created the world, He created it perfectly. That includes His creation of man. Yet, this "perfect" man was also given the freedom of choice, or an ability to choose. When Adam chose to disobey God, sin, death and suffering became an inevitable part of life. Romans 5:12 states, "When Adam sinned, sin entered the entire human race. Adam's sin brought death, so death spread to everyone, for everyone sinned" (NLB). The evil in this world is a result of that original sin.

You may say, "Wait a minute, I didn't choose to sin. Adam did." Yet, the Bible teaches that we all have sinned (Romans 3:23). We are not sinners because we sin; we sin because we are sinners. We have a natural bent in us to do what is wrong. James 4:1 says that there is a "whole army of evil desires at war within you." At the same time, God gave us absolutes to live our lives by--standards that are found in the Bible. When we make choices that are contrary to those absolutes and standards, evil is the result.

C. S. Lewis put this question in proper perspective. He observed that it is idle for us to speculate about the origin of evil. The problem we all face is the fact of evil. The only solution to the fact of evil is God's solution, Jesus Christ [Paul Little, *How to Give Away Your Faith* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1966), p. 72]. Once you surrender your life to Jesus Christ, you enter into the master plan that God has for you. For that reason, you can be assured of the promise in His Word, that "everything works together for the good of those who love God and are called according to His purpose for them" (Romans 8:28 NLB). Sometimes what appears horribly evil and tragic can result in something good. Consider Joseph's assessment of his brother's wicked act of selling him into slavery. Understanding that God had allowed this to happen so that he could be a man of power in Egypt, Joseph said, "God turned to good what you [my brothers] meant for evil. He brought me to the high position I have today so I could save the lives of many people" (Genesis 50:20 NLB).

We may not always understand the "why's" of a certain tragedy, but we know the "Who" that will carry us through it. He promises, "When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze. For I am the Lord

your God . . ." (Isaiah 43:2-3a NIV).

How can you Christians say that Jesus is the only way to heaven? Are you saying that if a person does not believe in Jesus Christ, they are going to hell? Jesus Christ Himself said, "I am the way, the truth and the life, and no one comes to the Father except through me" (John 14:6 NKJV). If humankind could have reached God any other way, Jesus would not have had to die. His voluntary death on the cross makes this fact even more compelling.

Christians are not superior to any other person. A person who believes Jesus Christ is the only Son of God and proclaims that truth is just one beggar telling another beggar where to find bread.

Don't all religions teach the same thing? "Don't all roads lead to God?" people often ask. "If a person is sincere in his or her beliefs, won't he or she get to heaven?" If you allow that all beliefs are true, then by what standards do you live? All belief systems cannot be true, because they cancel each other out. If you take time to look at what each religion teaches, you'll find that only Jesus Christ died for our sins and rose again. The Bible teaches that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, died on a cross for our sins, that He paid that debt in our place, and that if we will turn from our sin and follow Him, we can be forgiven and know that we will go to heaven.

How can a God of love send someone to hell? God doesn't send anyone to hell. It was never His design to send people to hell. It breaks the heart of God to see people, made in His image, make the deliberate choice to go to hell. Hell was not made for people; it was made for the angelic being, Satan, who rebelled against God. In Matthew 25:41, Jesus says the everlasting fire was prepared for the devil and his angels. Scripture also teaches, "[God] is not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9). That is why God sent Jesus to die on the cross in our place--to bridge the gap between sinful people and a Holy God. The gates of hell are locked from the inside. If you end up in hell, you will practically have to climb over Jesus to get there.

The reason I am not a Christian is because there are so many hypocrites in the church. This excuse is often offered by those who want to continue to live in darkness. They do not want to be brought into the light of Jesus Christ. Jesus does not say, "Follow the church," or "Follow the people." Jesus says, "Follow me" (Matthew 9:9; Mark 8:34; John 12:26).

We are given the freedom to choose. We have the ability to sin--to make choices that are against the teachings of God. Church is not a meeting place for saints, but a hospital for sinners. The worst sin you can commit is to say no to God. It is a "Son" issue, not a "sin" issue. You will find hypocrites in the church because we are all sinners. You will also find people who are trying to live their life according to the teachings of Jesus Christ.

I tried church before, but it didn't work for me. What did you try? Did you go to a

church? Did you read the Bible? Did you ask Christ into your life? Did you trust in what Jesus claimed? Did you examine the claims of Christ? Most people know the Ten Commandments and the things that "thou shalt not" do. But the Bible also commands us to "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind" (Mark 12:30 NKJV). If you are not doing that, you are falling short in God's eyes. Christ is real. Many facts substantiate that truth (Even Satan professed Jesus' deity). And we shall come face to face with Him on the Judgment Day (Revelation 20:11-12).