

G:love Q&A

Focused Living

Why Would A Loving God Allow Pain and Suffering When He Could So Easily Relieve It?



“These things I have spoken to you so that in Me you may have peace. In this world you will have tribulation. Take courage I have overcome the world.” John 16:33

Sin Is Our #1 Problem In His Bible God teaches that though He is our Creator and is sovereign over all He is not responsible for sin and suffering. All pain, death, disease, corruption, war, suffering, brokenness and adversity are a result of our original parents (Adam/Eve) rejecting God’s truth and love in order to become their own god as well as our own sin. Though created in perfection without sin, they became separated from God by their sin (missing the mark) creating 4 broken relationships (with God, each other, self, creation). As a result we have inherited and live in a very sinful, fallen, distorted, deceived and depraved world where all of sin’s consequences are ripping apart the human race making all of us spiritually dead, unresponsive to God and hopelessly separated from our Creator who loves us. We are sinners by birth into the human race and by choice contributing to the ongoing cumulative effect of sin in our fallen world. Our sin has even affected all of creation. Just as gravity affects every part of our existence, so sin impacts all of life, including creation. (Genesis 3:5, 14-16; 6:5-6; Romans 5:12; 8:19-23; Isaiah 59:2; Psalm 51:5; Ephesians. 2:1-3)

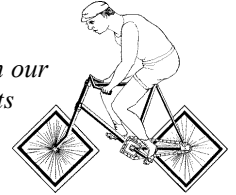
Assumption Of Innocence Sin is pervasive and no one escapes its devastating effects. We have a sinful nature. No one ever has to teach us to sin. There is no such thing as an ‘innocent’ person as we all have sinful hearts though some may act out their sin more than others. God did not create us as mindless robots forced into submission. Rather like a Father He created us with a choice to either respond to His love in obedience, thereby experiencing the eternal life He offers with Him, or reject it experiencing separation from Him. (Romans 3:10-23; John 9:1-3; Luke 13:1-5; Jeremiah 17:5-10)

Character Of God And His Gracious Offer If God is so good, wise, powerful and able, why does He allow pain and suffering? Why do bad things happen to ‘good’ people? Go behind the scenes in each case to discern what God is doing and what purposes He is accomplishing. We may never know the “why” but we can trust the “Who.” A surgeon would never say “I love you too much to cut into you to remove the

tumor as it would cause you too much pain.” The patient would say, “If you do really love me you would do everything possible to save me!” God is the great Surgeon. God is not the author of suffering, does not desire it for us, nor was it part of His original plan. He is God and He is good. He is sovereign over all suffering but not responsible. Suffering is often caused by the consequences of our own sin. Sometimes God allows the sin of others to cause suffering. He may not remove it but He will give us the grace to walk through it. (Job 1-2; 42:1-6; Romans 8:28; 11:33; Isaiah 55:8-9; John 11:1-15, 25-26; 16:33; Exodus 34:6-7; I John 1:9; 4:7-11; Luke 15:11-32; Ps 145)

The Big Picture Perspective God’s design is that mankind was created in perfection and to live for eternity with Him without death. Our short life on this earth is not what it is all about. We are just passing through and God’s eternity is a long time. If our culture is so very depraved, why aren’t we suffering more? (Ecclesiastes 3:11; Romans 8:18, 28; II Corinthians 4:16-18; James 4:14; Philippians 1:21; Isaiah 43:7)

Advantages Of Adversity “*God whispers to us in our pleasure, speaks to us in our conscience, but shouts to us in our pain. Pain is God’s megaphone to rouse a deaf world.*” C.S. Lewis. What is God’s revealed purpose for suffering? God is always expressing the **glory** of His character, causing others to realize their need for the grace of His **Gospel**, and to help His followers to **grow** strong in His grace. Adversity, pain and suffering...



- Clarifies **PERCEPTION** enabling us to see suffering from God’s perspective and purposes! Right sizes suffering. (Romans 8:18)
- Focuses **PRIORITIES** increasing our zeal to pursue the important. *Without adversity, everything is important. With adversity, only the important is important!*
- Purifies **PURPOSE** to grow a faith based on God’s character not circumstance. (1Peter 1:3-9; James 1:2-4; Rom 8:28-31)
- Increases **PERSISTANCE** making us strong so we don’t give up.
- Deepens **PRAISE** by recognizing His grace and faithfulness. (II Corinthians 9:7-10)
- Absolutely NOTHING enters your life that does not first have His **PERMISSION**. (Job 1-2; Luke 22:31-32)
- Gets our attention so that we are teachable and open to His truth. Humbles us to reveal our absolute dependence on God. (Luke 13:1-7; Habakkuk 3; Job 1:21;2:10; 13:15; 42:2; Romans 8:18)
- Realize all pain has purpose. Determine to GROW through it rather than GO through it! (Genesis 50:19-20; James 1:2-5)
- Focus on the WHO not WHY to see things from God’s perspective. (Psalm 16:8; Isaiah 41:10. Indian Rug, Job)