

WHEN BAD THINGS HAPPEN TO GOOD PEOPLE

Jesus saw that they wanted to ask him about this, so he said to them, "Are you asking one another what I meant when I said, 'In a little while you will see me no more, and then after a little while you will see me'?"²⁰ Very truly I tell you, you will weep and mourn while the world rejoices. You will grieve, but your grief will turn to joy.²¹ A woman giving birth to a child has pain because her time has come; but when her baby is born she forgets the anguish because of her joy that a child is born into the world.²² So with you: Now is your time of grief, but I will see you again and you will rejoice, and no one will take away your joy...³³ I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."
John 16:19-22, 33 (NIV)

TRUTHS ABOUT THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GOOD AND EVIL

1. God is GOOD.

For the Lord is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations.
Psalm 100:5 (NIV)

2. God is all POWERFUL.

Sovereign Lord, you have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and outstretched arm. Nothing is too hard for you.
Jeremiah 32:17 (NIV)

3. We live in a FALLEN world.

This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but people loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil.
John 3:19 (NIV)

- a. Sin is the author of EVIL.
- b. Consequences of sinful BEHAVIOR.
- c. STRUGGLE beyond our comprehension.

For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

Ephesians 6:12 (NIV)

THREE REASONS WHY EVIL EXISTS IN OUR WORLD TODAY

Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,² through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we boast in the hope of the glory of God.³ Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance;⁴ perseverance, character; and character, hope.⁵ And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.⁶ You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly.⁷ Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person someone might possibly dare to die.⁸ But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us...¹² Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all people, because all sinned.
Romans 5:1-8, 12 (NIV)

1. God's Will: Because God ALLOWS evil.
2. Satan's Influence: Because Satan AFFLICTS evil.
3. Humanity's Choice: Because we ACCEPT evil.

OUR RESPONSE TO SUFFERING MATTERS

Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day.¹⁷ For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all.¹⁸ So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.
2 Corinthians 4:16-18 (NIV)

1. Respond: Take WHATEVER you have (_____) to God.
2. Realize: REASONS will not ultimately satisfy.
3. Feel: Identify the EMOTIONS at the core of the matter.
4. Pray: Seek God for PERSEVERANCE.
5. Wait: Allow God the opportunity to ACT on your behalf.

OPPORTUNITIES DURING THE STRUGGLE

1. We learn to ask the BETTER questions.
2. We LEAN on Jesus.
3. We point others to our source of HOPE.

In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans. ²⁷And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God's people in accordance with the will of God. ²⁸And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

Romans 8:26-28 (NIV)