

ISSUES & ANSWERS

Bible Answers to Contemporary Issues

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Why Do Bad Things Happen To Good People?

How do you define good? I think of those people who selflessly serve others. Those who give and give, serve God freely, and love the Lord with all of their hearts. My father was a good man. My mother is a good woman. In my eyes and in the eyes of pretty much everyone who ever met them.

But look at **Mark 10:18**: *"Why do you call me good?" Jesus answered. "No one is good—except God alone."*

Here's the truth I know in my heart: none of us are Good on our own. None of us can claim the moniker of "Good" without the presence of Jesus in our lives.

Look at **Romans 3:23**: *This righteousness is given through _____ in Jesus Christ to all who _____.*
There is no difference between Jew and Gentile, for all have _____ and _____ of the
glory of God, and all are justified freely by his _____ through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.

When we ask why bad things happen to good people, we also need to consider another point brought up in Scripture. The only difference between bad and good is ONE decision.

What does **James 2:10** tells us?

All of us are sinners in desperate need of Christ's righteousness.

Look at **James 4:17** and **Romans 7:18**.
How do these verses apply to your life?

How do these verses make you want to change your decision-making process?

God is in Control

Here is the Good News – Our God is GOOD and He is in control!

Proverbs 16:9: *"The _____ of man plans his way, but the _____ establishes his steps."*

Jeremiah 10:23: "I know, O Lord, that the way of man is _____, that it is not in man who walks to direct his steps."

Bad things do happen, but our Lord is in control and, as we learned last week, He can use any situation, any illness, or any bad thing to bring us closer to Him and to show others of His love through our lives!

Romans 8:28 tells us, "And we know that in _____ God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to _____."

Nowhere in the Bible are we promised an easy life. It doesn't say, "Follow Jesus and everything will be rosy." In fact, it promises that our faith in Jesus will open us up to trails on earth, but an everlasting life.

John 16:33 says, "I have told you these things, so that in me you may have _____. In this world you will have _____. But take _____! I have _____ the world."

We will face trails and "bad things" but we do so with the HOPE of the Lord. That HOPE comes from His presence in our lives:

When you pass through the waters,
I will _____;
and when you pass through the rivers,
they will not _____.
When you walk through the fire,
you will _____ be _____;
the flames will not set you ablaze. (**Isaiah 43:2**)

His presence also PROTECTS us:

The righteous person may have _____, but the Lord delivers him from them all (**Psalms 34:19**).

He COMFORTS us so we can comfort others in times such as these.

Who _____ us in all our _____, so that we can _____ those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves _____ from _____ (**2 Corinthians 1:4**).

But why do bad things happen? Why do people suffer? Sometimes, it is because one person made a decision to sin and that sin led to consequences for themselves and others. Here are just a few examples from Scripture:

- Paul, even though he was a religious man, persecuted Christians.
- Judas betrayed Jesus for 30 coins, an act that led to Jesus' crucifixion and Judas' own suicide.
- King David, a man who loved God with his entire being, had an affair with Bathsheba and then killed her husband.

Every one of these decisions led to suffering, with the innocent suffering along with the guilty.

Have you ever had a situation in your life where a decision you made or a decision made by someone else led to suffering and hardship for innocent people? What happened?

Not all hardships come from sin though. Look once again to the story in John 9, where Jesus and his Disciples

met a blind man in their travels.

*His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who _____, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?"
" _____ this man _____ his parents _____," said Jesus, "but this happened so that the _____
of God might be _____ in him (vv. 2-3).*

Take a moment to consider that your life, and especially the difficulties you've faced, is a canvas exhibiting the brush strokes of God. Can you see them? Do you see God's hand at work? How has He turned bad to good in your life?

We are not alone in our trials. Take a look at a few of the many people in the Bible who faced difficulties. In each case, God revealed His glory in their trails and suffering:

- Noah lost his home, his community, and everything he knew and then endured a flood that lasted 40 days (Gen. 6-8).
- Joseph's brothers were jealous of him, so they trapped him and sold him into slavery. As if that wasn't bad enough, he was then wrongly accused of assaulting a woman and was imprisoned (Gen. 37- Gen. 47).
- Jacob's sons endured a famine and watched their families go hungry (Gen. 42-45).
- Ruth's husband died, she left everything she knew to support her mother-in-law, and eventually married a man she did not know (Ruth 1).
- Hannah suffered from the loss that is infertility, and she wasn't even allowed to suffer in peace (1 Sam. 1).
- A man was possessed by demons (Luke 8).
- A little girl fell ill and died (Luke 8).
- A woman was crippled for 18 years (Luke 13).
- Stephen stood strong in his faith and was stoned to death (Acts 7).

Chose two of the stories above and write about how God redeemed the situation and revealed His Glory.

(1)

(2)

Our Sin Forgiven – Hope for a New Eternity without Suffering

The purest Man who ever lived, the best, the MOST GOOD, suffered trails and pain while He was on earth. And through His sacrifice and our acceptance of Him as Savior, we become more and more like Him as we grow in our faith and relationship with Him.

*"And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord's _____, are being
_____ into his image with ever-increasing _____, which comes from _____
_____, who is the Spirit" (2 Corinthians 3:18).*

Jesus bore our sin on the cross. He died for us and paid the price for our sins. By His wounds (his pain and suffering), each of us has been healed. Because of our faith in Jesus, you and I are no longer bound by our sin. Unlike the people of God who lived in the Old Testament, we don't have to live in fear of the wrath of God. Jesus paid the price for our freedom!

Which of these two verses causes your heart to sing? Highlight it, draw stars next to it. Write it down and put it somewhere you will see it every day. Keep it as your promise as you navigate through the current crisis.

"He himself bore our sins" in his _____ on the _____, so that we might die to sins and live for _____; "by _____ you have been _____." (1 Peter 2:24).

"I _____ greatly in the Lord; my soul _____ in my God. For he has clothed me with garments of _____ and arrayed me in a robe of his _____, as a bridegroom adorns his head like a priest, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels" (Isaiah 61:10).

Because of Christ, we are new and GOOD!

REMEMBER though, the Bible makes it clear that our faith in Jesus doesn't guarantee a good life; it promise a perfect eternity. In fact, there are more passages in the Bible that talk about struggle and strife than there are that talk about success and rewards!

We don't want pain and suffering in our lives. We don't want to hurt. But at some point, we will.

Remember this: God doesn't cause that suffering, but He will provide us with what we need to see it through. He may not give us strength in that moment, but He will BE OUR STRENGTH.

We may not find peace in the turmoil around us, but we will always find PEACE IN HIM.

We may feel trapped and imprisoned, but we find TRUE FREEDOM in His arms.

God is our Salvation and our Rescue. He doesn't allow bad things to happen so we will suffer. He uses those opportunities to help us grow closer to Him. He turns even the worst of situations into HOPEFUL situations.

Our God is in Control!

Study Questions:

1. Why do bad things happen to people, good or bad?
2. What is God's response to our suffering and pain?
3. What does Matthew 11:28 say and how does it apply to this Bible Study?
4. But what about when life is unfair, and bad things happen to us? How do we need to respond to the situation?