South Bay Bible Church

UNPREPARED

Good God?

1 Peter 3:15; 2 Peter 3:9; Romans 8:18-21; Revelation 22:20
Message from Pastor Martin Hawley
August 28, 2016

The Bottom Line: Christianity offers both an explanation and a solution for suffering. Suffering is **why** we believe.

Introduction: The issue that elicits the most emotion but has no emotionally satisfying answer is the challenge and the problem of pain and suffering. Today's message is how to talk with someone who is saying, "If there is a good God, why is there so much **suffering** in the world?"

> **Book Recommendation:**
> **A Grace Disguised by Jerry Sittser**

Two   **Responses:**

1. Have you **read** anything on that topic?

   Assumption: You are not the first person to point this out. There are answers. This doesn't stump us. Don't let it stump you.

2. If you could, would you remove everything **bad** from the world right now? But, before you answer, let me also ask: Have you ever done anything bad? Have your children ever done anything bad?

   The only way for God to remove our primary complaint is to remove all the complainers.

   If you have a good reason not to do away with **everything** bad, is it possible that God has a reason as well?

   Christians believe that **you** and **I** are the reason.
   (2 Peter 3:9)

All of this points to two widely held assumptions:

1. Certain things **ought** not be. Where did this *ought not* come from? If I made it up, then it doesn't make any sense to conclude there is no God, based on a standard I invented.

   *"Quarrelling means trying to show that the other man is wrong. And there would be no sense in trying to do that unless you and he had some sort of **agreement** as to why Right and Wrong are ..."*
   -- C. S. Lewis, Mere Christianity

2. The **world** is broken. Not just human beings – the whole world.

   a. Christians agree, but Christians believe the current world is not the **final version**. The current world is the **best** path to the **best** possible world. Christians believe the **best** possible world is a world where men and women are **free** to sin but **freely** choose not to.

Short Answer:

If God removed evil from the world, he would have to begin with **me**, but I believe God entered this evil world through His Son to **forgive** me, rather than **remove** me. I believe he died for **my** sin and rose from the dead. But not because the Bible says so, it's better than that!

NEXT STEPS:
- ☐ **Memorize: 2 Peter 3:9**
- ☐ **Memorize:** *If God removed evil from the world, he would have to begin with me, but I believe God entered this evil world through His Son to forgive me, rather than remove me. I believe Jesus died for my sin and rose from the dead. But I don't believe it because the Bible says so. It's better than that. I believe it because Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Peter, James, and Paul said so.*
- ☐ **Attend Next Week-*God &Country***