



Why Does God Allow Evil?

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Why does God allow evil? When terrible things happen – whether it is from nature or from people -- that question often arises. But even though we may not have specific answers to that question, God does give general answers in His Word.

If you look down through the centuries of history, such acts of evil upon the innocent are not uncommon. In fact, before there was such a thing as democracy, and real law, it was more of the norm. And we are not yet even talking about other things that kill the innocent, such as disease, natural disasters, and accidents. God HAS allowed all of these things to happen to the innocent. Indeed, He has allowed them to happen even to His own people.

Even when God has allowed judgment to come upon a nation – including His own chosen nation of Israel in 70 A.D. – there have always been thousands of innocent people and children caught up in that judgment. Even many Christians have been murdered down through the centuries, suffered the loss of their children, been martyred, and suffered greatly. And again -- God has allowed it. Why does a loving God allow such evil?

This is an understandable question. But it is not the right question. The question should not be, "Why has God allowed evil?" The question ought to be, "Why does man continue to reject God's solution to evil?"

Agnostics have argued that if God has the power to stop such things, but does not, then it means that He must either be indifferent to evil, or approve of evil. Of course, it has never occurred to such people that God has already done everything He can to redeem the world – but people in general have rejected it. He has done it through His Son, with eternity in mind. Thus, rather than blame God for allowing evil, we ought to be thanking Him for redeeming it, and ultimately, putting a stop to it.

Only Through Christ

I would submit that most unbelievers don't really want God to remove all evil from this world. Rather, they want Him to remove only the consequences for evil. I say that because those who blame God for evil in this world have no intention of allowing God to remove the evil that is IN THEMSELVES. Indeed, they don't even acknowledge that they need help. And right here is

the rub: Before I accuse God because He has allowed evil in this world, I had better be the first in line to let Jesus Christ deal with the evil IN ME.

The reason that there is evil in this world is because man is evil. Even the evil that doesn't seem to be the fault of men – such as natural disasters – are the result of man's fall. But the fact that man, by nature, is evil, is no longer the biggest problem – because in Christ that problem IS solved. The problem is that man ignores God's redemption in Christ and REMAINS EVIL by nature. We may not be personally responsible for being born with an evil nature. But once we hear the gospel we are responsible for staying in bondage to it.

This is why I say that most people aren't too concerned about being delivered from their sin or evil nature. Rather, they want God to completely bypass their sin and rebellious nature and simply remove the consequences for sin. Many people would like a world where people can freely sin without consequences.

Actually, that is impossible. If God would simply remove the consequences FOR sin without

providing deliverance from sin itself, God would be mocked. We would not reap what we sow. God would be immoral. He would be sanctioning sin. And worst of all, God would be rendering the sacrifice of His Son meaningless. For if God removed the penalty for sin while leaving us IN sin – then why did Christ bother dying?

So God cannot bypass the evil nature of man and simply remove the consequences for sin. Rather, He has to address the evil nature of man directly. This He did through His Son. The death of Jesus Christ did not simply remove the consequences FOR sin – so that now man can sin because grace abounds. No. The death of Christ delivers man from sin itself, and through the resurrection, man is raised a new creature.

The problem therefore is man's refusal to come to Christ. We don't want THAT WAY of solving the problem of evil, because it mandates that God deal with US. It specifically says, in John 3:19-21, why people will not come to Christ – will not come into the light. It is because, "their deeds are evil." A person's eternity hangs on this point alone – whether they will come into the light and confess what they

are. Whether they will – not redeem themselves – but bring all the bad that they are to the Cross. If I will not come to Christ God has no other option for me.

Christ and Him crucified is God's solution for sin and evil. It is the ONLY one He will ever offer. God has delivered us from the evil nature that binds us and has redeemed us in Christ. So you see, God HAS – through His Son – done all there is to do in defeating evil. He has actually defeated Satan himself. He has gone to the root of evil in man. Thus, the problem of evil is solved completely through the Redemption of Jesus Christ.

Free Will

You have heard it a million times: God will NOT violate free will. This is because His eternal purpose absolutely requires it. God is redeeming out of sinful mankind a people who will voluntarily embrace Him and fellowship with Him forever. He wants to form Christ in people and have those people reign and rule with Christ forever. This mandates free will. For God to have a people who voluntarily embrace Him, it must be

possible for those people to voluntarily refuse Him. Otherwise, this is all a farce.

When God created man He created a moral creature. That means FREE WILL. We see this right from the start. There were TWO trees set before Adam, not one. Free will -- with God showing the Truth -- was always at the core of what man is, and what God was doing with him.

The fall of man did not change man's capacity for free will. Fallen man is still able to choose -- and he is even able to choose God when God gives him LIGHT. If God were to remove this free will in order to prevent evil, then He would be removing the same free will that is necessary to choose God and to walk with God. We would not be human beings. We would not be made in the image of God.

The necessity of free will cannot be overestimated. If I cannot choose evil, then I cannot choose God -- because I cannot choose, period. That would mean that there is no relationship with God. At best, what we would have are a bunch of morally programmed robots whose conduct and choices are already predetermined by God. This is

contrary to God's creation and purpose. No apologies here to the utter stupidity and heresy of Calvinism.

Some people cannot fathom a sovereign God creating a creature to which He gives the power to reject His sovereignty through that free will. But God did do that. God gave the human race the capacity to be a vessel for Himself – the possibilities of which have not entered into the mind of man. But that meant a risk. It also created the capacity for those same people to be a vessel for untold evil. That is why there is a hell.

The God of This World

Even many Christians have a wrong perspective as to the nature of things in this age. Many of us think that God has this world in His hand, but that once in awhile Satan manages to do some damage. This is completely backwards. In reality, Satan has the world in his hands. God is the outsider. That is why we are to pray, "Thy kingdom COME...." His sovereignty and Lordship are NOT yet in place on this earth. Far from it. Indeed, Satan is the god of this world. (see II Cor. 4:4)

This world is governed by Satan. Have we truly grasped that? In fact, God does not, in this age, intend to correct that situation. Rather, He is calling a people OUT of this world to Himself. Thus, to remain of this world means to stay in the kingdom of darkness. It means to stay under the curse.

The idea that God should just come in and take over sounds good, but today people are not willing to allow God to take over their personal lives. What good would it do if Jesus Christ came back and simply enforced His kingdom in an outward way? Actually, doing so would be contrary to God's purpose. Only people who have that kingdom set up in their hearts through Christ can populate God's kingdom. Anything else is a façade. And the fact is, during this age that is what God is doing – forming the kingdom within people by forming the KING within. Then when Christ comes back there will be a people who will voluntarily embrace the kingdom.

God has already done all there is to do to redeem this world and everyone in it. He has done that through the finished work of Jesus Christ. But now each of us must CHOOSE -- once God reveals to us the Truth we have to

exercise our free will. And as noted, if the choice to embrace Christ by faith is to be real, then it must also be possible to reject Christ.

Evil Must Be Allowed

So far we have seen that God cannot interfere with the free will of man -- He cannot prevent man from choosing evil, or from choosing to do evil. This would be counter to God's purpose for man. And it would not address the real problem: MAN IS EVIL.

If God were to continually intervene and stop evil – if he were to prevent the consequences for sin to happen – we would never grasp the evil of man's nature. We would never see the Truth about ourselves. And God would be responsible for a moral contradiction. For in that case, I could reap and not sow.

There is more. God is love. And it is because He is love that He wants to deliver us from sin – not just from the consequences OF sin. Indeed, it is often the consequences for sin that bring people to their knees before God.

We see this principle in the life of an individual with whom God is working. God does not remove the consequences for sin in my life because if He did I would not see the evil of sin, and would never repent of sin. I would therefore never value His gift of grace. This is the same Truth he is showing mankind as a race in this age.

God MUST let the cup of iniquity be filled to the full. That is the only way in which evil can be exposed eternally for what it really is. It is also the only way in which there can be a full and final victory. Only if evil takes its best shot and is defeated by Jesus Christ is there a real, experiential victory. And like it or not, we are all part of this. That may not be fun in this age, but it is essential for God's eternal purpose.

Judgment

It is a fact that all that who live outside of Christ are presently under the judgment of God. But that judgment is intended to drive people TO Christ -- not away from Him. Yet make no question about it -- if I do not turn to Christ that judgment remains. In the end, there are only two choices.

Primary to this judgment for choosing evil is that God gives us evil. Get that: God will often give us what we choose. The judgment of God is His way of showing us the Truth about ourselves. It is also His way of showing us the Truth about HIMSELF. We have to see we are sinners against God, and most often the only way we do is through the consequences of our choices.

When the terrible murder of 20 children and 6 adults took place last week at that elementary school, one of the consistent reactions everywhere was amazement and horror over how anyone could commit such an act of pure evil. That is understandable. We ought to WEEP over it. How could anyone be so totally callous and cold-blooded? Well, the young man who did this WAS. You can say what you want about any possible mental illness, etc., but in the end, human beings are capable of such unthinkable acts. We have proven it during human history – this was just one of those acts among thousands. The nature of human beings IS THAT BAD – and always has been. Events like this just show the Truth about what we are without God.

But how many are actually getting the message? When terrible things

happen, you hear more people blaming God than you do seeking Him. It is a sign of that people have completely rejected God when His judgment hardens them instead of driving them to Christ. Chastisement and judgment are always intended by God to turn people back to Himself. But when people respond by hardening themselves all the more we are reaching the end of God's dealings.

An Evil World

The nature of things in this world, because it is the nature of man, is EVIL. What this means is the God is NOT running this world. He is NOT. Indeed, He is calling people OUT of this world. To put it bluntly, the world is basically on its own. Sure. By definition it is alienated from God.

I'm not saying that God does not ever intervene in the affairs of this world. But I'm saying that God is not going to improve this world, help this world, or better this world. NO. God is judging this world – so that we will turn to Christ.

So what we have is this: We have God calling people out of this world to

Christ – to become part of a new creation. They are in this world but not OF it. But then we have all who remain OF it. The two are opposed. And to a great extent, except where it suits His purpose in Christ, God is going to leave the world alone to do what it chooses. Why? Because this is what the world wants -- and God gives it to them. This is His judgment.

This cannot be overemphasized. The world does not want God. The judgment of God is that God stays out. It is an awful thing. But this is serious business. Satan is the GOD of this world.

In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. (2 Cor 4:4)

And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lies in wickedness. (1 John 5:19)

And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceives the whole world: he was cast out into

the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. (Rev 12:9)

Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. (1 John 2:15-16)

So we need to completely eradicate from our thinking any notion that the world is even remotely good. It is not. It is intrinsically EVIL and opposed to God. We need to stop thinking that God intends to work WITHIN this world to accomplish His purpose. He will not. He is judging this world. Rather, God is birthing people OUT of this world.

These evil acts that people commit are what fallen man does – indeed, these extreme examples of murder are simply an expression of what each of us have as a possibility within us through the Adam nature. Look down through human history. What happened in Connecticut was horrifying. But it is really nothing new if you take human history as a whole. It is simply this evil race man has

become acting out its nature. And God has ordained to allow man to do exactly that. It is essential to His plan of Redemption.

God and Good

Psalm 76:10 states, "He makes the wrath of man to praise Him. And the remainder He will restrain." This shows God to be sovereign. It really says that same thing as does Romans 8:28 – that God is able to work good into all things. But we do need to look at this for a moment to see what it actually means.

The fact that God is able to make the wrath of man to praise Him, and to work good into all things, does NOT mean that the wrath of man is good, or that, "all things," are good. No. They are bad. That is why God has to work His good into them. The whole point is that what man intends for evil – what Satan intends for evil – God can turn to good. But this is ONLY if the people involved in the situation turn to God.

The fact that God can take an evil and turn it into something positive does not mean that those who worked the evil were doing good. The brothers of Joseph committed a great evil against

him by selling him into slavery. Joseph later said that what they intended as evil God turned to good. But does that mean they were doing God's will – that God was sitting in heaven pleased with the evil they did? No. They were as guilty as could be. But God took hold of what they did and used it for His purposes.

How about those who betrayed and crucified Christ? God intended for His Son to die from the foundation of the world. But when Judas betrayed Christ, did Jesus praise him for doing God's will? No. Judas sinned. Jesus said it would have been better had he not been born. Sin is sin – sin is sin even if God later redeems it or uses it for His own purposes. God even uses Satan. Read the book of Job.

What we see here is that God does NOT cause anyone to sin. He never WILLS evil. Rather, God allows people to sin, and He allows the judgment for sin to come. But God is a redemptive God. Thus, if the sinner or even the one sinned against, turns to God, God will take things exactly as they are and work good into it. Notice I did not say that God will turn what is bad into good – that is not what Romans 8:28

says. Rather, God will work good into the bad and bring redemption to it.

However – and this gets back to an earlier point – what we define as, "good," is not necessarily what God defines as good. We usually think, "good," means the relieving of suffering. But God defines, "good," as His Son. Thus, God may allow suffering so that people will repent and turn to Christ. All the while people are blaming God because He won't remove the suffering. We just don't understand God.

Again – God has a purpose. It is REDEMPTION IN CHRIST. All the good that God works is unto that end. Do we think God is going to bless an evil world – remove suffering -- so that people can get comfortable and happy in it and never see a need to turn to Christ? This world is under a curse. We have to get that straight. God is calling us OUT of it. All that God does is ultimately unto that end.

You are I are not going to understand many of the things that God allows in this evil age. We are not going to specifically be able to know why God allowed a disturbed young man to enter a school and kill 26 people. Why

THOSE people and not others? Some of those people might have been believers. We can't know why God did not stop such an evil act – we cannot know the specifics. But we can know that God allows ALL of this unto the purpose of Redemption in Christ. At the very least, this terrible evil serves as an event through which many people could turn to Christ. I mean, where do we think all of this is going otherwise? What else has to happen before we finally see that this is an evil world that God is NOT going to affirm?

We can know God without knowing all the answers. We can trust God without understanding why certain things happen. It is sufficient that HE knows.

This age is coming to a close. Man's world is perishing – morally and spiritually. Are we still deluded enough to think that God is going to bless it? No. He is going to judge it. That judgment has begun. And primary to that judgment is that God is going to allow evil people to wax worse and worse. It is what man has chosen and God is going to give it to them.

The Sovereignty of God

I noted earlier that God does NOT control this world – by His own choice to NOT control it. Some of us have a hard time accepting that. Part of the problem is that we realize God knows everything and is able to do whatever He wants. We realize this means that nothing happens that God does not at least ALLOW. Some people even reason that if God ALLOWS something to happen that is equal to God WILLING IT. For if God sees evil and can stop it, and does not stop it, it means He wills it. This is nonsense.

The fact is, God wills much that He does not do. He hates much that He does not stop. He knows everything ahead of time and yet lets evil happen. He wants everyone to be saved, but some will be lost. He weeps when He must judge people, and yet He goes ahead and judges them. None of this ought to be confusing. It all goes back to the eternal purpose of God in Christ – and the necessity of God giving man free will in order to accomplish it. It goes back to the fact that God knows what we cannot know.

Herein is a need to understand the SOVERIEGNTY of God. Because God

is sovereign it is a fact that He can put His hand to anything He pleases and control it. But because God is sovereign He can likewise take His hand off of anything and allow it to take its own course. The reality is, in this age, God has indeed taken His hand OFF of most of what happens in this world. This is the only way to accomplish His eternal purpose.

God's purpose is to have a people who will VOLUNTARILY worship Him and be used of Him through the eternal ages through Christ. There is NO moral or spiritual value in that which is INVOLUNTARY. But to get for Himself such a people who will walk with Him voluntarily, God must give man a free will.

A free will is only free if it is free to choose evil, and to do evil. If I cannot choose evil then the good I choose is of no value – because I was programmed to choose good. This would mean there really isn't any such value as love or faith. It would mean that God isn't really lovable – I have to be programmed to love Him. No. All that God wants to do necessitates FREE WILL.

Free will carries with it a tremendous risk, with tremendous stakes. For some, free will is going to mean eternal hell. But again – only if God allows man to reject Him and go to hell is there the possibility of embracing Christ and being saved. Only then is God's purpose real and voluntary. I'm tempted to get off into exposing the utter stupidity of Calvinism at this point, but I will resist and move on.

As mentioned earlier, God's sovereignty is expressed when He controls things, but it is likewise expressed when He takes His hands off of things. Thus, for God to allow man to reject Him and for Him to allow the cup of iniquity to become full – this is also His sovereignty. It is a case where God has a will – but allows man to reject His will. That is sovereignty. Only a God who is truly sovereign would allow His creation to reject that sovereignty.

In short, God allows -- WITHIN His sovereignty – you and I the choice as to whether to come under Him. God must allow man, and Satan, to take their best shot in their rejection of Him. He must allow people to walk in darkness if that is what they choose.

Only then can the Truth be exposed about all things. It is a fact that only when evil prevails and the consequences come upon man that we will fully turn to God.

So here we have a case where God – in His sovereignty – allows people to reject Him. God is not a prisoner of His own sovereignty. The sovereignty of God does not force Him to control and cause. No. Fully within the sovereignty and purpose of God is the possibility that God take His hand off and let people choose for themselves.

There have always been arguments as to where the sovereignty of God leaves off and the free will of man begins. There should be no such confusion. God – WITHIN His sovereignty – has given man a free will. God – WITHIN His sovereignty – has taken his hands off of man's free will and has allowed Him to do whatever he chooses to do. In short, God – WITHIN His sovereignty – has afforded man the right to reject God Himself.

Can we see that the free will of man is WITHIN the sovereignty of God? Not OUTSIDE of it? In other words, God has nothing to do with most of what

happens on this planet. He is not in it. He did not cause it. He does not approve of it. But He allows it – not because He is indifferent, and not because He isn't sovereign. No. He allows it because He IS sovereign and has determined AS the sovereign TO allow it. Why? So that in the eternally LONG term people will learn that HE is the only answer. So that by suffering the consequences of a free will that rejects God, people might see the Truth and use that free will to turn to God. That is the way He works in an individual. And that is the way He is working with humanity as a race.

If God Stopped All Evil

Now I do realize that these general principles of Truth do not explain every instance of evil. The question will always remain as to why God allowed a specific occurrence of evil such as THIS one. But God has allowed many of them. And the fact is, we do not know how many times God actually DID prevent evil – because that evil never happened. So we don't know about it. It is easy to blame God for the bad that happens. But few of those same people credit Him when good happens.

I believe that God weeps when tragedy happens just as Jesus wept over Jerusalem. But I also believe that He allows many of those same tragedies over which He weeps to nevertheless happen. I also believe that we will see someday when we meet Jesus Christ that God was absolutely right, and fully redemptive, in everything He did, in everything He allowed, and in everything He put His hand upon, and in everything over which He took His hand off. This is an eternal purpose. It will never make sense to the natural mind, or fit into a temporal worldview.

But there are always going to be those who blame God for the evil in this world, because they say He is able to stop it. But those who demand that if God were good He must stop evil are not using their heads. What they are demanding is not possible – and frankly, most of them would be the first to object if God granted them their demands.

If starting today – without changing the nature of man, or the spirit of this world -- God prevented all evil, this would mean that every evil intent of man would have to be snuffed out before it was put into action. We would have millions of people choosing to do

bad things – but each of those bad things would miraculously be prevented. In turn, those people would try harder to put into action their evil intentions. And God would continue to prevent them from doing so. What would we have? We are talking insanity.

This would mean that even the laws of nature would have to be suspended. Every time an accident was about to happen God would have to prevent it. Every time a person, through bad habits, ruined their health, God would have to stop them. Each time that someone was about to even so much as hurt the feelings of someone else God would have to intervene. But that is not all. What about the evil intentions themselves? Should God prevent those, too?

What we are talking about here would be a world that is controlled completely by God – God would have to override all free will – He would have to frustrate it, or eliminate it completely. We would not be humans beings. There would be no purpose of God.

As noted earlier, those who are the first to demand that God remove all

evil from this world would likely be the last to ask God to remove all evil from THEMSELVES. How many agnostics that demand that God remove all evil would consent to letting Him deprive them of their free will? They don't even know what they are talking about. The very definition of someone who is lost and separated from God is a person who has put their will before God's will.

What people need to see is that God has ALREADY done everything there is to do toward removing all evil from this world – from people themselves. He has made a way for this to happen – not by force – but voluntarily. He has sent His Son, not only to die FOR sin, but to deliver us FROM sin. Thus, the agnostic that demands God remove all evil from this world has their wish – God has done so in His Son. But you see, the only way for this to be accomplished is for people to come to His Son.

The Christian Church

It is the commission of the Christian church to preach a message – in the Holy Spirit – that will, "convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment." It is our job to preach the

one and only solution of Jesus Christ. But the heartbreaking Truth is, there aren't even many CHURCHES today wherein you can preach a message that will, "convict of sin, righteousness, and judgment." You could not preach a message like this for five minutes in most churches today. It would be considered negative or a message of condemnation. That is because we don't realize what we are made of. We don't believe we – as professing Christians -- could be that far off the track. Any message about the true condition of people is going to be a negative one UNLESS you show the solution. Then you bring in the good news. The good news is NOT that we are sinners. The good news is that HE came to save us from our sin.

The Christian Church is MORE responsible for the evil in this world than are unbelievers. That is because WE are the restraint. WE are the witness AGAINST evil only if we are a witness FOR CHRIST. Thus, as the spiritual health of the Body of Christ declines in apostasy, the restraint is fading. The evil one is infiltrating all points of society on deeper and deeper levels. Things are, frankly, just getting warmed up.

We must understand this very clearly: God Almighty owes NOTHING to the United States. Any protection from Him – any protection He affords any nation – is predicated only upon the advancement of the gospel. When a nation rejects the gospel, or when the churches within it uses the freedom to preach that gospel to preach heresy, it is just a matter of time until that nation reaps what it sows. Remember the nation of Israel. They were God's chosen people. What happened to them in 70 A.D. was something unthinkable only 40 years earlier when they rejected the Messiah.

The moral and spiritual fabric of the USA, and of the world, is coming apart at the seams. This incident is just one in a series. Expect more. When Satan gains a foothold in a nation, that nation will be controlled by fear – but not imaginary fear – fear in some very real dangers. And unless people turn to Christ they will turn to other solutions – one end of which is a police state. It is an amazing ignorance that would think that the solution to this is to vote into office the right people. Or the issue of guns. Or funds for police. Or proper training. Or better mental institutions. Yet many Christians still think that many of

these political means will solve the problem. Nothing will solve the problem except the ONE WAY, Jesus Christ.

God has only ONE purpose: Redemption in Jesus Christ. But to accomplish this purpose, it is necessary to open our eyes to the fact that we need it. Thus, God MUST allow people to make their choices. He must allow the human race to run its course in rejection of God so that many, through the terrible consequences of that rejection, might see the Truth, repent, and turn to God.

The Gospel

When horrible things like this recent shooting take place, there is no way to make it ok. There is no way to fix the overwhelming sense of loss. There is no way to replace a child, or a loved one – under these or any other circumstances. It is good to mourn. God Himself weeps. We should call what happened exactly by its name: Evil and Satanic.

I cannot imagine what it must have been like for the parents of those children. However, I do know that for these little children – they have been

given a promotion out of this evil world unto something eternal. And it helps to know that if we could ask them – they wouldn't want to come back. Again – that doesn't make it less devastating for those left behind. But it IS the Truth – and that Truth can help a person come to terms with such things.

God is going to continue to allow the human race to destroy itself. He has to. We will learn in no other way. Thus, if you and I want to know what we can do – we can preach and LIVE the Truth of Jesus Christ.

In Acts 2, we see the solution to the problems of this world answered:

Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. And with many other words did he testify and

***exhort, saying, Save yourselves
from this untoward generation.
(Acts 2:37-40)***

If we are trying to find a solution another way we are wasting our time. This is the only solution. And may God give us the boldness to proclaim it and to live it.