

Series: "If God Is Good..."

Lead Pastor David Colp

Discussion Opener:

Every generation can point to a specific moment where suffering has occurred, which has led many people to ask, "If God is good, why is there evil and suffering in the world?"

Share with the group a time in your life when an event happened that caused someone to suffer? Do you remember where you were and what you were doing? (9/11, Haiti, etc.)

Pinpoint the visible cause of each of these moments of suffering and talk about those causes.

A Glance Into Scripture:

When we look at the story of David we see many times that he dealt with suffering in a variety of contexts. As you read, discuss what causes of suffering you see in each passage.

READ: 1 Samuel 17:34-35

Suffering is sometimes caused by the natural order (earthquakes, storms, or even lion attacks)

READ: 1 Samuel 19:1-5

Suffering happens *to us* by the hands of another person (theft, lying, murder)

READ: 2 Samuel 11:1-17

Suffering is caused *by us* when we choose to hurt others through our actions.

How do you see the relationship between evil and suffering? Do they always relate?

Sermon Thoughts:

Throughout history many people have wrestled with the question of suffering. Many books, articles, and papers have been written and many lectures have been given trying to come to a conclusion on this complex issue. The answers given are extremely diverse. Many of these answers fall short. Ultimately, however, we see that the cross is God's answer to the question we ask him: "Why don't you do something about evil?"

READ: John 3:16-21

What does this passage say to us about how God views evil in the world?

What does God want for us?

There will always be suffering, but what is our hope that is found through faith in Christ?

READ: Revelation 21:1-5

What is the hope that we see and God's ultimate solution to evil and suffering?

We should have faith in God even when we don't have easy answers to life's most complex questions. Faith does not mean to just trust in God, but actually calls us to take part in God's plan of redemption and restoration as we allow the Holy Spirit to lead our lives.

READ: James 2:14-17

Question to ponder:

READ: Matthew 25:31-40

We ask God this question, "Why don't you do something about suffering?" What are some practical, tangible, ways that we can, and do, answer that same question through our lives?

Prayer Time:

Pray that God will help you to be an agent of grace, hope, and love in dealing with evil and suffering in this world, to follow His lead as we seek to make a difference when suffering occurs.

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