

## Week 4

# How Can God be Good if There's So Much Suffering?

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March 14



Dear reader,

During this series, we've been sitting with different foundational questions that shape our faith. These questions revolve around our purpose and identity, the existence and evidence of God, if Jesus really is the only way to the Father and this week's question: How can there be a good God if there is so much suffering in the world?

All you have to do is take one look at the news and this question rises to the surface. It can be difficult to look at global suffering and wonder where God is in all of it. Then when the question hits closer to home, it's even more difficult. To watch those we love suffer greatly or even to experience the pain firsthand makes us look to God, asking what He's up to or why He's not doing something about it. It can be hard to trust when our hearts hurt. It can be hard to know where to turn when it seems like God isn't being good and when He even seems silent.

As I've wrestled with this particular question, the "why" of suffering was always at the forefront. When I have experienced pain firsthand, it was so difficult to see the goodness of God in the middle of the deep hurt. The fog of pain sometimes makes it difficult to see the grace that God provides. I have found, however, that as the fog lifted, I could see how God had indeed been good in so many ways, gifting me with His presence and healing.

Reflecting on our experience with God in suffering is an important way to begin engaging with this week's question. Take some time to consider the pain and suffering you've endured in your own life. Prayerfully invite God to reveal where He's been in that suffering. Look for His goodness in it and think about these questions: When have you endured pain and suffering in your life? What did you learn about God through it? How did you see God's presence during that time? How did you see God's presence and goodness afterwards? If you're having trouble seeing it, invite God to show you.

I'm not sure where you are with this particular question. Maybe you're in the middle of a season of suffering right now and it feels like God is silent and absent. I understand that place and want to share some Scriptures that held me together in the middle of the storms where

God seemed to be far away. Maybe you've had years of pain, have seen firsthand the goodness of God in the midst of it, and these Scriptures and resources will be wonderful reminders of what you've learned, having endured the trial of suffering. Either way, I pray God's presence will be near and tangible as you wrestle with finding God's compassion, kindness, and goodness in the hard places.

Here are four resources I've found helpful:

1. Scripture – Time and time again, Scriptures like **Psalm 103**, **Psalm 34**, **James 1:2-5**, **Romans 5:1-5**, **Isaiah 53:3-4**, **Romans 8:18-39**, **Ephesians 3:7-10**, **Hebrews 4:14-16** have helped me as I wrestle with that question. I hope that they help you as well.
2. [This article from The Gospel Coalition](#) offers several insights that I find helpful as we consider different insights into the Christian view of suffering.
3. [This Q & A video from Timothy Keller](#), pastor and author of *Walking with God through Pain and Suffering*, is a great resource to consider. It's about an hour in length, but can be watched in smaller segments. It's full of helpful perspectives when considering what you believe about pain and suffering.
4. [This video from ReasonableFaith.org](#) helps unpack the logic of how suffering and evil can exist if God is all-loving and all-powerful. It's helpful to see the arguments broken down in a way that makes sense and brings perspective.

I hope you find these helpful and hopeful as you lean into the goodness of God. While they won't take the suffering away, perhaps they'll help you find God in the midst of it. He's closer than you might think.

Grace and peace,  
Laura