

The Life and Ministry of Christ, Part 31

The story of the man born blind raises a question many people have asked: “Why do bad things happen to good people?” We all want to know why things happen. If you are the blind man, you want to know why this happened. When tragedy or difficulties happen, many people question and challenge the belief that God is good and powerful. The disciples as well as everyone in the community questioned why this had happened to the man born blind.

John 9:2 NKJV And His disciples asked Him, saying, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?”

There are several basic truths that we need to understand.

Since God is totally good, He desires the well-being of His creation.

To understand this, we should study and know the nature and character of God.

James 1:17 NKJV Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.

When we know the nature and character of God, it helps us settle many of these questions. We know from God’s nature and character that He desires the well-being of His creation.

God is good — His goodness is related to His mercy, righteousness, love, benevolence, grace, perfectness, truth and holiness.

God is gracious — His grace is known through His salvation, redemption and unmerited or undeserving favor toward those who are under condemnation.

God is faithful — Every promise of God in word, implication or deed will be fulfilled. God keeps His covenant.

God is immutable — He is unchangeable in essence, will, consciousness, and attributes. He never increases, decreases, improves, deteriorates, gets better or worse. He is absolutely perfect.

God is just — God’s justice is not controlled by emotion or passion but by pure holiness.

God is love — The love of God is expressed through mercy, grace, goodness, kindness, and patience. His love is based on His truth, holiness, and goodness.

God is merciful — Mercy is the manifestation of God's goodness in response to the need of man. His mercy is known as compassion,

pity, and love.

God is patient — God is self-controlled in forbearance toward mankind.

God is perfect — God is absolutely complete, flawless, pure, holy, truth, kindness, love, joy, etc; none is better.

God is wise — The wisdom of God is related to the knowledge of God. Wisdom is the controlling power of God in making all things work together for good. The wisdom of God is absolutely original, eternal, immutable, and manifold, (Romans 11:33; Psalms 104:24).

God is totally good.

God is totally against evil.

In the beginning, God created the world and everything within it and God said: “It is good.” God did not go about creating things that were evil or that would destroy or cause pain. When God said, “It is good,” He was not just admiring His own work. That would not have been a bad thing, because a good and perfect God does good work. What God created had a character and nature that was good. Everything bore the fundamental nature or imprint of the Creator. That goodness would have perpetually continued had sin not entered.

Genesis 2:16–17 NKJV And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, “Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.”

Bad things happen because sin entered and brought with it the curse upon everything that God made. Sin always has consequences.

Romans 5:12 NIV Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned.

That is physical, spiritual and eternal death. Genesis 3:14-19 describes the curse. The curse disrupted every dimension of human existence and as a result, the woman faces multiplied sorrow and pain in child birth and the man encounters a cursed ground and toil in labor. Sin and the curse separated them from God and hid the face of God so that He would not hear, (Isaiah 59:2). All creation was subjected to futility and corruption and brought about lack of harmony between mankind and nature. Sin brought consequences that God neither created nor intended. Everything experienced the fall and curse of sin. As time progressed over the millennium, this fallen condition has progressed.

By the time of Noah, wickedness became great.

Genesis 6:5 NKJV Then the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

Due to that wickedness, God brought judgment on the entire earth.

People with evil thoughts do evil things.

Genesis 6:11 NKJV The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence.

The holy and righteous God looks upon mankind and they have all turned aside from God and have become corrupt. As a result, every kind of unrighteousness is practiced. (Psalms 14:1-3; Matthew 15:19;

Romans 1:28-32)

Genesis 6:6 NKJV And the Lord was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart.

God's sorrow was not triggered by human existence but by the wickedness and intentions of their heart. God's perfect intention for His creation was for it to remain in harmony with Him. When sin and corruption filled the earth, God took the necessary action.

Genesis 6:7 NKJV So the Lord said, "I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man and beast, creeping thing and birds of the air, for I am sorry that I have made them."

Why would God destroy rather than rehabilitate?

Noah preached righteousness with no response and they had turned their hearts from God. (2 Peter 2:5)

Why did Noah survive?

Genesis 6:8-9 NKJV But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord. This is the genealogy of Noah. Noah was a just man, perfect in his generations. Noah walked with God.

Genesis 7:1 NKJV Then the Lord said to Noah, "Come into the ark, you and all your household, because I have seen that you are righteous before Me in this generation.

Grace relates to the goodness of God.

The fruit or wages of sin is death.

Romans 5:12 NKJV Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned.

Romans 3:23 NKJV For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

The only remedy for the world is to remove all sin and evil. Even after the

judgment and destruction by flood, the hearts of mankind were not made perfect. Judgment and destruction are not redemptive in nature. Knowing the consequences of sin does not make one righteous.

As long as evil is present, there will be trouble in the world.

Although God prefers to do good to all of His creation all the time, the holy God cannot by-pass or ignore sin. The Bible tells us the wages of sin is death.

When Jesus Christ died upon the cross, a new age of grace was entered.

If God did not punish evil, He would not be a holy and righteous God. Jesus Christ provided the grace whereby we may be saved and find relief from the curse of sin.

Romans 6:23 NKJV For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

God's grace and mercy are amazing.

Ephesians 2:8–10 NKJV For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

Since we are all sinners, every good thing that happens to us is an act of God's grace.

Why do bad things happen to good people?

Satan is the adversary and he works hard to destroy everything good that God creates.

He roams around like a lion, seeking what he may devour, 1 Peter 5:8. He is a murderer and liar and has been from the beginning, John 8:44. He seeks to steal, kill and destroy, John 10:10. Since Satan's motive is to do harm and cause havoc, we should not be surprised when bad things happen.

Ephesians 6:12 NKJV For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.

Since we contend with spiritual hosts of wickedness, we must learn to resist them in steadfast faith, 1 Peter 5:8-9; Ephesians 6:10-18.

Why do bad things happen to good people?

We contend with evil people.

2 Timothy 3:12–13 NKJV Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ

Jesus will suffer persecution. But evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.

Matthew 24:9–10 NKJV “Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name’s sake. And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another.

Matthew 24:11-13 NKJV Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold. But he who endures to the end shall be saved.

Matthew 24:14 NKJV And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.

Why do bad things happen to good people?

In this text, the man was born blind and Jesus said the blindness was not a consequence of personal sin.

John 9:3 NKJV Jesus answered, “Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in him.”

God allowed this to happen so that the man’s healing would reveal God’s work and glory. Is God unjust if we have problems even though we have done everything “right”?

Romans 9:20–21 NKJV But indeed, O man, who are you to reply against God? Will the thing formed say to him who formed it, “Why have you made me like this?” Does not the potter have power over the clay, from the same lump to make one vessel for honor and another for dishonor?

Romans 9:22-23 NKJV What if God, wanting to show His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, and that He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He had prepared beforehand for glory...

The Lord God Almighty is sovereign in all of His actions.

He is infinitely elevated above all creation and is subject to no one. He operates without external influence or constraint and does exactly as He pleases. He owns all things in heaven and earth. He has all authority over all things and has the right to impose His will on all things. He is in absolute control over His universe and is not baffled or frustrated by creation. His purposes are eternal and immutable, requiring no change. He is all wise, benevolent, holy, just and good.

Lamentations 3:21–23 NKJV This I recall to my mind, Therefore I have hope. Through the Lord’s mercies we are not consumed, Because His

compassions fail not. They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness.

What would happen if God would just get rid of all of the evil people?

Is God wrong to allow some people to suffer? or Why is there suffering in the world?

If a good person goes through a bad situation, has God lost control?