

The Facts of Life

The Answers to the Questions!

“Everything that goes into a life of pleasing God has been miraculously given to us...” The Message

“A Good God May Allow Suffering”

“For our present troubles are small and won’t last very long. Yet they produce for us a glory that vastly outweighs them and will last forever!

So we don’t look at the troubles we can see now; rather, we fix our gaze on things that cannot be seen. For the things we see now will soon be gone, but the things we cannot see will last forever.”

2 Corinthians 4:17-18 NLT

A. How can a good God allow suffering?

1. God is infinitely wise; all-knowing; omniscient.

“Great is our Lord and mighty in power; his understanding has no limit.” Psalm 147:5 NIV

“Even if we feel guilty, God is greater than our feelings, and he knows everything.” 1 John 3:20

2. God is infinitely powerful; all-powerful; omnipotent.

“I also pray that you will understand the incredible greatness of God’s power for us who believe him. This is the same mighty power” Ephesians 1:19 NLT

“I know that you can do all things; no purpose of yours can be thwarted.” Job 42:1-2 NIV

3. God is infinitely present; all-present; omnipresent.

“For God watches how people live; he sees everything they do.” Job 34:21 NLT

“Can anyone hide from me in a secret place? Am I not everywhere in all the heavens and earth?” says the Lord.” Jeremiah 23:24 NLT

4. God is infinitely loving; all-loving at all times!

“But anyone who does not love does not know God, for God is love.” 1 John 4:8 NLT

“For this is how God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.” John 3:16 NLT

B. There are two kinds of evil in this world, and two ways to respond...

1. There is natural evil. This is evil that is produced through nature as in floods, tornadoes, etc.

2. Because of free will, there is moral evil. This is evil inflicted on a person or a group by another person or a group. It is said this accounts for 95% of the evil in our world.

3. One response is logical and appeals to the mind and generally is not beneficial when someone is in the midst of pain.

4. A second response is more feeling-based and appeals to the emotions. Most people in pain have a hard time listening to logic. The wounded really want comfort.

“Maybe sometimes God keeps us in the dark about ‘why’ not so much because He wants to keep using the dark, as because He knows we are incapable of absorbing so much light.” Phillip Yancey

In response to Job’s questions: “For God to try to explain the kinds of things Job wants explained would be like Einstein explaining relativity to a little-neck clam.” Frederick Buechner

C. God will always use the trials and suffering that come into our lives...

1. God uses them to build patience, character, and faith.

“God blesses those who patiently endure testing and temptation.” James 1:12a

“We can rejoice, too, when we run into problems and trials, for we know that they help us develop endurance. And endurance develops strength of character...” Romans 3:5-6a
“For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow.” James 1:3

2. God may use them to discipline.

“But God’s discipline is always good for us, so that we might share in his holiness. No discipline is enjoyable while it is happening—it’s painful! But afterward there will be a peaceful harvest of right living for those who are trained in this way.” Hebrews 12:10b-11

3. God may use them to build dependence on Him.

“Each time he said, ‘My grace is all you need. My power works best in weakness.’” 2 Corinthians 12:9a

4. God will always use them to help us become more like Jesus.

“For God knew his people in advance, and he chose them to become like his Son...” Romans 8:29a

5. God will always use them to help us comfort others.
“He comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort others. When they are troubled, we will be able to give them the same comfort God has given us.” 2 Corinthians 1:4 NLT

6. God will use them to bring glory to Him.
“As for me, I will always have hope; I will praise you more and more. My mouth will tell of your righteous deeds, of your saving acts all day long—though I know not how to relate them all.” Psalm 71:14-15 NIV

7. Sometimes, we just don’t know!
“‘My thoughts are nothing like your thoughts,’ says the Lord. ‘And my ways are far beyond anything you could imagine. For just as the heavens are higher than the earth, so my ways are higher than your ways and my thoughts higher than your thoughts.’” Isaiah 55:8-9

D. Jesus made a promise that is not always welcomed...

“I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.” John 16:33

1. We will all have trouble!

2. We all have choices of how we handle the trouble!
You can either become bitter or better!

3. We all have the option of peace!

4. And no matter what the trial or suffering...it is temporary as Jesus has overcome it for each of us!
So fix your eyes on Jesus!

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Digging Deeper...for all those interested in digging deeper into this topic, there are resources in the Well Read Bookstore to assist you.

The God Questions book at \$2.50 and \$7.50 for follow up.

Plus, Well Read has additional materials upon request for the even more serious student!

Coming soon:

September 27: *40 Days of Prayer and Fasting* begins...

October 23: Fact #5 God Created

Answer to the Question – Which Is Right:
Evolution or Creation?

October 30: Fact #6 – Heaven is a Place for Eternity

Answer to the Question – What Will Heaven Be Like?

November 6: *Friend Day (End of 40 Days)*