

If God Exists, Why Is There So Much Evil?

The question of evil and suffering is one of the deepest challenges to belief in God. If God is all-powerful and all-loving, why does He permit so much pain, injustice, and tragedy? At first glance, the existence of evil seems to argue against God's existence. Yet, when considered carefully, the presence of evil actually points to God's reality, and the Christian faith provides both an explanation and a hope for all.

1. The Problem Defined

The objection usually assumes this logic:

1. If God is all-good, He would want to eliminate evil.
2. If God is all-powerful, He would be able to eliminate evil.
3. Evil exists.
4. Therefore, an all-good, all-powerful God does not exist.

This is a powerful challenge, but it rests on some hidden assumptions that deserve examination.

2. Evil Presupposes Good

To call something "evil" assumes there is such a thing as "good" against which evil can be measured. If there is no God, then moral values are simply human preferences, no more binding than personal tastes. But we instinctively know that some things are not just unpleasant — they are truly wrong: genocide, cruelty, betrayal. Evil is real, not imaginary. And if evil is real, then so is an objective moral standard. That moral standard is best explained by the existence of a moral Lawgiver — God. Ironically, our awareness of evil is itself evidence that God exists.

3. The Gift of Free Will

Much of the evil we see in the world is the result of human choices: wars, exploitation, abuse, corruption. Why would God allow this? The Christian answer is 'free will'. God created humans not as pets or robots programmed to obey, but as persons capable of real love, real trust, and real obedience. But genuine freedom also means the possibility of rejecting God and doing harm. Love without freedom to choose is impossible.

4. The Role of Suffering

Not all suffering comes from human choice. Natural disasters, disease, and death are part of the world's brokenness. The Fall of humanity introduced disorder not only into human hearts but into creation itself.

Yet suffering is not meaningless. Often, it shapes character, produces compassion, and turns people toward God. The Bible presents suffering as a context in which faith is tested and refined. This does not trivialise pain, yet while we may not understand the reason for every tragedy, God can still bring profound good even out of hardship.

5. God's Justice and God's Patience

A common question is why God doesn't simply step in and remove evildoers. The Christian answer is that He will — in His time. Scripture promises a final judgment where every wrong will be accounted for, and perfect justice will be established. But God's patience delays judgment because He desires repentance and as many people to choose Him as possible. What feels like divine neglect is actually divine *mercy*, giving more people time to turn back to Him.

6. The Cross: God Enters Our Suffering

The most profound Christian response to evil is not merely philosophical but personal: God Himself has entered into our suffering. In Jesus Christ, God took on human flesh, endured injustice, betrayal, torture, and death. The Cross shows that God is not distant from human pain — He shares it. And the resurrection demonstrates that evil and death do not have the final word. Christianity uniquely proclaims a God who suffers with us and for us, offering forgiveness and eternal hope.

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten son, that WHOSOEVER believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life (John 3:16).

I am the way, the truth and the life. No-one comes to the Father except through me. (John 14:6)

7. Hope of Restoration

The Bible does not minimise the reality of evil. But it points to a future where God will wipe away every tear, and death and pain will be no more (Revelation 21:4). The existence of evil is not the end of the story. In Christ, God promises a renewed creation where justice, peace, and love will reign perfectly.

Conclusion

The existence of evil is troubling, but it is not evidence against God. Instead, it highlights our deep awareness of moral truth, the value of freedom, and the longing for justice — all of which point toward God, not away from Him. Christianity does not claim to answer every “why” behind every tragedy, but it does proclaim that God is good, that He has acted in history to defeat evil through Jesus, and that He will one day bring about a world without suffering.

In the meantime, believers are called not to offer glib answers, but to embody Jesus’s love, bringing light into dark places. The question of evil remains painful, but in Jesus we see both an explanation and a hope that transforms despair into trust.

Do you want to find out more? Here are some useful resources to begin your journey:

davidpawson.co.uk

derekprince.com

bibleproject.com

khouse.org

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