

# HOW CAN A GOD OF LOVE ALLOW PAIN & SUFFERING?

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JOB 1

## MAIN TAKEAWAY

God is good, and His thoughts are above our thoughts. Humanity, not God, is responsible for sin—but Jesus came to die for our sins and to give us eternal life and purpose.

## INTRODUCTION

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

**Pastor Greg explained, “More people point to the problem of evil and suffering as their reason for not believing in God than any other.” How have you experienced this in your relationships? How have you learned to respond to this question?**

**In the question, “If God is so good and loving, why does He allow evil?” why is the first part of the question based on a false premise? How do you know that God is good? How do human responsibility and sin factor into the question?**

## UNDERSTANDING

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

### HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ JOB 1

**How does Job’s story help explain why God allows pain and suffering?**

**Job was a man of prayer and integrity, and was blessed by God. Why is character not made in crisis, but *revealed* in crisis?**

**In response to crisis, you can either turn to the Lord or *against* Him; you either get *better* or *bitter*. How is this seen in Job and his wife? How does Job’s response serve as an example to imitate (James 5:10-11)?**

***God allows suffering and sickness to get our attention. How do trials uniquely awaken us to God's presence and life's brevity (Psalm 23:4; 90:12; 119:67)?***

***God is in control of all circumstances that surround the believer. How is this seen in the interaction between God and Satan in Job 1? How does God's sovereignty bring you comfort and hope even in pain?***

***Suffering helps us grow spiritually and makes us stronger in our faith (Job 23:10; 42:5). In what way are trials like "God's gym" (James 1:2-4)? How was Job changed as a result of his extreme suffering?***

***Suffering can be used to prepare us for a special task (Genesis 50:19-21). Like Joseph, how can difficulties turn into opportunities? How can the ministry of comfort be one of these tasks (2 Corinthians 1:3-7)?***

***In response to the question, "Why do bad things happen to good people?" Pastor Greg answered, "That only happened once—and He volunteered." How does Jesus' suffering and sacrifice bring perspective to this question? How does this reveal what God did about our pain and suffering?***

## **APPLICATION**

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

***As Christians, why should trials be expected, and how can you prepare for them to come (1 Peter 4:12-13)? How should you respond (John 16:33)?***

***Pastor Greg said, "Faith that cannot be tested is a faith that cannot be trusted." How have you experienced spiritual growth through the testing of your faith?***

***How will you respond the next time you are asked, "How can a God of love allow pain and suffering?" How did this message help you form a biblical answer?***

## **PRAYER**

Give thanks to God, for He is good. Pray for strength to trust that His thoughts are above our thoughts, and that He is working His redemptive purpose even in difficulty. Pray for those in your group who are experiencing pain and suffering. Praise God for the hope found in Christ.