

DISCUSSION GUIDE

WHY DOES GOD ALLOW EVIL AND SUFFERING?
Apologetics 2025 — Week 4

ICEBREAKER: If you were assured you would not fail, what endeavor would you attempt?

OVERVIEW: Philosopher David Hume articulated the problem of evil this way: “Is God willing to prevent evil but not able? Then he is impotent. Is he able but not willing? Then he is malevolent. Is he both able and willing? From whence then is evil?” In other words, if God is both all-powerful and perfectly good, then why do evil and suffering exist? One prominent theologian calls this the single greatest challenge to the Christian faith. In this study, we will go deeper with learning how to answer this question.

1. What insight, principle, or observation from this weekend’s message did you find to be the most helpful, eye-opening, or troubling? Explain. (Or what was your key takeaway from Sunday’s message?)
2. Has the problem of evil ever caused you to doubt God — either His goodness, His greatness, or even His existence? Explain.
3. Do you agree that the problem of evil is the single greatest challenge to the Christian faith? Explain.
4. How do you hold on to your faith when you witness or experience evil and suffering?

5. Read John 9:1-7 and answer the following questions.
 - a. What did the disciples ask Jesus?
 - b. The disciples’ question reveals a common assumption about suffering. What is it?
 - c. What explanation did Jesus give for why this man suffered? What did He mean?
 - d. In fact, there are many reasons why a person might suffer other than punishment for sin. What are they?
6. Refer to Sunday’s sermon for the following questions. One of the main points was that evil and suffering don’t disprove God’s existence. Why not?
7. How do evil and suffering actually point to God’s existence?
8. Where do evil and suffering come from in the first place?
9. Why did God allow Adam and Eve to sin?
10. How does God use suffering for good?
11. What is God’s ultimate plan for evil and suffering?
12. How does God want to help us when we suffer?

The Last Word: “God would never permit evil — if He could not bring good out of evil.” Augustine

