

One Objection

How could a 'good' God allow suffering?



Overview of the message:

Adrian phrased the objection as: "***If God is all powerful, and doesn't desire suffering, why is there suffering in the world?***" He covered four perspectives on suffering that help us to understand how God can allow it:

1. God gives us free will, which means we have to deal with the consequences of our actions.
2. God sometimes works through suffering.
3. God is not immune to suffering – Jesus suffered too.
4. God more than compensates for our suffering – we will have an eternity free from suffering.

He finished by showing how the cross is God's answer to suffering:

1. It shows us the results of human freedom – Jesus' unfair punishment at the hands of people.
2. We see God working through suffering – Jesus' death was God's plan to rescue us.
3. God shares in our experience of suffering.
4. Through the cross, God more than compensates for our suffering.

Questions

The material from this talk was very rich. It is too much to cover everything.

There are probably two main groups in which Adrian's message is helpful.

- For those struggling intellectually with the objection, or wanting to help those who are.
- To comfort and encourage those who have gone through deep suffering.

Clearly there is overlap – answers for the first group are also helpful for the second. The first two questions below are mainly intended for the first group, the last question for the second group. Feel free to use whichever questions you feel are most helpful for your own Life Group.

1. Have people in the group ever struggled with this objection themselves? If so, have you come across answers/helpful responses previously?
2. In small groups - how would you respond to someone who said they couldn't believe in God because of the suffering in the world?
3. How would this message help you comfort someone who was going through severe suffering of some kind?

Possible answers

3. *God cares about our suffering, and we're not alone in it. One day it will be over forever.*