

# WHY>

## Week #4: Why Is The World So Messed Up?

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### 1. The Sin Issue

The answer to the question ‘why is the world so messed up?’ is concisely simple yet infinitely complex all at the same time. The answer is because of SIN.

- “All traditional Christians agree that human beings have a biblically certified and empirically demonstrable bias toward evil.” Cornelius Plantinga
- Sin is vandalism against the Shalom of God and Shalom is “The webbing together of God, humans, and all creation in justice, fulfillment, and delight... Shalom, in other words, is the way things ought to be...” Cornelius Plantinga - Sin makes things the way they aren’t supposed to be.
- Sin Perverts, Pollutes and Divides/Compartmentalizes

### 2. The Deeper Questions

- God, are you there?
- Why do you allow evil and suffering?

### 3. The Three Types of Suffering or Evil

- Moral Evil: Evil that comes from man’s poor choices or decisions.
- Natural Evil: Evil that happens as a result of Nature (hurricanes, tornadoes, earthquakes and such).
- Physical Evil: Evil that results from our physical bodies such as diseases.

### 4. Theodicy: God's reason for permitting evil - is God just?

“The attempt to justify the ways of God to man.” John Milton

Theodicy of the Major Religions of the World:

- Judaism – Deuteronomic - if you do good then good will happen and if you sin then bad things will happen.
- Islam – Submission - whatever happens is God's will.
- Hinduism – Karma - you get what you deserve - there is a caste system.

- Buddhism – Avoid - by avoiding desire and having compassion on those who suffer.

## 5. Three Common Biblical Defenses of Theodicy

- Freewill Defense: Human suffering comes about as a result of human sin.  
*Genesis 2:16, 17; Galatians 6:7*
- Soul-Building Defense: Human suffering comes as God either sends or allows suffering to teach us something.  
*Psalms 92:12; Matthew 5:11, 12*
- Eschatological or Eternal Defense: However severe human suffering may be in this life, it is small against the backdrop of all eternity.  
*John 14:1-3; 1 Corinthians 2:9*

## 6. The Threefold Nature of the Christians' Hope

- We Can Make a Difference – *John 16:33*

Every action that builds the Shalom of God, the things we do to make the world and our family the way it ought to be, minimizes suffering. The vast majority of our suffering is either self inflicted or the result of a sinful choice of another individual.

“For unless we distinguish clearly between tragic suffering and just suffering or... between human evil and universal evil, we are tempted to equate all forms of suffering and to decry all of them as a visitation by cruel fate on innocent people, as in Kushner’s phrase, ‘bad things happen to good people’... Christians are indeed called...to suffer redemptively in the world on behalf of their hope in God’s coming kingdom of justice. Indeed, redemptive suffering on behalf of others is the signature of Christian hope in our idolatrous world.” Christian Beker

- Our Savior Understands the Dark Night of the Soul

Crying out to the omnipotent God to change the course, minimize the trial, or remove the pain only to be subjected to the greater unknown plan of God.

*Mark 14:34-36 - "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death," he said to them. ... "Abba, Father ... everything is possible for you. Take this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will." NIV*

*Mark 15:34 - "... My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" NIV*

- The majesty of a relationship with Christ brings a unique perspective on the Problem of Evil and Suffering

*Hebrews 4:14-16 - Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. <sup>15</sup>For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are — yet was without sin. <sup>16</sup>Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need. NIV*