



Tough Stuff: Evil in the World

Text: Various

Executive Director Breakaway Ministries Timothy Ateek

1. Evil is real. In fact, Jesus even told his followers, “in this world you will have troubles.” (John 16:33) T.A. taught that it is a virtually universal human experience that when we are confronted with the existence of evil in this world, we have all been tempted to doubt God’s existence, goodness, and/or power.
 - a. How have you experienced the existence of evil creating doubt in you?
 - b. Is this something you would say you are wrestling with right now? Explain.
 - c. If you have been able to work through some of these doubts and still hold on to your faith, how did you continue in your faith even while struggling with doubt?

2. However, if we will allow it, the presence of evil and God’s response to evil can actually fuel our faith and our confidence in God’s existence, goodness, and power. It is evidence of God’s existence because to call something inherently and objectively evil, it assumes the existence (or at least potential) of good. In other words, our visceral response to evil shows that there is something in our hearts that screams, “That’s not the way it should be!” Read Genesis 1:1, 26-31.
 - a. According to the Christian worldview, rooted in Scripture, where does our heartfelt understanding and longing for the way things should be come from?
 - b. How do the naturalistic and postmodern worldviews, as T.A. explained them, fall short in being able to explain this?

3. God’s ultimate display of goodness and power over evil was displayed in the life, death, and resurrection of Christ. (See Romans 5:6-8 and Hebrews 2:14-15.) The victory has been won, and those of us who have put our trust in Jesus will get to live with him in eternity in a world completely free from evil. (See Revelation 21:1-4.) However, what about the here and now? Where is God? Why doesn’t he completely do away with evil right now? Read 1 Timothy 2:3-7 and 2 Peter 3:8-9. What answers do these texts provide?

Challenge: Read John 14:12, John 20:21, and Romans 12:21. What does God want us to do in response to the evil in the world? What is a specific way you feel led to get involved? What is a specific evil in the world that places a burden on your heart, and how can you be a part of overcoming that evil with good?

Prayer:
Father,

We know that despite the evil we see in this world, you are perfectly good. You are loving, gracious, and wise beyond all we can imagine or say. Help us to trust in these truths, even when our hearts begin to doubt in the face of evil. We know that our grief and anger against evil is there because the presence of evil rages against the seed you have put into our hearts of the way things were meant to be. We thank you that even though this world is broken, you did not stand idly by. You came for us, to rescue us. You entered this world full of evil in the person of Jesus. You showed us what a life of pushing away evil and bringing a message of hope looks like. You took the curse of evil upon when you went to the cross, absorbing the penalty we should have paid for the part we have played in the evil of this world. And you defeated evil through this ultimate sacrifice of love and subsequent resurrection. Thank you for the hope you have purchased for us on the cross. Give us strength and endurance in this life. Help us to be agents of your love, pushing back the evil we see in the world and killing the remaining evil we find in our own hearts. And help us share the hope you bring to the hurting world around us.

In Jesus' name. Amen.

STUDY DEEPER

Resources mentioned in the Postscript at <http://faithbridge.org/sermon/tough-stuff-evil-in-the-world/>.

#1 Recommended Resource – Book: *I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be An Atheist* by Norman Geisler and Frank Turek

Resources from Ravi Zacharias and his ministry, RZIM (<https://rzim.org/>)

- Evil Present = God Absent? - <https://rzim.org/just-a-thought-broadcasts/evil-present-god-absent/>
- Short Answers 16: If God, Why Evil? - <https://rzim.org/global-blog/short-answers-16-if-god-why-evil/>
- Evil: Define It - <https://rzim.org/just-a-thought-broadcasts/evil-define-it/>
- The Origin of Evil - <https://rzim.org/just-a-thought-broadcasts/the-origin-of-evil/>
- Evil and Suffering - <https://rzim.org/just-a-thought-broadcasts/evil-and-suffering/>
- Book: *Why Suffering?: Finding Meaning and Comfort When Life Doesn't Make Sense* by Ravi Zacharias

Other Recommended Authors

- Greg Kochel
- Frank Turek
- William Lane Craig

<https://www.gotquestions.org/>

- What is the definition of evil? - <https://www.gotquestions.org/definition-of-evil.html>
- Did God create evil? - <https://www.gotquestions.org/did-God-create-evil.html>
- Why does God allow evil? - <https://www.gotquestions.org/God-allow-evil.html>