

## The Beautiful Paradox Of Mercy: A Sermon On The Existence Of Evil - Notes

Scripture: Romans 8:35-39

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? As it is written:

“For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered.”

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

### Resources and References

#### [David Hume – Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion](#)

“If God is unable to prevent evil, then he is not all-powerful.

If God is not willing to prevent evil, then he is not all-good.

If God is both willing and able to prevent evil, then why does it exist?”

#### [Epicurus – Epicurean Paradox](#)

“If God knows about our suffering (all-knowing), cares about our suffering (all-loving), and can do something about our suffering (all-powerful), then there shouldn't be any suffering!”

#### [St. Thomas Aquinas – Suma Theologica](#)

“The existence of evil exemplifies the beauty and perfection of God's all-loving and all-powerful nature. God allows evil to exist in His presence so that He can create good from this evil.”

#### [Tim Keller – The Reason For God](#)

Tucked away within the assertion that the world is filled with pointless evil is a hidden premise, namely, that if evil appears pointless to me, then it must be pointless...This reasoning is, of course, fallacious. Just because you can't see or imagine a good reason why God might allow something to happen doesn't mean there can't be one.

## **OUTLINE**

- I. Introduction
  - a. Introduction/Update
    - i. We went to new members class last week.
    - ii. How were we not members before now? (Long Story)
  - b. Introduce Series
    - i. People write in questions.
    - ii. Pastors review and assign questions.
  - c. Introduce Topic
    - i. How do we make sense of God, good, and evil while living in an imperfect world
      1. Why does God allow evil
      2. Why do good people suffer
- II. Parameters
  - a. We must walk gently with reverence when approaching other people's pain.
  - b. There's no good answer in the now of pain – the good answers only come when looking back on it
  - c. God grieves all pain. We cannot compare or measure one person's pain against another.
- III. This question is an OLD question
  - a. As a non-Christian/skeptic I asked this question
  - b. As a Christian going through difficult times I asked this question.
  - c. David Hume asked this question in the 1700's
  - d. Epicurus asked this question in 300 B.C.
- IV. Thom's non-Christian approach and David Hume
  - a. Logical Fallacy called "False Dilemma" Fallacy
    - i. Evil = separate from God.
    - ii. God and evil are not equals
    - iii. God is actually the authority
    - iv. God can and does use evil for good
    - v. God can and has transformed evil into something good
    - vi. Evil is bad – but it cannot separate us from the love of Christ.
  - b. Good Shepherd Analogy
    - i. The good shepherd goes after the lost sheep.
    - ii. The good shepherd ensures the sheep never strays again.

- iii. The good shepherd protects the sheep from what the sheep believes to be good.
    - iv. What the sheep believes to be good, will kill it.
    - v. Cognitive dissonance
  - c. We are not victims of evil. We partake in Christ's conquest of it.
    - i. "In all these things we are more than conquerors."
    - ii. We partake in Christ's conquest on the cross. (turning the ultimate evil into the ultimate good)
    - iii. Thomas Aquinas quote – "The existence of evil exemplifies the beauty and perfection of God's all-loving and all-powerful nature."
- V. Thom's Christian approach/journey
  - a. God moves us out of our present comfort zones because he loves us.
    - i. Leaving Richmond VA
  - b. God uses hard times to form us for HIS future glory.
    - i. Leaving Key Biscayne
  - c. God uses the power of adversity to strengthen us.
    - i. The Pandemic and the end of C2
  - d. God uses our highs and our lows to draw us into communion with Him and with the Body – forever.
    - i. Welcome to The Brook
  - e. We are never separated from the Love of God – or the family of God.
    - i. Reread Romans 8:35-39

### **Important Questions To Ask Yourself:**

What circumstances bring about my "Why does God allow evil?" questions?

Is my "Why does God allow evil?" question an honest question or is it an accusation?

Has your "Why does God allow evil?" question separated you from the body of Christ?

If you look back where can you see "God moving" in your troubles?

What would it look like to accept that Jesus loves you MORE than you love you?