

HOW CAN A GOOD GOD ALLOW EVIL?

EPISODE 1: THE GOD PROBLEM

look back

First, **LOOK BACK** at the past week by asking, “How did we do?” Begin with prayer, then check in with one another—sharing honestly, celebrating victories, acknowledging struggles, and graciously offering practical help.

 **PRAYER** - Begin with prayer, inviting Jesus into the conversation.

Since this is the first episode of the series, take time to:

- Share what brought you here and why this topic matters to you.
- Talk about how you’ve seen faith challenged by suffering or evil.
- Reflect on what you hope to gain from this study and what you’re praying God will reveal.

look up

Next, **LOOK UP** to God’s Word by asking, “What does Jesus want us to know?” If you haven’t already, watch this week’s video: “*The God Problem*.” Then use the summary, questions, and Scriptures below to draw out the main truths together.

 **WATCH: How Can a Good God Allow Evil?: The God Problem**

Episode Summary

This episode introduces the question that has challenged believers for centuries—**How can a good God allow evil?** Dr. Bob explains that this is one of the main reasons many young people today struggle with faith. Instead of avoiding the question, Jesus invites us to face it with honesty and compassion.

In the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus Himself wrestled with fear, sorrow, and the weight of evil. On the cross He cried, “My God, my God, why have You forsaken Me?” Rather than solving the problem of evil with arguments, He entered into it, suffering for us and with us.

All of your clever arguments will never change anyone. But Jesus can, if they hear and see Him in you.

HOW TO USE THESE RESOURCES

Whether you’re studying on your own or with a group, each guide follows a simple yet powerful rhythm: **Look Back/ Look Up / Look Forward**. For group leaders, additional instructions for leading a small group are included at the end of the first workbook in each series.

ABOUT THIS STUDY

This series explores one of the most difficult questions people ask about faith: **If God is good, why does He allow evil and suffering?** Each episode will help you think biblically and compassionately about this issue so you can grow in faith and confidently discuss it with others. The final study guide in this series includes Discussion Starters designed to help you share these videos and start meaningful conversations with your children, grandchildren, and friends.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1. If you could ask Jesus one honest question about suffering or evil, what would it be?
2. Does remembering that Jesus is with you in suffering strengthen your trust in Him? How?
3. Have you personally discussed the problem of evil with a young person? What did you learn from that dialogue?
4. Why is it important to make room for honest questions and doubts when talking about faith?
5. How can we respond with love and humility when someone struggles to believe in a God who allows suffering?
6. Why does helping others see Jesus’ suffering in Gethsemane make the gospel more relatable and real to them? Why is that an important step in leading them to Jesus?

WHAT DOES GOD'S WORD SAY?

KEY SCRIPTURE

“Hebrews 4:15 For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin.” Jesus understands our pain and questions because He lived them Himself—He meets us in our suffering, not apart from it.

SUPPORTING SCRIPTURE

Psalms 22:1–2 “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me, so far from my cries of anguish?” God welcomes honest cries from the heart. Our questions are not necessarily rebellious, but often are more about our relationship with God.

Romans 8:28 “And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.” We may not always know why bad things happen but we can trust a good God to make good come from them.



Finally, **LOOK FORWARD** by asking, “What does Jesus want us to do?” Commit to practical steps for living out this lesson. Review the assignment, share commitments with the group, pray for one another, and move forward together in faith and hope.

ADDITIONAL REFERENCES

Genesis 50:20
Job 1:8–12
Matthew 26:36–46

THIS EPISODE'S ASSIGNMENT

This week, take time to reflect on moments in your life when you've experienced pain, confusion, or loss. How did those experiences shape your faith? Write down one or two ways you saw God's presence or purpose more clearly afterward. Bring your reflections to the next session and be ready to share how He met you in your questions.

For a deeper dive: Here are two books that explore the issue of God and evil and give good Biblical answers: ***Where is God When It Hurts*** by Philip Yancy and ***Theater of Angels*** by Robert Petterson.

PERSONAL GROWTH COMMITMENTS



- What has God laid on my heart?
- What is the Holy Spirit leading me to change?
- What will I do in my own life, in my relationships, and to reach NextGen loved ones?



SHARE WITH THE GROUP

Encourage sharing commitments, prayer needs, and real-life stories. Close your time together in prayer, asking Jesus to strengthen your faith and help you continue practicing kindness that reflects His heart.



ESSENTIALS FOR LEADING A SMALL GROUP

These principles help create a safe, encouraging environment where everyone can grow and connect:

- **Begin with Prayer** – Invite Jesus into the meeting and ask for His guidance.
- **Create a Welcoming Setup** – Sit in a circle so everyone can see each other.
- **Facilitate, Don't Lecture** – Guide the conversation with thoughtful, Scripture-based questions.
- **Stay on Mission** – Gently redirect if conversation strays into politics or unrelated topics.
- **Model Grace & Openness** – Be transparent about your own journey and set expectations for confidentiality.
- **Build Relationships** – Include social time before or after the session.
- **Follow the Look Back / Look Up / Look Forward Rhythm** – Celebrate progress and offer grace for struggles.



Explore additional resources and upcoming events at LegacyImperative.org. If this series blesses you, please share it—and consider helping us reach more families by clicking the donate button.