



³⁷ And he said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.
³⁸ This is the great and first commandment. (Mt 22:37-38)

“But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander.” (1Pt 3:15-16)

God is good

... and the 'problem' of suffering

The Problem of Suffering.

1. An Intellectual Problem.
2. An Emotional Problem.

1. The intellectual problem of evil.

The skeptic might presuppose God cannot have morally sufficient reasons for permitting evil in the world.

Three reasons God might allow evil:

- i. Free will creates suffering, even if God prefers a world without suffering.
- ii. God could not have created a world with as much good as, but less evil than this world.
- iii. God has good reasons for permitting the suffering that exists.

Suffering affirms God's existence.

Premise 1: If God does not exist, objective moral values do not exist.

Premise 2: Evil exists.

Therefore, objective moral values.

Therefore, God exists.

2. The emotional problem of evil.

- A. We may never know *why* some things happen.
- B. We cannot “faith” our way out of trouble.
- C. Evil reminds us of the depravity of this world.
- D. The future holds hope for those who trust Jesus.

A. We may never know *why* things happen.

- i. God knows *why* all things happen (Rom 8:28).
- ii. We know God does not *cause* evil (James 1:13).
- iii. We trust God when we do not understand.

B. We cannot *faith* our way out of trouble.

- i. Faithful Job experienced trouble (Job 1).
- ii. Joseph suffered unjustly (Gen 50:20).
- iii. Paul couldn't do it (2Co 11:23-25).
- iv. Faith in weakness shows God's power (2Co 12:9).

C. Evil reminds us of the depravity of this world.

- i. The entire creation groans (Rom 8:22-23).
- ii. Mankind exists in rebellion against God (Rom 1:21-25)
- iii. Jesus will return to vanquish evil (Rev 21:1-5).
- iv. He delays that one more might be saved (2Pt 3:8-9).

D. The future holds hope.

“We do not lose heart. For this slight, momentary affliction is preparing us for an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison ...” (2 Cor. 4:16-18).

The only real hope in suffering comes from the Lord. Trust him today.