

Why Do Bad Things Happen to Good People?

If the Spirit of God is speaking to you today, then today is your day of salvation. Second Corinthians 6:2 says that at just the right time, God heard you. If you cry out to God, He will hear you. On the day of salvation, He will help you. He will send the Holy Spirit to guide you and draw you to Him. Certainly, the "right time" is now. Today is the day of salvation! There is no guarantee of tomorrow. Your heart may become hard and your ears deaf to His call. Today, if you are fortunate enough to hear His voice, I urge you to say yes to Christ and His love.

You can experience a spiritual rebirth today. Romans 10:9 (KJV) says, "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."

Will you pray today and begin your journey with Christ? "Lord Jesus, I confess with my mouth today that You are the only begotten Son of the living God. I repent and turn from my sins. I believe that You died on the cross to save me from my punishment, and I receive You as Savior and Lord of my life. Please help me to grow in Your fellowship and serve You all the days of my life. I ask these things in Jesus' name. Amen."

If you prayed that prayer today from your heart, then you have become a child of God. You have been born again, and your adventure with Christ begins. Read the Bible each day, beginning with the book of John. Talk to God each day, and ask for His help. Find a church that loves Jesus, loves people, worships God with enthusiasm, and teaches the Bible. They will help and encourage you on your journey with Christ.

May God bless you,
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Introduction – This paper was written by a retired high school and college mathematics instructor. It was not written or produced by any particular church or denomination. It is provided free of charge as an expression of God's love for mankind.

Why do bad things happen to good people? I am frequently asked this very question. Charitable hospitals share the stories of children who are fighting cancer and other critical diseases with continuing painful treatments and surgeries. Other families have suffered the loss of a loving mother or father, sometimes both. At an orphanage in Central America, we met two children who had witnessed the murder of their mother and father right in their very own home. Although many people seem to do the right thing, for some, disaster strikes at every turn. Nevertheless, the wicked often seem to prosper. In Psalm 73:3 (ESV), David said, "... I was envious of the arrogant when I saw the prosperity of the wicked." Have you ever felt that way? Many people are troubled and confused by the apparent contradiction in observing the success of the wicked and the suffering of the innocent.

It is not unusual for people to call attention to what they perceive to be a grave injustice. As a result, many people wonder why bad things happen to good people. It's actually not as frequent as you may think. In the whole course of human history, it has only happened one time. According to God's standard of holiness, there has only been one perfect person, Jesus Christ. Hebrews 4:15 (ESV) says, Christ was tempted in every respect "as we are, yet without sin." Speaking of both the Gentiles and the Jews, we are reminded in Romans 3:11 (ESV), "... There is no one righteous, not even one ..." We are all sinners.

People go to heaven by the mercy and grace (unmerited favor) of God. Ephesians 2:8-9 (ESV) tells us, "8 for by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, 9 not by works, so that no one can boast."

What about the millions of little children whose life experience has been cut short by illness, war, or the intentional termination of their life? The answer may be found in Matthew 19:13-15 (KJV): "13 Then were there brought unto him little children, that he should put his hands on them, and pray: and the disciples rebuked them. 14 But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven. 15 And he laid his hands on them, and departed thence."

Little children belong to God. Hear the words of Ezekiel 16:20-21 (NIV): "20 And you took your sons and daughters whom you bore to me and sacrificed them as food to the idols. Was your prostitution not enough? 21 You slaughtered my children and sacrificed them to the idols." Ezekiel chapter 16 is only one of many graphic descriptions of the wickedness of mankind. The people engaged in absolutely filthy behavior and further destroyed the children that were produced by their conduct. I challenge you to read the entire sixteenth chapter of Ezekiel. Jeremiah 17:9-10 (ESV) declares, "9 The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it? 10 'I the Lord search the heart and test the mind, to give every man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his deeds.'"

There are people who have the opinion that God doesn't exist. In such a debate, man's opinion could not possibly be more worthless. We read in Romans 1:18-22 (NIV): "18 The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of people, who suppress the truth by their wickedness, 19 since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. 20 For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse. 21 For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. 22 Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools."

There are people, some of them highly educated, who suppress the truth by their wickedness. They deny accountability to God in their desire to do and think as they please. They looked at the amazingly obvious hand of God throughout creation, and they responded by

building a fraudulent caveman from the tooth of an extinct pig. In physical science, they look at 26 fundamental constants and random impossibilities in the universe and glibly respond that we just got lucky. The Apostle Paul was correct: "Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools" (Romans 1:22 NIV).

Psalms 53:1 (ESV) tells us, "The fool says in his heart, 'There is no God.' They are corrupt, doing abominable iniquity; there is none who does good." The Apostle Paul spoke of two kinds of people in the world. In First Corinthians 1:18 (ESV) we read, "For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God." There are sinners who are perishing, but there are sinners who are being saved. There is no undecided category.

So, we come to a most important question. Why do good things (greater than we can imagine) come to lost sinners like us? Because "... God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16 KJV). God extends His hand of love and mercy to the world. He gave His only begotten Son as a ransom to set us free from the bondage of sin. First Peter 1:19 (ESV) says that we were ransomed "... with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot." It also says that His plan was foreknown before the foundation of the world.

God knew that Adam and Eve would sin. The plan of salvation was not a second thought or a Plan B. God planned to redeem those who would believe on Him, repent of their sin, and call on His Name. Romans 5:6-11 (ESV) says, "6 For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. 7 For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die— 8 but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. 9 Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. 10 For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. 11 More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation."