

When Bad Things Happen

Life can be extremely tough. I've seen it. Felt it. Experienced it. I have some very real examples. I'm sure you do too.

There are moments when we are faced with the harsh realities of the world around us and it can be hard to reconcile that with our faith. In these times, we often forget that we are not alone in this struggle.

We often ask, "why do bad things happen to good people?". How do we reach out to God when tragedy hits? And, "what we can say to our brothers and sisters who are going through tough times?"

First off, let's talk about the question "why bad things sometimes happen to good people?"

It's a question that has puzzled many of us, and, as Christians, it's a question we need to grapple with for ourselves, and for others.

The existence of evil and suffering in the world is a reality we cannot deny. Everything from natural disasters to personal tragedies, the human experience is frequently riddled with pain and sorrow. But as believers, we need to remember and recognize that our understanding of this issue is limited.

Isaiah 55:9 says, *"As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts."*

In other words, there are depths of wisdom and knowledge beyond our comprehension, and sometimes, we simply cannot fathom why certain events occur. Yet, in the midst of our confusion and doubt, we find hope in the character of God. We know and believe He is a God of love, compassion, and justice. He cares deeply for His creation and desires what is best for us.

While we may not understand why bad things happen, we can trust that God is working all things together for our good (**Romans 8:28**). Even in the midst of suffering, we have faith that His purposes are being fulfilled, and His grace is sufficient to sustain us through every trial.

So, our response to the question of why bad things happen to good people is multifaceted:

Firstly, we must resist the temptation to blame God or question His goodness. Instead, we approach Him with humility and trust, acknowledging our limited understanding with faith that He still has plans for us.

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. (Jeremiah 29:11).

Secondly, we should cling to the promises of Scripture, finding comfort in the assurance that God is with us in our suffering.

"The righteous cry out, and the Lord hears them; he delivers them from all their troubles. The Lord is close to the broken-hearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit." (Psalm 34:17-18).

Q: How do you usually respond when faced with trials and tribulations? Do you tend to question God's goodness, and/or lack trust in His sovereignty?

Now, let's think about how to help others that may be experiencing tragedy and/or hardship.

One of the most profound ways we can live out our faith is by extending a helping hand to those who are experiencing tragedy. When life's storms rage around us, it's easy to feel overwhelmed and helpless. But as followers of Christ, we are called to be a source of comfort and support to those who are hurting.

First and foremost, empathy lies at the heart of effective support. Empathy is the ability to understand and share the feelings of another person. This means actively listening to their concerns, validating their emotions, and offering a compassionate presence.

Beyond empathy, practical assistance can also make a significant difference in someone's life. Whether it's providing a meal, running errands, or offering childcare, tangible acts of service can alleviate some of the burdens that come with tragedy. Sometimes, it's the simple gestures of kindness that leave the greatest impact.

Also, consistent availability is key to providing ongoing support to those who are experiencing tragedy. The journey through grief and loss can be long and seemingly unbearable, and people often need companionship along the way. By walking alongside them through these times, we demonstrate our unwavering commitment to their well-being and remind them that they are not alone in their struggles.

Lastly, and most significantly, prayer is a powerful tool that should not be underestimated. When we pray for others, we are lifting them up before the throne of grace and interceding on their behalf. Prayer not only connects us to the heart of God but also communicates our love and support to those who are hurting.

Q: Who near you needs your support, presence, and/or prayer as they go through a tough time? How will you respond to them?

In Closing:

While the complexities of suffering may never fully be understood, our faith and dependence on God helps us find solace in trusting in His sovereignty and goodness, even amidst life's trials. Responding with humility, trust, and compassion, we can lean on Scripture's promises and the support of our faith community to navigate through difficult times.

Helping others as they experience hardship is a requirement of Christian faith, reflecting Christ's compassion and love for humanity. By acting with empathy, offering practical assistance, and interceding through prayer, we extend comfort and support to those facing extreme difficulties.

Drawing inspiration from Jesus' example, Christians strive to be vessels of hope and healing in the lives of those who are suffering.

My Prayer

Heavenly Father, we recognize that life can be hard, and sometimes it feels like we're drowning in a sea of troubles. But we know that you are our refuge and strength, a very present help in times of trouble. Help us to trust in your plan, even when we can't see the way forward. Give us the strength to cry out to you in times of need, knowing that you hear our prayers and care for us deeply. And help us to be a source of comfort and encouragement to our brothers and sisters who are hurting, lifting them up in prayer and support.

In Jesus' name, we pray, Amen



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