

If God is Love, Why do so many horrible things happen?



By Lorraine Vincent
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Why? Because there is evil in the world. Do not blame God for bad things. Evil dwells in this world; his name is Satan, the devil. God is love, the opposite of evil which is hatred. It is impossible for God to will evil. It would be totally against His divine nature which is Love. God is merciful, good, loving and compassionate.

A Spiritual Battle

(See the Catechism of the Catholic Church #405, #408, #409, #978)

There is a constant spiritual battle going on around us: Good against Evil. Satan roams freely in the world trying to steal souls, and trying to wreak havoc and interfere with God's will. In the Holy Bible, St. Peter states: *"Stay sober and alert. Your opponent the devil is prowling like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour"* (1 Peter 5:8). God wills us to be strong against evil and use His power and Wisdom to defeat it. *"Resist him [the devil], solid in your faith, realizing that the brotherhood of believers is undergoing the same sufferings throughout the world. The God of all grace, who called you to His everlasting glory in Christ, will Himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish those who have suffered a little while"* (1 Peter 5:9-10). It is written in the Holy Bible that good prevails and God is victorious. Through Jesus' Passion and Resurrection, He has already won. In John 16:33, Jesus said, *"In the world you face persecution. But take courage; I have conquered the world!"*

Free Will

God highly values our freedom of choice, even though He knows many choose to rebel again Him. He created people and angels with free will because He wants all to choose to love Him freely. Through the deception of the Evil One, Eve chose to disobey God and therefore, through her and Adam, sin entered into the world.

From the very beginning of creation our loving God willed our Salvation through His Son, Jesus Christ. Also, Mary, His Mother, cooperated with God's plan totally. Through Her free response to God, Her "*fiat*," and by the power of the Holy Spirit, our Saviour was born. She said, "*I am the servant of the Lord. Let it be done to me as you say*" (Luke 1:38). Mary's response should also be ours.

However, because we have free will, people often inflict evil upon each other. We are all sinners. Through sin, we are responsible for all the evil in the world: wars, terrible injustices, poverty and murder. St. James said, "*Beloved, those conflicts and disputes among you, where do they come from? Do they not come from your cravings that are at war within you? What you desire you do not obtain, and so you resort to murder. You covet something and cannot obtain it; so you engage in disputes and conflicts*" (James 4:1-2).

We really need the Lord. Let us pray that we don't give in to revenge and to hatred. St. Paul said, "*See that no one returns evil to any other; always seek one another's good and for that matter, the good of all*" (1 Thessalonians 5:15).

Why does God allow evil in the world?

God, our Father does not will evil. He does allow it for now. Because of the Original Sin and our own sin, God allows suffering, but He always uses it for our good. He is in control. He loves us and permits things for our spiritual good because He wants us to join Him in heaven. It is only through the goodness of God that suffering could be to our benefit: to discipline, to teach, to motivate us to come back to Him, to purify, and to strengthen our souls.

God gives us this advice: "*Endure your trials as the discipline of God, who deals with you as sons. For what son is there whom his father does not discipline? ... They disciplined us as seemed right to them, to prepare us for the short span of mortal life; but God does so for our true profit, that we may share His holiness. At the time it is administered, all discipline seems a cause for grief and not for joy, but later it brings forth the fruit of peace and justice to those who are trained in its school*" (Hebrews 12:7,10-11).

Redemption is at hand for all those who want it. "*Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded*" (James 4:7-9). Using our free will wisely, we can choose to follow Christ.

Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) #1434—“The interior penance of the Christian can be expressed in many and various ways. Scripture and the Fathers of our Church insist above all on three forms, fasting, prayer and almsgiving, which express conversion in relation to oneself, to God, and to others.” CCC #1435—“Conversion is accomplished in daily life by gestures of reconciliation, concern for the poor, the exercise and defense of justice and right, by the admission of faults to one's brethren, fraternal correction, revision of life, examination of conscience, spiritual direction, acceptance of suffering, endurance of persecution for the sake of righteousness. Taking up one's cross each day and following Jesus is the surest way of penance.”

To Save All Souls

Suffering can have great merit. Christ died on the Cross for our salvation. Also, the Blessed Virgin Mary knows what it is like to suffer. She offered Her Son for us. Through the grace of God, our suffering, endured in love as a penance, can help save souls. This is another tool against Satan.

In prayer we can join our suffering to the Holy Passion of Jesus on the Cross and offer it all to God the Father for the good of all souls. St. Paul speaks of suffering for others: *“Even now I find my joy in the suffering I endure for you. In my own flesh I fill up what is lacking in the sufferings of Christ for the sake of His Body, the Church”* (Colossians 1:24).

Conclusion

We can pray to God for peace in our own hearts, so there can be one place in the world where there will not be war. Jesus comforts us with these words: *“Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you. I do not give it to you as the world gives peace. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid”* (John 14:27). Be of good cheer; trust in the loving power of God, and pray: Jesus, we trust in You.