

*If God Exists, How Can He Allow*  
***Suffering & Evil***  
*Part 2*



## *Why Study Suffering and Evil?*

# *If God Exists, How Can He Allow Suffering and Evil?*

- 1. For non-Christians, this is one of the most frequently cited objections / problems with Christianity.*
- 2. For Christians, this question often is the most serious challenge to our faith, and many don't make it through.*
- 3. Studying this question gives us a great opportunity to learn about our view of God and His character.*

## *The Context For Our Inquiry*

*Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom  
and knowledge of God!*

*How unsearchable his judgments,  
and his paths beyond tracing out!*

*"Who has known the mind of the Lord?  
Or who has been his counselor?"*

*"Who has ever given to God,  
that God should repay him?"*

*For from him and through him and to him are all things.  
To him be the glory forever! Amen.*

*Romans 11:33-36*

## *Last Week*

*Traditional Christian Explanations of Suffering*

*Your Explanations of Suffering*

*Identified Free Will as the #1 Response to Why Suffering  
Exists in the World*

*Began to Explore Free Will*

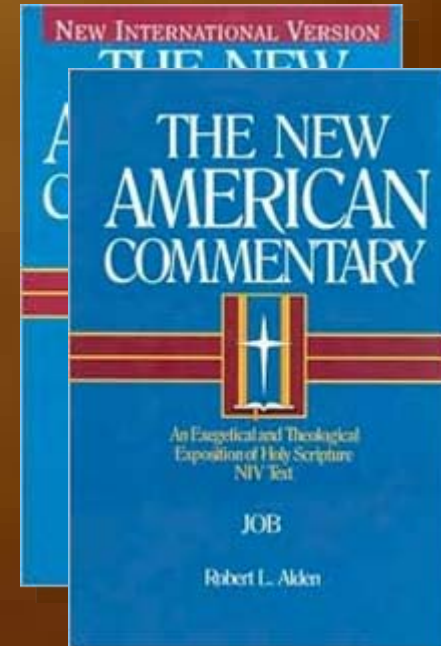
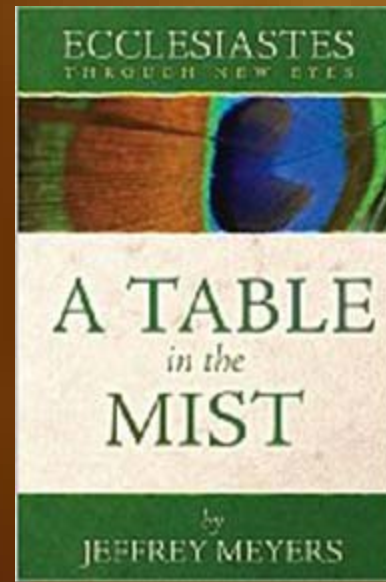
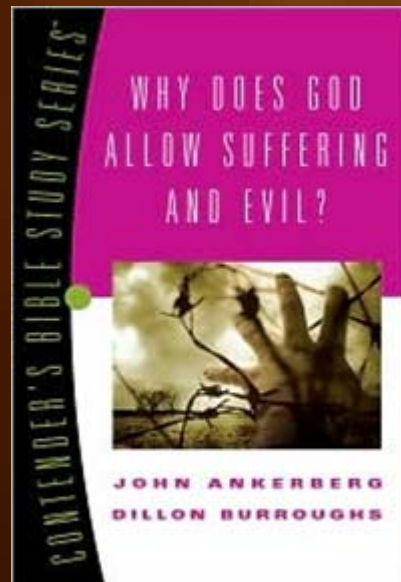
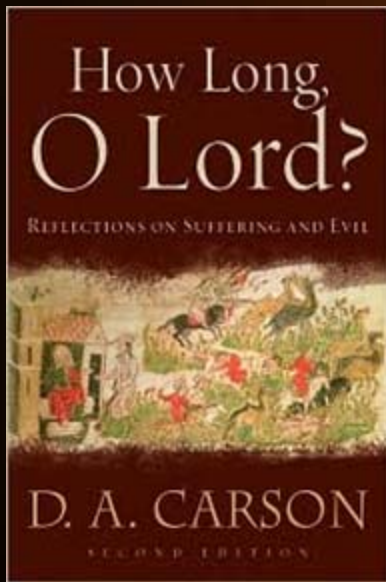
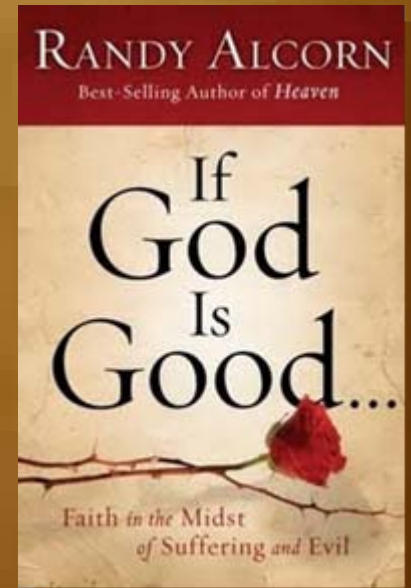
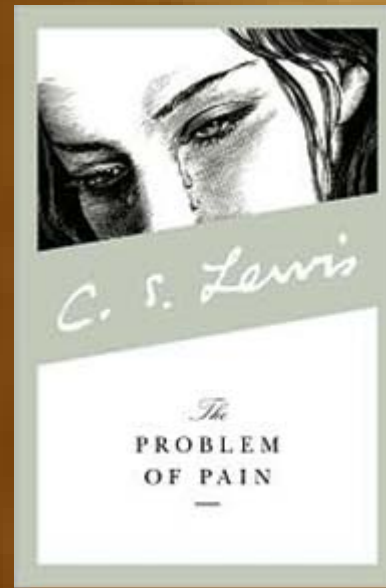
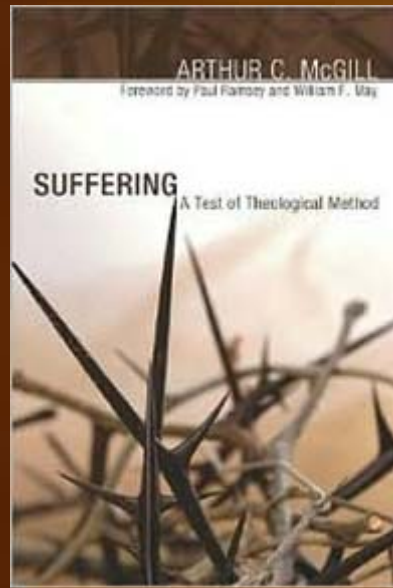
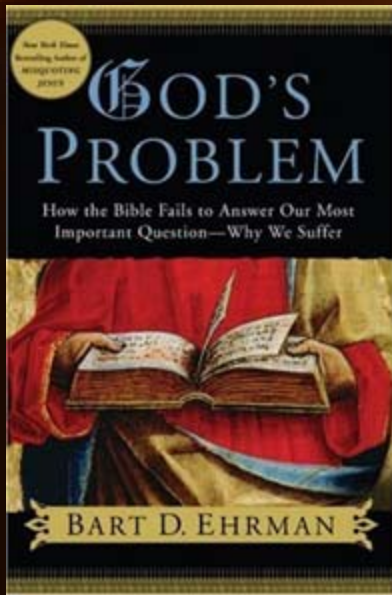
## *TONIGHT*

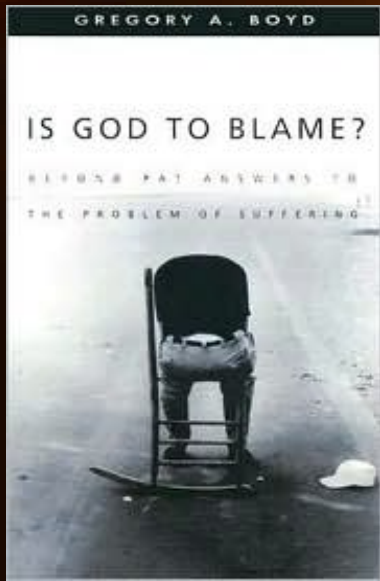
*Continue our Examination of Free Will*

*THEN, IN THE FOLLOWING WEEKS . . .*

*Examine the Biblical Explanations of Suffering*

*Construct a Holistic View of Suffering*





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## *Some Definitions*

*Free Will: Some ability to choose to obey the Lord or do evil.*

### *Contrast:*

- *Free will must be entirely free.*
- *If God has any control over anything, there is no free will in the matter.*
- *If any thing or any one or any circumstance has influence over the situation, then I do not have free will.*

## *Some Definitions*

*Free Will: Some ability to choose to obey the Lord or do evil.*

*Evil: Rebellion against God; not doing what God commands, or doing what God forbids.*

### *Contrast:*

- Knowledge or experience of evil is needed to know good.*
- Our sense of right and wrong defines evil.*



## *Some Definitions*

*Free Will: Some ability to choose to obey the Lord or do evil.*

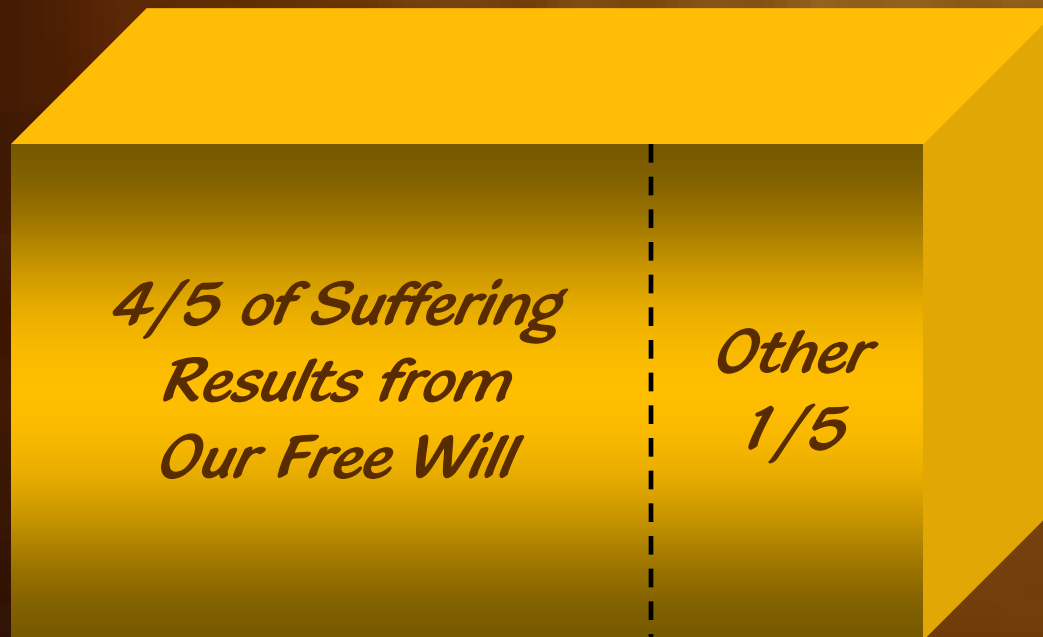
*Evil: Rebellion against God; not doing what God commands, or doing what God forbids.*

*Suffering:*

# *God Allows Suffering Because . . .*

*Number One Answer :*

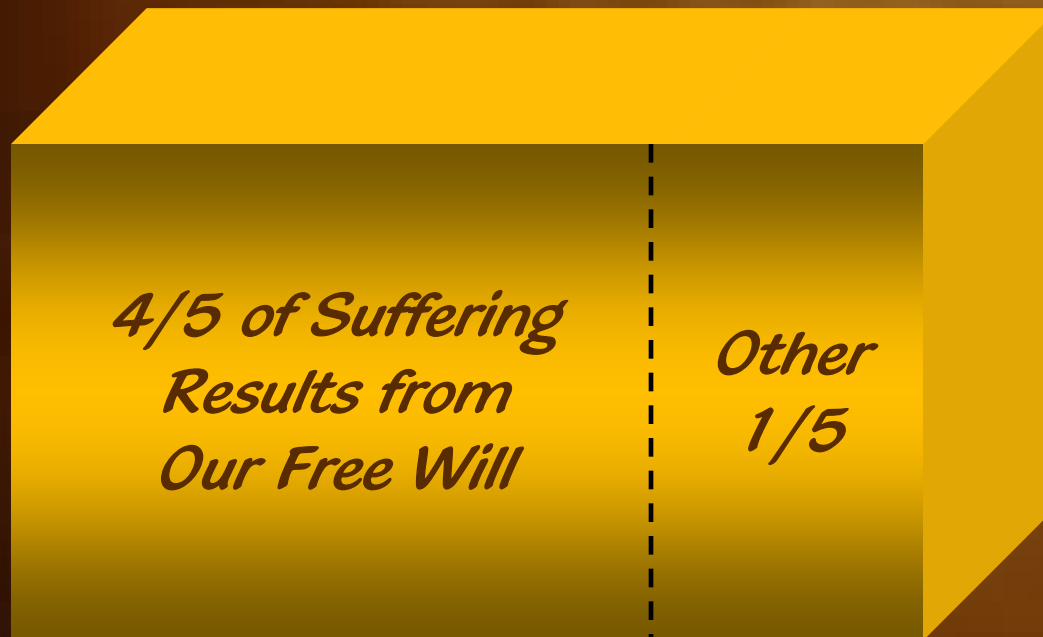
*Free Will*



# *God Allows Suffering Because . . .*

*Number One Answer :*

*Free Will*



## *Looking Closer at Free Will*

*Could God have created a world in which there was no evil?*

*Yes.*

*Could God have made a world inhabited by beings with the power to choose good or evil in which no one would ever have made the wrong choice?*

*Yes.\**

*Could God have made a world inhabited by beings with the ability to choose good or evil in which no one was given the ability to make the wrong choice?*

*No.\**

## *Looking Closer at Free Will*

*Could God have created a better world that allows us to exercise free will and make wrong choices, but without evil and suffering resulting?*

*No.\**

*If God "knew" that humans would sin, resulting in evil and suffering, why did He create us?*



## *Looking Closer at Free Will*

*Christian: God gave us free will so that we could love Him. He loved us first, and our free will allows us to choose to love Him in return.*

*Response: Free will resulted in evil, which resulted in death and suffering to every person who has ever lived. After death, most people will end up suffering in hell for eternity. All this so we can freely love Him?*

*Consider: If we need free will to love God, and free will is not free unless we can choose to sin, how will we love God in heaven?*

*"Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."*

## *Looking Closer at Free Will*

*Could God have created a better world that allows us to exercise free will and make wrong choices, but without evil and suffering resulting?*

*No.\**

*If God "knew" that humans would sin, resulting in evil and suffering, why did He create us?*

*If God "knew" that humans would sin, is He responsible for the evil and suffering which results since He went ahead and created us?*

## *Some Observations*

*Allowing for the possibility of sin,  
in the midst of God's express prohibition of sin,  
does not make God culpable of sin.*

*God is the source of all good, and all good comes from God.*

*God is Holy, pure and blameless. He cannot be the author,  
cause or source of evil.*

*But God must be said to allow evil.*

*Otherwise, we conclude that evil is beyond God's sovereign power.*



## *Next Week*

*How did the Biblical writers deal with suffering and evil?*

*What about natural evil?*

*Does God actually cause suffering, or simply allow it?*

*Is it evil when suffering results from God's action?*



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