

What Kind of God Allows *Bad Stuff* to Happen?

1. *The kind of God who would send His Son to earth to die for our sins.*

He cares about us so much that He had His own Son suffer unimaginable shame, pain, anguish and death for us. He is more concerned for character than comfort.

2. *The kind of God who loves us too much to wipe out all the sin (bad stuff) in the world.*

If He did wipe out all sin (*and sinners*) we would be gone too, and our chance to hear and respond to the gospel would also be gone. In order for God to draw us to the cross and bring us to heaven, we have to navigate through a lot of awfulness.

***Illustration:** If you had a child who was dying of a strange and rare illness, and the only known antidote was a five mile hike away, would you go get it for them? Of course. But there's something I didn't tell you. On that journey you will encounter all kinds of pain, obstacles, temptations and calamities. You will be hurt (sometimes seriously), discouraged, distracted, confused and threatened, but you will not die before getting the antidote back to your child. Will you still go? Yes. It's like that with God. He allows us to go through all kinds of ugliness and calamity, not because He doesn't care, but because He loves us so deeply that He is making sure we hear the gospel, come to the cross, and find life. Again, if all the ugliness of the world was wiped out by God, we would be gone with it and robbed of finding life.

3. *The kind of God who knows how it feels.*

We know that the Father allowed His Son to suffer for our sakes, and that He lets us go through suffering so we can live long enough to respond to the gospel, but how does He feel about all this? Is He so above it that it doesn't affect Him? Is he so detached that He's not concerned? Is He so angry that He feels we deserve it?

Acts 9 and Mt. 26 answer those questions without us having to speculate about it. In Acts 9 Saul was taking another group of Christians to the city of Damascus to be persecuted or killed. On the way Jesus appeared to him in a blinding light and during the encounter asked him, "Why are you persecuting me?" He didn't ask "Why are you persecuting these innocent people," or "these followers of Mine?" He took what Saul was doing to those believers very personally. He said, "Why are you persecuting Me?" When we are persecuted, Christ feels persecuted.

In Mt. 25 we are told that when Jesus judges us, he will say,

*"Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. 'For I was hungry, and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me something to drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in; naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me.' "Then the righteous will answer Him, "Lord, when did we see You hungry, and feed You, or thirsty, and give You something to drink? "And when did we see You a stranger, and invite You in, or naked, and clothe You? "When did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?" "The King will answer and say to them, "Truly I say to you, **to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them you did it to Me.** "*

Again, He didn't say when you did this to one of these brothers of mine, you did it on my behalf, or to my followers or to some good people. He said "you did it to Me." So when someone does something kind to one of us, Jesus feels blessed, just as when someone hurts or persecutes one of us, Jesus feels persecuted. He takes all that happens to us very personally. That's how he feels when bad stuff happens.