

Why does **GOD** let **BAD THINGS HAPPEN?**

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DISCUSSION GUIDE

CHAPTER 1

- ▼ When have you found yourself asking the same question as Chris at Allegra’s funeral: *God, how could you let this happen? Don’t you care?* (p 9)
- ▼ Why might some people argue that God allows suffering because he is either weak, cruel, or both?
- ▼ Why is the issue of suffering more of a “problem for our hearts” than a “puzzle for our heads” (p 11-12)?

CHAPTER 2

- ▼ If you believed that angry, violent gods made the universe, would that make suffering easier to explain? Why/why not?
- ▼ How about if the universe wasn’t created by any god at all? Would believing that we’re here by accident explain suffering in the world?
- ▼ What does the Bible say about what the universe was like when it was first created? What adjective stands out? What is better about this explanation for how we got here than the other explanations in this chapter?

CHAPTER 3

- ▼ Which parts of the Bible’s account of the first people might seem unbelievable to some people? And how does it help to know the type of book Genesis is, and is not (p 24)?
- ▼ What choice did Adam and Eve face with the two trees in the garden?
- ▼ What proof can you see around you, and in your own life too, that we all make similar choices to Adam and Eve?

CHAPTER 4

- ▼ Why were Jesus' actions on the lake on a whole different level to what the disciples had seen of him up to that point?
- ▼ What was Jesus trying to prove by showing this miracle to his frightened friends?
- ▼ What kind of person would you put your trust in, during a hard time? Is Jesus that kind of person?

CHAPTER 5

- ▼ How often have you had the experience of calling out to God for help and yet feeling he's not listening?
- ▼ Why does it seem crazy that Jesus would wait so long before travelling to help Lazarus?
- ▼ What do you think was going through Martha's head when she said the words on page 42 (John 11:21-22)?

CHAPTER 6

- ▼ "When you're going through something horrible, what do you imagine God's reaction to be?" (p 46). Which of Chris' suggested answers have you thought yourself?
- ▼ After seeing the miracle of Jesus raising Lazarus to life, how does your view of Jesus' actions change? Does the initial two-day delay make more sense?
- ▼ How are Jesus' miracles similar to movie trailers?

CHAPTER 7

- ▼ If Jesus looked at the evil in the world and just shrugged his shoulders, what kind of God would he be? Could we describe that as being loving?
- ▼ Recap some of the ways that Jesus suffered from pages 54-55. Do any of these statements surprise you or encourage you?
- ▼ What was the great swap that the Bible describes as happening 2,000 years ago?

CHAPTER 8

- ▼ What was the difference between Jesus' resurrection body and Lazarus'?
- ▼ Why do you think many people see Jesus' promise of a new creation without pain or sadness as being simply too good to be true?
- ▼ How does the story on pages 61-62 help explain what the new creation will be like? Dog food v real food!

CHAPTER 9

- ▼ What does Jesus say his followers should expect in this life and why?
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- ▼ How did God turn what seemed to be a defeat, the crucifixion of Jesus, into a victory? How does this encourage you as you look at the hard things going on in your life and the lives of others you know?

CHAPTER 10

- ▼ How does the cross prove that God does love us and therefore cares about our suffering?
- ▼ How does the empty tomb of Jesus prove that God is powerful enough to help us in our suffering?
- ▼ As you finish this book, do you still have questions about why God lets bad things happen? Have you found any answers?