

## Why does God allow suffering?

- Is God all powerful or all good ? the philosophy question with suffering in the world surely God cannot be both
  
- **Did God plan suffering ?**
  1. The Garden of Eden – suffering not in God’s original plan
    - Do you think God ever intended there to be suffering? No but he knew it was a possibility or side effect of free will
    - Do you think God wants you to suffer? No
    - Do you think God enjoys you suffering? No
    - God’s heart breaks when he sees you suffer – story of child going to dentist and being in pain
    - God does not want you to suffer but on earth he allows it to allow free will and the choice to be with him, in heaven all suffering will vanish and there will be no more tears (revelation 21)
  
- **The problem of free will**
  2. Free will – people choosing to break God’s laws which allows suffering
    - God wants you to choose
    - God does not want you to be slaves (i.e. No free will, mindless robots) he wants to be your friend, thus had to allow free will
    - Free will in the garden of Eden led to imperfection which = suffering as part of that, also meant cells in our bodies can be corrupt i.e. Cancer and war can occur as people have free will
    - Ever since that time ‘for the creation was subject to frustration, not by it’s own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from it’s bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God’ Romans 8:20) –
    - Sin either in the part of you or others can have an effect on suffering – ie war, or starvation (due to unequal distribution of resource), or man’s greed

- Born into a sinful world and need to come to christ
  
- **God works through suffering**
  - Corrie Ten Boom and the fleas
  - That's why he is always beside you through it, he helps good come out of it
  - Suffering is never good in itself but God helps good come out of it
  - Suffering is used by God to draw us to Christ, to remind us we cannot go it alone
  - Sometimes people only see/hear God when they suffer, it breaks down the veil and he shouts his presence through it
  - Even Jesus learnt obedience through what he suffered (Hebrews 5:8)
  - Great testimonies and great triumphs can only come after great trials
  - how would we know what was good if there were no suffering
  - often we cannot see what is going on or why we are suffering the way we are
  
- **Jesus our savior/ God suffered too**
  - Jesus went through all earthly sufferings and did not sin
  - Share in his sufferings that we may share his glory
  - if live according to sinful nature you will die, if live by spirit you will live Hebrews
  - a payment has to be made for going against God's will
  - C.S Lewis said if there were no suffering we would be tempted to say "I am happy as I am please leave me alone" because sin would be comfortable.
  - Also he sent Jesus to make it right - he suffered, he asked God to take away the suffering but it was the ONLY way we can be saved (read Matthew)
  
- **God more than compensates for our suffering**
  - God's heartbreaks when you suffer which is why he walks beside you in it and carries you when you cannot walk any longer

Tuesday, 6 November 2018

- Bring him your pain, your anger, your worries, he will soothe and give you peace, the big hugs come from the Big Man
  - God can bring the silver lining to any dark cloud, so let him, trust him, run to him and the dark won't seem as dark anymore
  - Tasks us to help, to help reduce the suffering of others, to be there for those in need
  - what to do next? how will you respond to suffering? what is God trying to tell you and what will you do next?
  - keep your eyes fixed on him (Hebrews 12:2)
  - put your arms round those who suffer and “weep with those who weep” (Romans 12:15)
  - Jesus fought against suffering wherever he found it and calls us to do the same
- 
- Questions?
  - What about congenital disease
  - What about natural disasters
  - Does God allow you to suffer to draw you closer to him? I.e. Does God encourage sufferings?