

BIBLE LIFE MESSAGES

# Why Does a Loving God Allow Evil in the World?

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Romans 1:18-32

**1 The following event was narrated by Chuck Colson of Prison Fellowship Ministries on his “Breakpoint” radio program aired April 21, 1999. It is a word for word interview conducted by Larry King.**

***“KING: Back to Littleton, Colorado. Standing by is Mickie Cain, who is a student at Columbine High School who lost a friend in the shooting. Can you hear me OK, Mickie? I know you’ve got wind out there. Can you hear me?”***

***“MICKIE CAIN: Yes, faintly.”***

***“KING: What happened to your friend?”***



***“CAIN: Let’s see. Let me just tell you about my friend, Cassie. She was amazing, and I met her about two years ago, and she came to my private school that I was going to, and she was kind of headed away. She didn’t want to go. And I was so happy to be able to reach out to her and be her friend, and so many special times were spent with her.”***



***“KING: Were you with her when the-when the-when the two boys came in and started the shooting? Were you together?”***

***“CAIN: No. I got out quickly. Yesterday was unbearable, but today’s a little bit more tranquil. It’s coming to the point of . . .”***

***“KING: Hard to accept.”***

***“CAIN: Just-she-she . . .”***

***“KING: Where was she, Mickie?”***

***“CAIN: She was in the-in a classroom, I believe, and she ended up standing up for the greatest thing ever. She had the courage to turn her life around, and she went straight up after she started trusting Christ. And, when I came to Columbine the year after she left, she lent a hand to me when I was kind of going crooked, and she completely stood up for God when the killers asked her if there was anyone who had faith in Christ. She spoke up and they shot her for it. And that is the most brave thing anyone could ever do, and I-I want***

***that memory to live on and her example for that. And she was so fun loving and amazingly open hearted, and-you could come to her with anything, and she accepted your darkest secret with open arms.”***

***“KING: Mickie, she lives on in you, Mickie. She had a good friend in you. You take good care, and thanks for being with us. I know this was hard. We appreciate it. Mickie Cain.”<sup>1</sup>***

**It seems like life would be so much easier to live if we didn't have the bad guys. Why does a loving God allow massacres like the senseless shooting deaths at Columbine High School? Why wouldn't He protect Cassie Bernall from the boys pointing those guns at her? She loved the Lord so much and was serving Him with all her heart! There doesn't seem to be straight answers for this, but God's word in this passage may help.**

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<sup>1</sup> “Breakpoint” radio presentation by Chuck Colson, aired April 21, 1999 at 9:00 p.m. ET, Prison Fellowship Ministries.



**From Romans, Chapter 1, verses 18 through 32, <sup>2</sup> we read, The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness, since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities — his eternal power and divine nature — have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse. <sup>3</sup>**

**For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles. Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped**

**and served created things rather than the Creator — who is forever praised. Amen. <sup>4</sup>**

**Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones. In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed indecent acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion. Furthermore, since they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, he gave them over to a depraved mind, to do what ought not to be done. <sup>5</sup>**

**They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice. They are gossips, slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they disobey their parents; they are senseless, faithless, heartless, ruthless. Although they know God's righteous decree that those who do such things**

**deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them.**

**Why does a loving God allow evil in the world? Here are some reasons that make sense to me.**

## **I. So that Spiritual Priorities Will Become Evident <sup>6</sup>**

**The first reason that makes sense to me is so that spiritual priorities will become evident. God wants you forever in heaven with Him. That's His priority for you and more important than anything you could experience in this short life. Heaven is more important than anything else!**

**<sup>7</sup> You can get so wrapped up in this world that spiritual things are not your priority.**

**<sup>8</sup> How about your physical body? You've got to keep it healthy. You need to eat the right diet and exercise regularly. And, of course, you need to keep it as beautiful as you can. You've got to be presentable with the right clothes and cosmetics.**



**9** You have to consider your income. I mean by this, your employment and retirement plans. You either enjoy your work and spend more time doing it than you should. Or, you might not enjoy your work and think a lot about finishing it so you can go home. It's your source of income, so you've got to do it!

**10** Then there's your family; you think about and you may worry a lot about your kids. You may worry about your marriage relationship because it isn't meeting your expectations.

**11** And then, you have your recreation and your social life. You live for your vacation and you think about that a lot. You work hard to buy things to enjoy and to show off. You live for your friendships and your parties.

**12** Why might you have these priorities? **13** Maybe it's because you can see and experience these physical things. Besides **14**, the spiritual aspect of your life is kind of spooky, confusing and not immediately discernible. It requires you to live by faith and not by

sight. <sup>15</sup> Also, the practical, material side of your life pressures you to make decisions and to act now!

<sup>16</sup> But, the most important things in your life need to be the spiritual. That's because <sup>17</sup> they are what will last forever. Everything else is only temporary! <sup>18</sup> God created you to live in the spiritual realm. The physical one is only your environment. You were created in God's image and likeness; the spiritual. You are a special creation of God. But you choose to live like a "superior animal" science wants you to believe you are!

<sup>19</sup> What evil does is make apparent how superior the spiritual priorities are to this old world!

## **II. So that the Light of Christ Can Shine in Darkness <sup>20</sup>**

**The second reason is so that the light of the world can shine in darkness.**

**John, Chapter 3, verses 19 through 21 says <sup>21</sup>, This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what he has done has been done through God.”**

**<sup>22</sup> God is honored when you see the contrast between Cassie Bernall and her murderers. <sup>23</sup> People generally know what’s good and right when they see it. <sup>2</sup> <sup>24</sup> But our culture is trying to present immorality and**

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<sup>2</sup> v20 - For since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.



**perversion as normal and acceptable <sup>3</sup>. California wants to make the teaching of homosexuality as an alternative lifestyle mandatory in our public schools. Abortion is pushed as the only viable alternative to unwanted or inconvenient pregnancies.**

**<sup>25</sup> What evil does is to provide the darkness as a backdrop for the light to shine in! Hundreds of Christians were martyred in the coliseum in Rome, but thousands of people were persuaded to come to the Lord as a result.**

**The church was scattered and Stephen was martyred in Acts, Chapter 7. But, in Acts, Chapter 8, the Samaritans received the gospel and the Ethiopian came to know the Lord. In Acts, Chapter 9, Saul, who began the persecution in the first place, surrendered his life to the Lord and became the Apostle Paul!**

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**<sup>3</sup> v21-22 - For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools . . .**

### **III. So that God Can Have the Opportunity to Bring Good Out of It <sup>26</sup>**

The third reason is so that God can have the opportunity to bring good out of it

<sup>27</sup> In Romans, Chapter 8, verse 28, it says, **And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.**

<sup>28</sup> All the issues, challenges and circumstances in your life will “work out together” to eventually bring out good. Your life is like a tapestry woven in different colors. Chances are; there are no chances in your life if you love the Lord. God always has His hand in it!

<sup>29</sup> In John, Chapter 9, verses 1 through 7, the event about the man who was born blind is recorded. Here was a mature man who had been blind from his birth <sup>4</sup>. When asked by His disciples if sin was responsible for physical handicaps, Jesus replied, **Neither this man**

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<sup>4</sup> John 9:1 - As he went along, he saw a man blind from birth.

**nor his parents sinned . . . but this happened so that the work of God might be displayed in his life.** <sup>5</sup> Jesus stated that this man had been blind all of his life so that God would be glorified in this miraculous healing!

<sup>30</sup> How might this principle apply to you? What evil does is to give you the opportunity to demonstrate the glory of God in your life by the way you handle it. If you are the one who is suffering, it is by the way you honor God as you suffer. If you are not the suffering one, it is how you come to the sufferer's aid and help.

#### **IV. So that People May Have a Clear Cut Choice <sup>31</sup>**

The final reason for God allowing evil in the world that makes sense to me is so that people may have a clear cut choice. Our lives are full of choices. God allows us to experience the consequences of those decisions whether they are good or bad.

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<sup>5</sup> John 9:3.



**One of the most important parenting skills is to ensure that children learn personal responsibility. The best way is to allow them to experience the consequences for the choices they make. If the natural consequences are too severe, parents need to provide logical ones for kids to experience.**

**<sup>32</sup> Eve chose what tasted good and was pleasing to the eyes instead of obedience to God. She chose temporary pleasure instead of the eternal. That's a choice most people make today. Notice the terrible consequences of that bad choice! It led her husband astray <sup>33</sup> and ultimately separated him emotionally from her. His answer to the Lord's inquest was, "It's all her fault, Lord." <sup>6</sup> <sup>34</sup> It separated man and women from the animals after the ark landed. <sup>7</sup> <sup>35</sup> It eventually**

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<sup>6</sup> Genesis 3:11-12 - Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?" The man said, "The woman you put here with me — she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it."

<sup>7</sup> Genesis 9:1-3.

separated men from one another at the Tower of Babel. <sup>8</sup>

**36** When you make the choice not to give your life to the Lord, what do you give up?

**37** You give up eternal life in heaven with God and abundant life right now here on earth. You gain, instead, eternal life in hell and only a mere existence here on earth.

**38** You give up salvation from your sins.

**39** You give up having brothers and sisters all over the world. As military people, Linda and I have lived in Europe and Asia. We experienced close relationships with precious people from different cultures who spoke different languages. But there was a love there that can only come when you have the Lord in common!

**40** You give up the joy of Christian service.

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<sup>8</sup> Genesis 11:1-9.

**41 You give up the opportunity of learning God's word which shows you how to live a better life.**

**42 You give up the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit in your life to help you live victoriously.**

**43 Why does a loving God allow evil in the world? So you can plainly see good from bad, God from Satan and the Christian life from the life of this old world!**

**44 Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God — this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is — his good, pleasing and perfect will.<sup>9</sup>**

**<http://biblelifemessages.org/>**

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<sup>9</sup> Romans 12:1-2.