

Jesus Christ is our Substitute

Today, I would like to address a common argument against the Christian God. The argument is: "Why does a perfectly good and all powerful God allow unspeakable, evil things to exist?"

We have historical records of large scale killings; Hitler and Stalin. We have individuals in our society who are sexual predators, murderers, abusive and violent. Why do these things exist?

If we turn to the Bible, it does say that God will not allow these things to continue. There will be a time when God will come and destroy all evil. The Bible calls it "The Day of the Lord". Let me read a passage describing this "Day of the Lord".

(Malachi 4: 1-3)

"Surely the day is coming; it will burn like a furnace. All the arrogant and every evildoer will be stubble, and that day that is coming will set them on fire," says the LORD Almighty. "Not a root or a branch will be left to them. But for you who revere my name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its wings. And you will go out and leap like calves released from the stall. Then you will trample down the wicked; they will be ashes under the soles of your feet on the day when I do these things," says the LORD Almighty.

That sounds like great news doesn't it? "Then you will trample down the wicked; they will be ashes under the soles of your feet." But there is a problem though. We all have a tendency to think we are right. How would Hitler view this "Day of the Lord"? How about the Ku Klux Klan? Do we really know what we're asking for? Before we all cheer for the "Day of the Lord", why don't I read this passage cautioning against that.

(Amos 5:18-20)

Woe to you who long
for the day of the LORD!
Why do you long for the day of the LORD?
That day will be darkness, not light.

It will be as though a man fled from a lion
only to meet a bear,
as though he entered his house
and rested his hand on the wall
only to have a snake bite him.

Will not the day of the LORD be darkness, not light--
pitch-dark, without a ray of brightness?

When this "Day of the Lord" comes, whose standard will be used? Would we be considered righteous and go to heaven? Or would you and I be considered evildoers and be destroyed?

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Let me turn to another passage to answer these questions:

(Romans 3:10-12)

As it is written:

"There is no one righteous, not even one;
there is no one who understands,
no one who seeks God.
All have turned away,
they have together become worthless;
there is no one who does good,
not even one."

This is quite clear. There is no one righteous, not even one. This leaves us with a very bleak picture. God will most certainly do something about all the evil in the world, but that includes us! But there is good news! God is not only about judgment, God also loves us! He accomplishes these two things through one individual; Jesus Christ, God's own Son. This verse sums it up quite well:

(1 John 4:10)

This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.

So why is this love? Remember Day of the Lord? Remember judgment? It is still going to happen. There are penalties to our evil, and that penalty has been paid for by Christ himself! 2000 years ago, Jesus Christ died on the cross, on **our** behalf, as our substitute. After three days, he even rose from the dead! And this resurrection is important, because that proves he is greater than both death and sin. So I leave you all with this challenge. In light of judgment, will we try to pay the penalty ourselves, knowing full well that we are not greater than death, nor greater than our sins? Or will we accept Jesus Christ as our savior, our substitute?