



## Introduction: The Question We Have All Asked

Few questions have accompanied humanity as much as this one: **if God is good, all-powerful, and loves us, why does He allow evil and injustice?**

The question arises naturally when we witness a war, an incurable illness, the suffering of an innocent child, a family tragedy, or the countless injustices we see every day in the world. It also appears in our most personal moments: when a prayer seems unanswered, when a loss breaks our hearts, or when we experience the pain of betrayal, poverty, or abandonment.

This is not a new question. Since ancient times, philosophers, theologians, saints, and ordinary people have sought to understand this mystery. In fact, much of the history of Christian theology can be understood as a search for an answer that neither diminishes God's goodness nor ignores the reality of human suffering.

The Catholic Church does not offer a simplistic answer or a magical formula that removes pain. What it offers is something deeper: an understanding of evil in the light of Revelation, the Cross of Christ, and eternal hope.

This article seeks to explore this mystery rigorously from a theological, biblical, philosophical, and pastoral perspective, helping us discover how God continues to act even in the midst of suffering.

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## The Problem of Evil: One of the Greatest Objections to Faith

Throughout history, many have argued that the existence of evil seems incompatible with the existence of God.

The objection is often expressed like this:

- If God is good, He wants to eliminate evil.
- If God is all-powerful, He can eliminate evil.
- Yet evil exists.
- Therefore, God either does not exist or is not good.



At first glance, this appears to be a powerful argument. However, the Christian tradition has shown that it is based on an incomplete understanding of both God and the nature of evil.

The correct question is not simply:

**“Why does evil exist?”**

But rather:

**“Why does God temporarily permit the existence of evil within a greater plan of salvation?”**

The difference is fundamental.

The Christian faith has never denied the existence of suffering. On the contrary, it takes it extremely seriously.

The Bible is filled with tears, persecutions, illnesses, wars, and human tragedies. The difference is that faith affirms that evil does not have the final word.

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## What Is Evil, Really?

Before asking why God allows it, we must understand what it is.

Saint Thomas Aquinas, following Saint Augustine, taught that evil is not something created by God.

Evil is a privation of a due good.

For example:

- Blindness is the absence of sight.
- A lie is the absence of truth.
- Injustice is the absence of justice.
- Hatred is the absence of love.

God created everything good.



As we read in Genesis:

“And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good” (Gen 1:31).

Evil is not a substance created by God. It is a corruption or distortion of a previously existing good.

This is why the Church teaches that God is not the author of evil.

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## The Origin of Moral Evil: Human Freedom

The first great Christian answer to the problem of evil is found in the gift of freedom.

God wanted to create beings capable of love.

But authentic love requires freedom.

True love cannot exist where there is only programming.

A robot can obey.

A free being can love.

And precisely because it can love, it can also reject love.

Here we find the origin of sin.

The fallen angels misused their freedom.

Our first parents misused their freedom.

And each of us continues to do so.

A great deal of the world’s suffering comes directly from human choices:



- Wars.
- Corruption.
- Exploitation.
- Abortion.
- Violence.
- Hatred.
- Economic injustices.
- Persecutions.

God could eliminate every possibility of sin.

But to do so, He would have to eliminate freedom.

And then the possibility of love would disappear as well.

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## Why Doesn't God Constantly Intervene?

Many people ask:

“If God sees an injustice, why doesn't He stop it immediately?”

The answer involves understanding how God governs the world.

God continually sustains creation, but He normally acts while respecting the laws of nature and the freedom of His creatures.

If God intervened miraculously every time someone attempted to do something evil:

- No decision would have consequences.
- Freedom would be an illusion.
- Moral responsibility would disappear.

The world would become an artificial stage.

Yet God has desired an authentic creation in which our choices carry real weight.

This does not mean that God is indifferent.



It means that He temporarily permits certain actions because He sees the whole of history, while we see only fragments.

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## The Mystery of the Suffering of the Innocent

Here we arrive at the most difficult point.

What about children who suffer?

What about innocent victims?

What about those who endure devastating illnesses?

The Christian answer humbly acknowledges that a mystery remains.

Not everything can be fully understood from our limited condition.

The Book of Job is perhaps the deepest reflection in all of Scripture on this subject.

Job was righteous.

Yet he lost:

- His possessions.
- His health.
- His children.
- His social standing.

His friends insisted that he must have committed some hidden sin.

But they were wrong.

At the end of the book, God does not provide Job with a detailed explanation.

Instead, He shows him something greater:

the immensity of divine wisdom compared to human limitations.



Not every question receives an immediate answer.

But faith teaches that no tear falls outside God's providence.

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## The Cross of Christ: God's Definitive Answer to Suffering

The deepest answer to the problem of evil is not a theory.

It is a person.

Jesus Christ.

Many imagine a distant God observing human suffering from heaven.

But Christianity proclaims something radically different.

God Himself entered into human suffering.

He was persecuted.

He was betrayed.

He was slandered.

He was tortured.

He was unjustly condemned.

He was crucified.

The Cross reveals that God is not detached from pain.

He took it upon Himself personally.

As the prophet Isaiah says:



| *“Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows” (Isa 53:4).*

And Saint Paul proclaims:

| *“We know that in everything God works for good with those who love him” (Rom 8:28).*

The Cross shows us that God can bring immense good even out of the worst evil imaginable.

The Crucifixion was the most unjust crime in history.

Yet from it came the salvation of the world.

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## God Can Bring Greater Goods Out of Permitted Evils

This teaching is fundamental in Catholic theology.

God does not will evil.

But He can permit it because He is capable of bringing about a greater good from it.

An obvious example is the conversion of many people after painful experiences.

Countless saints discovered God precisely through suffering.

Not because suffering was good in itself.

But because God transformed that pain into a path of sanctification.

Saint Augustine expressed this truth with a famous phrase:



“God judged it better to bring good out of evil than not to permit any evil.”

This does not mean that we should seek suffering.

It means that no suffering needs to be meaningless.

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## Injustice Will Not Have the Final Word

One of humanity’s greatest anxieties arises when we see the wicked prosper.

Sometimes the corrupt flourish.

The violent seem to prevail.

The innocent suffer.

From an exclusively earthly perspective, this is scandalous.

But the Christian faith contemplates the whole story.

There is a divine judgment.

There is eternal life.

There is perfect justice.

God ignores no human action.

Jesus Himself taught:

| *“Nothing is hidden that shall not be made manifest” (Lk 8:17).*

Christian hope does not consist in denying injustices.

It consists in knowing that no injustice will remain unanswered before God.



## The Role of Christians in the Face of Evil

Understanding why God allows evil does not mean remaining passive.

Quite the opposite.

The Catholic faith demands that we fight against evil.

Christians are called to:

- Defend the truth.
- Help the poor.
- Protect the weak.
- Promote justice.
- Comfort those who suffer.
- Build peace.

Every work of mercy is a participation in Christ's victory over evil.

The question should not only be:

“Why does God allow suffering?”

We should also ask:

“What am I doing to alleviate the suffering of others?”

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## Suffering Can Become a Path to Holiness

This teaching is difficult for the modern mindset.

We live in a culture that views suffering as something to be eliminated at any cost.



And certainly, it is good to fight against it whenever possible.

But the Christian faith adds a deeper dimension.

Suffering united to Christ can have redemptive value.

Saint Paul writes:

*“I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I complete what is lacking in Christ’s afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the Church” (Col 1:24).*

This does not mean that Christ’s Cross is insufficient.

It means that God allows us to participate in the work of redemption by offering our sufferings united to those of Jesus.

This is why so many saints embraced their crosses with serenity and hope.

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## The Modern View of Evil and the Loss of Transcendent Meaning

One of the great tragedies of our time is that many people experience suffering without a spiritual horizon.

When God disappears, pain seems absurd.

When eternity disappears, injustice seems final.

When supernatural hope disappears, suffering seems meaningless.

For this reason, many contemporary crises are not merely psychological or social.



They are also spiritual.

Faith does not automatically remove pain.

But it gives pain meaning.

And suffering with meaning can be endured in a completely different way than suffering that appears pointless.

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## God's Final Victory

Christianity does not end at Calvary.

It ends with the Resurrection.

God's final word about history is not death.

It is life.

It is not evil.

It is goodness.

It is not injustice.

It is justice.

It is not sin.

It is holiness.

The Book of Revelation describes the final destiny of the redeemed:

*"He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain*



| *anymore” (Rev 21:4).*

This promise is at the heart of Christian hope.

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## Conclusion: Trusting When We Do Not Understand

The question of why God allows evil will probably accompany humanity until the end of time.

No intellectual explanation can completely remove the mystery.

Nevertheless, the Catholic faith offers certain fundamental truths:

- God did not create evil.
- God does not desire evil.
- God respects human freedom.
- God can bring immense good even out of the greatest evils.
- God has personally entered into suffering through Jesus Christ.
- God will judge every injustice.
- God promises eternal life where evil will be definitively defeated.

When we contemplate the Cross, we understand that God does not always answer our questions in the way we expect.

Sometimes He answers by showing us His presence.

The Christian does not believe because he perfectly understands the mystery of suffering.

He believes because he knows that, even in the midst of darkness, Christ has walked the path before us.

And if Good Friday ended in the glory of Easter, then our own crosses, united to His, are also destined to be transformed into resurrection.



Therefore, when pain, injustice, or uncertainty seem unbearable, we can confidently repeat the words of the psalmist:

*“Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for you are with me” (Ps 23:4).*

Ultimately, this is the Christian answer to the mystery of evil: not a cold explanation, but the certainty that God remains with us even when we cannot fully understand His ways.