

Frequently Asked Questions in Disasters

1. What does the Bible say about why we suffer?

God created us because He loves us. God never meant that there would be tragedy and prejudice, wars and hatred, lust and greed, jealousy and pride. God meant that the earth was to be a paradise, a place where there would be no death.

But man and woman rebelled against God. Mankind said, "I don't need you, God. I can build my world without you." God said, "If you take that position, you will suffer and experience eternal death." Mankind took that position, and began to suffer and we have been dying ever since. Physical death is just the death of the body, but the spirit lives on. If your spirit is separated from God for eternity, it will be lost forever.

The Bible teaches that Satan is the author of sin. Sin is the reason that we have afflictions, including death. The Bible says that all of our problems and our suffering – whatever it may be, sickness, natural disasters, and man's greed, including death itself – is a result of mankind's rebellion against God. But God has provided a gigantic rescue in the person of His Son, Jesus Christ.
Genesis 3:2; Corinthians 1:3-4; Psalms 46:1-2

2. Is God angry with me?

No, God is not angry with you. The Bible, in John 3:16, says that He loves everyone. However, because we live in this world, we all deal with the good and the bad. God is aware of everything that happens and has the ability to take what was intended for evil and use for good. The evil in this world does not render God powerless. It is quite the opposite. We can always go to Him and He promises to not only be with us but, if we are willing to live life as He created it to be lived, in relationship with Him, to guide us out of the calamity into a life where we can have peace and live without fear.
John 3:16-17; Romans 8:28; James 1:1-4; John 10:10

3. Why me?

It often feels like it is directed right at us, doesn't it? Yet many times, it is a case of us happening to just being there, like being caught in the rain. Not to trivialize something, but we are all aware that we will each die, we all get sick, we all live here on a planet that shakes, storms and has crazy weather from time to time. Yet still, why me? The Bible says that it rains on the just and the unjust. We all live through things that hurt and are uncomfortable. The bigger question may be, who are we trusting when that happens to us? Are we self-reliant or are we God-reliant. If we are trusting in ourselves, then an answer can't come that is bigger than ourselves. If we reach out to God in time of need, then we are accessing the one who created the creation. What if we knew the one who created the creation already or were ready to step into a relationship with Him? The Bible says that He is waiting for our response? He has already made the invitation through His Son Jesus. Why you? Because He loves you and He wants you to look to Him so He can rescue you and bring you peace.
Romans 5:8; John 11:1-44

4. **What good can come out of this?**

The simple answer is growth and glory. Those are not the easy answers, just simple. We grow when life hurts because we pay attention and we find out what is real and who we can trust. In the Bible, in James 1:1-4 it talks about when we face trials we can see it as a positive thing in our life because ultimately we are going to grow from it. That's hard to swallow when it's all we can see, but after you've experienced life for a while and if you're a follower of Jesus, and you've experienced how faithful He is, then you know it's true. The other answer is a bit more complicated. The answer to it is found in a Bible story about a blind man that Jesus heals in John 9. The man didn't do anything to deserve to be blind, and when asked why the man was blind, Jesus answered, "so you can see who I am." God is good and He knows it! He also knows that when we know it, and stay close to Him, it is the best thing for us. He healed the blind man so that the blind man and everyone around him would be amazed and follow Him. Why? It was the best gift He could give them. We are attracted to greatness. God is the greatest of them all and He desires to be with us. James 1:1-4; John 9; Romans 8:28

5. **How do I recover spiritually from this?**

The natural response is to deny that you are affected by the crisis. The truth is that crisis affects everybody it touches, but it affects them in various ways to varying degrees. David, in Psalms tells his soul to praise the Lord. That may seem like a strange thing to tell yourself until you realize that David was in a place where he didn't want to do that. He was in a bad way, in a dark place emotionally, but he knew that praising God would lift his spirits and that calling on God would effect the outcome of the situation! Psalm 42 and Psalm 88 are Psalms of lament. The writers were despondent, yet they sought God in spite of feelings. Counselors will tell you that feeling will follow fact. So, there are some things that we should do to recover:

- Acknowledge you're need for God where you are at
- Read God's Word, the Bible (or listen to it on tape or DVD. Psalms is a good place to start)
- See if there are others around you that will pray with you
- Is there something you can do for someone else
- Stay connected with others at a level where you know their names (small group, activity group, service group, church)
- Don't isolate yourself
- Find small ways to be thankful and ways to express that to God and others
Psalm 9:10, 34:17, 50:15, 145:18-19; James 5:13-16

6. **How can I be strong when my world is crumbling?**

When we are in need of money, we try to get a loan, when life is about to crumble, we look to God and find out that He had something called *grace*. In 2 Corinthians 12:9, the Bible says that His *grace is sufficient* for you, for his power is made perfect in weakness. What that means to each of us is that when we are submitting our situation and life to God, He is going to give us the ability to stand up and endure by standing there with us. He is willing to take the load. The hardest part is giving it to Him. We like to hold on to things. The last part of that verse is key, it's easy to say God is

great, it's hard to say I am weak. However, that is what it takes at times to let go and allow God to be God in our situation. Have a conversation with God and admit that He needs to carry your load because you can't anymore. It's too heavy. Another passage is Matthew 11:28-29, Jesus is asking for you to come to Him. The question is, will you? Titus 2:11 says that *grace precedes salvation*. When we understand God loves us and wants to come to our rescue, we gladly submit to Him, turn from our ways, and ask Him to be our Savior (I John 1:9).
Matthew 11:28-29, 2 Corinthians 12:9; 1 Peter 5:7; Titus 2:11; I John 1:9