

Gospel Lounge Hour – LIVE

With Pastor Ed Anderson and Angela Anderson

Sunday, March 23, 2025

Questions Tackled:

1. **Why does God allow suffering and evil?** If God is all-powerful and loving, why does He allow things like war, disease, injustice, and personal tragedy? We explore the biblical truths behind pain, the freedom of choice, and how God can bring beauty even out of brokenness.

2. **What happens after we die?** Will we see our loved ones again? Is there really life after death? What does the Bible say about heaven, hell, and the resurrection? We dive into Scripture for real answers and lasting hope.

3. **What is God's will for my life?** Am I on the right path? How can I know God's plan for me? Whether you're facing big decisions or searching for your life's purpose, this discussion will help you understand how to walk in faith and discover God's direction.

WHY DOES GOD ALLOW SUFFERING AND EVIL?

By Pastor Ed Anderson

- People wrestle with the question: *“If God is loving and all-powerful, why do bad things happen—like war, sickness, or personal tragedy?”*
- This question dives into the problem of pain, free will, and God’s ultimate plan for redemption.

ANSWER:

You’re asking one of the **deepest and most heartfelt questions** people have asked for centuries:

“If God is loving and all-powerful, why does He allow suffering and evil?”

This question touches on **God’s character**, **human freedom**, and the **hope of redemption**. Let’s walk through it step by step.

1. God Created a World of Free Will

- **Love requires choice.**

If God forced us to do good, we wouldn’t be free—we’d be robots.

- **Genesis 2–3** – God gave Adam and Eve the choice to obey or disobey.

When they chose sin, suffering entered the world—**not because God wanted it**, but because humans misused freedom.

Free will is a beautiful gift, but it comes with risk.

We have the power to love—but also to hurt, to choose peace—or war.

2. Evil and Suffering Are the Results of Sin

- **Romans 5:12** – *“Just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, in this way death came to all people, because all sinned.”*
- Much of the pain in the world comes from **human decisions** (greed, violence, injustice).
- Other suffering—like natural disasters or sickness—entered when the world became broken by sin.

God didn’t cause evil—but He allows it for now, because erasing it instantly would also erase our freedom.

3. God Suffers With Us

- **John 11:35** – *“Jesus wept.”* He cried when His friend Lazarus died.
- **Isaiah 53:3–5** – Jesus was *“a man of sorrows”* who carried our pain.
- **Hebrews 4:15** – Jesus understands our suffering—He experienced betrayal, grief, poverty, and death.

God is not distant. He feels our pain more deeply than we ever will.

4. God Can Use Pain for a Greater Purpose

- **Romans 8:28** – *“In all things God works for the good of those who love Him.”*
- Suffering can:
- Build character and compassion
- Draw us closer to God
- Wake us up spiritually
- Allow others to see faith in hard times

God doesn’t waste pain. He can turn it into purpose.

5. Evil and Suffering Are Temporary

- God has a plan to **end evil forever**—but He is giving people time to repent before that day.
- **2 Peter 3:9** – *“God is patient, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.”*
- **Revelation 21:4** – *“He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain.”*

The story isn’t over yet. God will make all things new.

6. The Cross Is God’s Final Answer to Suffering

- On the cross, **God absorbed evil and pain into Himself.**
- He didn’t just explain suffering—**He experienced it**, so one day He could **end it completely.**
- **Romans 5:8** – *“While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”*

If you ever doubt God’s love during suffering—look at the cross.

Final Answer: Why Does God Allow Suffering and Evil?

1. Because **love requires free will**, and free will allows people to choose wrong.
2. Because we live in a **broken world tainted by sin**.
3. Because **God walks with us** in pain and works to bring good from it.
4. Because **He is patient, wanting more people to be saved** before ending evil.
5. Because **He has promised to restore all things—and He will**.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER WE DIE?

By Pastor Ed Anderson

- This includes questions about heaven, hell, the resurrection, and the afterlife.
- Many ask: *“Will I see my loved ones again?”* or *“What is the biblical view of death?”*

ANSWER:

2. What Happens After We Die?

This is a question that touches every human heart—**what comes next?** Do we go straight to heaven or hell? Will we see our loved ones again? The Bible offers **clear, hopeful, and consistent answers.**

1. What Is Death, According to the Bible?

The Bible describes death not as the end, but as a **temporary sleep**:

- **Ecclesiastes 9:5** – *“The living know that they will die, but the dead know nothing.”*
- **John 11:11-14** – Jesus says, *“Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep... Lazarus is dead.”*
- **Psalms 146:4** – *“His breath goes forth, he returns to the earth; in that very day his thoughts perish.”*

Death is a sleep-like state of unconscious rest—no thinking, no awareness, no pain.

2. Do We Go Straight to Heaven or Hell When We Die?

The Bible teaches that **the dead rest in the grave** until the resurrection—not that they go to heaven or hell immediately.

- **Job 14:12** – *“So man lies down and does not rise. Till the heavens are no more, they will not awake nor be roused from their sleep.”*
- **Daniel 12:2** – *“Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt.”*
- **Acts 2:29, 34** – Even **King David**, a man after God’s heart, *“is dead and buried... David did not ascend into the heavens.”*

The dead are “asleep,” **waiting for the resurrection**—not floating around or watching us from above.

3. When Do We Rise Again? The Resurrection.

The Bible teaches two major resurrections:

The First Resurrection (of the righteous)

- **1 Thessalonians 4:16-17** – *“The Lord Himself will descend... the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive... will be caught up... to meet the Lord.”*
- **1 Corinthians 15:51-52** – *“We will all be changed... at the last trumpet... the dead will be raised incorruptible.”*
- This happens at **Jesus’ Second Coming**.

The Second Resurrection (of the wicked)

- **Revelation 20:5** – *“The rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished.”*
- After the 1,000 years, the wicked are raised for **final judgment**.

Everyone will be raised—some to eternal life, some to judgment.

4. What About Heaven and Hell?

- **Heaven** is a **real, physical place** that God has prepared for those who love Him (*John 14:2-3*).
- **Revelation 21:4** – *“He will wipe every tear... no more death or mourning or crying or pain.”*
- **Hell (the lake of fire)** is not a place of eternal torture, but a final and complete **destruction of sin and the wicked** (*Malachi 4:1, Revelation 20:14-15*).

Heaven is eternal life with God.

Hell is the permanent **end of sin**, not unending pain.

5. Will I See My Loved Ones Again?

If your loved ones **died in Christ**, then YES—you will see them again!

- **John 11:25-26** – *“I am the resurrection and the life... whoever believes in Me will live, even though they die.”*
- **1 Thessalonians 4:17-18** – *“And so we will be with the Lord forever. Therefore, encourage one another with these words.”*

At the resurrection, believers will be **reunited with their loved ones**—forever.

6. What Should We Do While We Wait?

- Live with hope and readiness:
 - **Titus 2:13** – *“We wait for the blessed hope—the appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ.”*
 - Share the good news of eternal life.
 - Walk with Jesus daily, trusting in the promise of resurrection.
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Final Answer: What Happens After We Die?

1. We “sleep” in the grave—unaware, at rest.
2. At Jesus’ return, the righteous are resurrected and taken to heaven.
3. The wicked rise after 1,000 years for judgment and destruction.
4. Heaven is eternal life in God’s presence.
5. Hell is the final end of sin—not eternal torture.
6. You will see your loved ones again—if they died in Christ.

WHAT IS GOD'S WILL FOR MY LIFE?

By Pastor Ed Anderson

People often ask: *"How do I know my purpose?"* or *"How do I make the right decisions according to God's plan?"*

ANSWER:

5. What Is God's Will for My Life?

This is one of the most personal and important questions we can ask:

"Why am I here? What does God want me to do with my life?"

The Bible gives **clear principles** to help you discover God's will—both His **general will for all people** and His **specific will for you**.

1. God's Will Is First About Who You Are, Not Just What You Do

- **Romans 12:2** – *"Do not conform 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."*
- God is more interested in your **character than your career**.
- Before asking *"What should I do?"*, ask *"Who is God calling me to become?"*

God's will is that you grow to be like Jesus—loving, humble, faithful, and obedient.

2. God's Will Is Revealed in His Word

- **Psalms 119:105** – *"Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path."*
- Many parts of God's will are already revealed in Scripture:
- **Love God and love others** (Matthew 22:37-39)
- **Live a holy life** (1 Thessalonians 4:3)
- **Rejoice, pray, and give thanks** (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18)
- **Do justice, love mercy, walk humbly** (Micah 6:8)

If you're walking in obedience to His Word, **you're already in God's will**.

3. God's Will Is Discovered Through Prayer and Surrender

- **Proverbs 3:5-6** – *“Trust in the Lord with all your heart... in all your ways submit to Him, and He will make your paths straight.”*

- Ask God:
- *“What are You calling me to do today?”*
- *“How can I glorify You with my gifts, time, and relationships?”*

The more you seek Him, the more He reveals Himself step by step.

4. God’s Will Often Unfolds One Step at a Time

- **Psalm 37:23** – *“The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord.”*
- God usually doesn’t show you the **entire plan**, but gives you the **next step**.
- Take a step of faith in what you know—He will guide you as you go.

Think of God’s will like a flashlight—it lights the **next step**, not the whole path.

5. God Uses Your Gifts, Desires, and Circumstances

- **Ephesians 2:10** – *“We are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.”*
- Ask:
- *What am I passionate about?*
- *What are my gifts and talents?*
- *What needs has God put in front of me?*

God’s specific will often matches your **calling** with real-life **opportunities**.

6. God’s Will Includes Trusting Him Even When It’s Hard

- **Romans 8:28** – *“In all things God works for the good of those who love Him.”*
 - God’s will may include **challenges, waiting, or change**, but it always leads to growth.
 - Stay faithful even in uncertainty—He’s shaping your story for His glory.
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Final Answer: What Is God’s Will for My Life?

1. To know Him, love Him, and become more like Jesus.
2. To obey His Word and live with purpose and holiness.
3. To seek Him daily in prayer and trust Him step by step.

4. To use your gifts to serve others and glorify God.
5. To trust that even in difficulty, He is working for your good.

God's will isn't a mystery to fear—it's a relationship to walk in.