

## Table Talk

1. Read the verses listed about God's goodness (*Deuteronomy 32:4; Habakkuk 1:13a; James 1:17; 1 John 1:5*). What do we learn about God through those verses? How do those verses aid you in a current struggle you are going through?
2. How has Romans 8:28-29 been true for you or your family? Reflect back on a time when you went through something that didn't seem "good," but since then you have realized its blessing on your life and the way that it has caused you to grow in your faith. How can that perspective help you in a current struggle?
3. Job struggled for a long time with the suffering that plagued him. Finally, he comes to the point of demanding an audience with God (Job 31:35). The end of Job is God's granting that request and responding to him (Job 38-41). Take some time this week to read this as a personal devotion. What insights do you gain from how God reveals Himself in this remarkable section of Scripture?
4. Think of a situation right now where someone is doing evil to you. How can you respond in this situation not with evil, but with good (Romans 12:21)?
5. In this new year, how can you reflect more on the cross and what our Savior teaches us through it about evil, suffering, and the like?
6. Spend some time this week looking up all of the references on this outline. As you do, record your insights and dialogue with God about the truth He is revealing to you in them.

# What Would Jesus Think?

Part 2 – "The 'Problem' of Evil"

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## Introduction

### I. A Proper Perspective

Three observations on the "Fall of Man":

- The magnitude of the rebellion was larger than we may comprehend. *Genesis 3:5*
- Our own guilt in it is greater than we may recognize. *Romans 5:12*
- Its effects were more far-reaching than we may realize.

Death entered the world. *Romans 5:12, 14, 17*

We became slaves to sin. *Romans 6:6, 16, 17, 20; see also Matthew 15:19*

## II. A Proper Framework

1. Evil exists. *Isaiah 5:20; Matthew 5:11, 6:13, John 3:20, 7:7; Romans 1:29; Ephesians 6:16, etc.*
2. Evil is a result of a fallen world brought about by human rebellion and Satan's continued influence. *Matthew 15:19; Mark 7:23; Romans 7:21; Colossians 1:21-22, etc.*
3. God is good. *Deuteronomy 32:4; Habakkuk 1:13a; James 1:17; 1 John 1:5; etc.*
4. God is sovereign. *Deuteronomy 32:39; Isaiah 43:13, 45:7; Daniel 4:35; Matthew 10:29, etc.*

Two important examples:

Job 1:1-2:7

2 Samuel 24:1 / 1 Chronicles 21:1

5. God uses evil to bring about His good purposes. *Romans 8:28-29*

Two important examples:

Genesis 50:20

Acts 2:23 / Acts 4:27-28

## III. A Proper Response

Do good. *Romans 3:8, 12:21*

Seek good. *Romans 8:28-29; James 1:2-4*

Pray for good. *Matthew 6:13; Philippians 4:6-7; 1 Thessalonians 5:17*

## Conclusion

### Recommended Books:

D. A. Carson, *How Long, O Lord?: Reflections on Suffering and Evil* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2006).

John S. Feinberg, *Deceived by God?: A Journey Through Suffering* (Wheaton, Ill: Crossway Books, 1997).

C. S. Lewis, *The Problem of Pain* and *A Grief Observed* (available either separately or together in many C. S. Lewis anthologies).

John Piper and Justin Taylor, eds., *Suffering and the Sovereignty of God* (Wheaton, Ill: Crossway Books, 2006).