



## A Crack in Creation

### The Lie: Is Evil God's Fault?

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***Mark 5:21-43***

#### **OPEN**

Because evil came into our world, it is forever stained, cracked, broken...from its original form and purpose. We hope for a new heaven and earth when humanity and creation is fully restored. Until then, we live in the land in between where God is present in us (thanks be to the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus and the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit). We also have a mission to push back evil so that God's will be done on earth as it is in heaven until Christ comes again. So we live in a tension.

Which of these effects of evil bother you more:

- When the physical world produces suffering and hardship (disease, natural disasters...).
- When moral violations occur, caused by people who make bad or evil choices in their actions and behaviors (abuse, hate, murder...)
- When brokenness and pain are brought by relational breakdowns (divorce, bullying, neglecting parents...)

#### **INTRODUCTION**

In this series we are exposing some of the big questions and lies that linger in our minds when it comes to the problem of evil. We want to know *Why?* evil exists, especially if God is so powerful. If God is this seriously opposed to Evil, why does he allow us to struggle and suffer the way we do in this life? Isn't that what we are really wondering when we ask if Evil is God's fault?

#### **REFLECTION ON SCRIPTURE**

**Read Mark 5:21-43.**

- Try to put yourself in the lives of the characters in this story who were suffering. Try to describe the range of emotions, questions, and desperation in their lives. (Note: Some people in the group may have had similar experiences. Be gracious and sensitive as people share.)

## DISCUSSION

Respond to the quotes below by C.S. Lewis in *Mere Christianity*:

*"The sin, both of men and of angels, was rendered possible by the fact that God gave them free will. Free will, though it makes evil possible, is also the only thing that makes possible any love or goodness or joy worth having.*

*[God] saw that from a world of free creatures, even if they fell, he could work out a deeper happiness and a fuller splendor than any world [of creatures that worked like machines] would permit."*

Sin is sometimes defined as *the abuse of things made good*. Part of the blessing of the world God created is that it can be abused by evil. For each of the areas below, describe the blessing and goodness with each and also share how these can be abused when evil is present:

- The laws that govern our physical world in creation
- The moral law the ability of free will
- The relational and social law that enables relationships.

What are your thoughts for this quote?

*"The suffering inflicted on a person is not a complete event..."* God doesn't give evil that kind of power. *"A complete or total event must include a person's response to the suffering."* It is this response which determines whether the pain becomes merely another crack in the creation or instead a corridor through which one receives the very grace and power of God.

What does Jesus tell Jairus to do (Mark 5:36)?

- What are we to believe in the face of evil and suffering?

Close your time by discussing one last quote:

Paul Claudel explained it this way: *"Christ did not come to do away with suffering. He did not come to explain it. He came to fill it with his presence."* So don't get stuck so much on the "Why" of evil and the "Who to blame" of pain. Move on and ask "What's next, Lord?" What can YOU by your grace do with this? Let the crack in creation that sin and evil have wrought become a corridor through which you receive the One who comes walking with wounds in His hands but the light of life in His eyes... the One who says to YOU today: **"Don't be afraid, just believe."**

How were you challenged by the sermon and study this week?

**NEXT STEPS:**

- Read and reflect on the Bible verse and group study this week.
- Look for *corridors* in your life where you ask, “*What’s next?*”

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<sup>i</sup> C.S. Lewis, *Miracles*, pp.121-22.; *Mere Christianity*, pp.52-53.

<sup>ii</sup> Diogenes Allen, *Acting Redemptively*, *Theology Today*, 265.