

Conversation Starters

- What is your background with the Christian faith?
- What are some questions you still have about Christianity?

Discuss

Most of us have a picture of God we have drawn in our mind, particularly with regard to His nature. So in a world where evil and suffering exist, many find it hard to believe in the God of the Bible who is (as the Bible teaches) all-powerful and thoroughly good.

The Lord passed in front of Moses, calling out, "Yahweh! The Lord! The God of compassion and mercy! I am slow to anger and filled with unfailing love and faithfulness. ([Exodus 34:6 NLT](#))

O Sovereign Lord! You made the heavens and earth by your strong hand and powerful arm. Nothing is too hard for you! ([Jeremiah 32:17 NLT](#))

- What is the picture of God you have drawn in your mind?
- What (research, teachings, people, etc.) helped you draw that picture?

The Bible teaches us that God loves us and that we were made to be in a relationship with Him. But for that love to be real, God had to take a relational risk and give us the opportunity to choose whether to accept or reject that love. Evil and suffering is what exists when we choose to live apart from God – He is not behind evil and suffering, people are. Everyone at some point in life has gone against God's plan and design for our life – we are all guilty of sin.

For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God's glorious standard. ([Romans 3:23 NLT](#))

- What kind of relationship would we have with God if we did not have a choice?
- Have you ever done anything that would be considered wrong?
- How did your decision or actions affect others?

God could end all evil and suffering, but He loves us so much that He chooses not to act right now. He knows, understands, and is present with us in our suffering. He is like a lovesick Father waiting for His children to turn back to Him.

And the Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness. For example, we don't know what God wants us to pray for. But the Holy Spirit prays for us with groanings that cannot be expressed in words. And the Father who knows all hearts knows what the Spirit is saying, for the Spirit pleads for us believers in harmony with God's own will. ([Romans 8:26-27 NLT](#))

- How does God as a lovesick Father change your picture of Him?
- What do you understand about God's love and presence in suffering? What do you not?
- Will you let evil and suffering draw you to or away from God?

Next Steps

Do you have any questions that are keeping you from a relationship with God? Where you stand with the God of the Bible is the most important decision you can make in life. Write down any questions you have still. Then, investigate it. Meck is a place that welcomes all questions. [Let us know](#) how we may help!

Meck has tons of resources to help you grow in your faith. We invite you to allow us to help you explore. One of the best place to start is [Starting Line](#).

A relationship is at the heart of what it means to be a Christian. Are you allowing that relationship to shape you on a daily basis? If you would like some help in this area, consider taking [Training Camp](#), where you can learn more about what it means to relate to a supernatural God.

Regardless of where you're at, we all have a next step in our relationship with God and the church that He is building. Consider taking [your next step](#) this week at Meck.

Further Reflection

Read [Exodus 34:6](#); [Jeremiah 32:17](#); [Romans 3:23](#); [Romans 8:26-27](#) NLT.

Pray

God, your Word tells us that you are good and powerful and that you are truth, even in the midst of evil and suffering. Thank you for allowing us to ask questions about things that are hard for us to understand. Help us as we seek answers to those questions with your wisdom and to trust you when we don't understand.