

## Does Pain and Suffering Prove There is No God?

### How Could There Be A Good God In A World Like This?

Atheists often see the existence of pain and suffering as evidence that God simply does not exist. Their argument goes something like this:

1. *If there is a God, He is, by definition, all powerful and all loving. In other words, if there is a God, he is \_\_\_\_\_*
2. *A good, all powerful and all loving God would not allow pain and suffering to exist in \_\_\_\_\_*
3. *Pain and suffering \_\_\_\_\_ in our world*
4. *Therefore, there is no good, all powerful, all loving God*

### The Fallacy of 'Comfort'

A good God values character over comfort. Character is often best developed as a result of our experience of pain and suffering. God, therefore, allows some level of pain and suffering in order to develop our character.

**Romans 5:3-4** (Key Idea): \_\_\_\_\_

**James 5:10-11** (Key Idea): \_\_\_\_\_

**1 Peter 5:10** (Key Idea): \_\_\_\_\_

### The Fallacy of 'Love'

A loving God demonstrates the perfect balance between mercy and justice. Justice often requires the infliction of pain and suffering in order to achieve a greater good. God, therefore, allows some level of pain and suffering in order to maintain the just character of 'love'.

**John 9:1-3** (Key Idea): \_\_\_\_\_

**2 Corinthians 12:7** (Key Idea): \_\_\_\_\_

**Psalms 119:71** (Key Idea): \_\_\_\_\_

**Hebrews 5:8** (Key Idea): \_\_\_\_\_

### The Fallacy of 'Immediate Satisfaction'

A loving God provides humans with an existence beyond the grave. All happiness, love, mercy and justice need not be satisfied immediately in this life, because all these desires will be satisfied in eternity. God, therefore, allows some level of pain and suffering because he knows (and has communicated) the fleeting, short nature of our mortal experience.

**1 Corinthians 7:29-31** (Key Idea): \_\_\_\_\_

**John 17:14, 17** (Key Idea): \_\_\_\_\_

**1 John 2:15-17** (Key Idea): \_\_\_\_\_

**1 Thessalonians 4:13-18** (Key Idea): \_\_\_\_\_

**Hebrews 11:13-16** (Key Idea): \_\_\_\_\_

### So, How Can God Exist?

Imagine a parent bringing his infant into the doctor's office for a flu shot. From the child's perspective, the shot is terribly painful and unwanted. The infant does not feel as though he or she has done anything to deserve this, and has no desire to suffer through the experience. But the father knows better, even though the child simply cannot begin to understand what is happening. The father knows that the pain of the shot will protect the child; it will result in something that benefits the infant. And the father also knows that he is acting out of love, even though a painless day from the child's perspective might seem like a more loving approach. The father knows that true love often requires him to allow some pain on the part of the child. And finally, the father knows that the pain of the shot is fleeting relative to the life of the child. For all these reasons, the fact that the father has allowed the pain of the shot does not negate his existence!

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