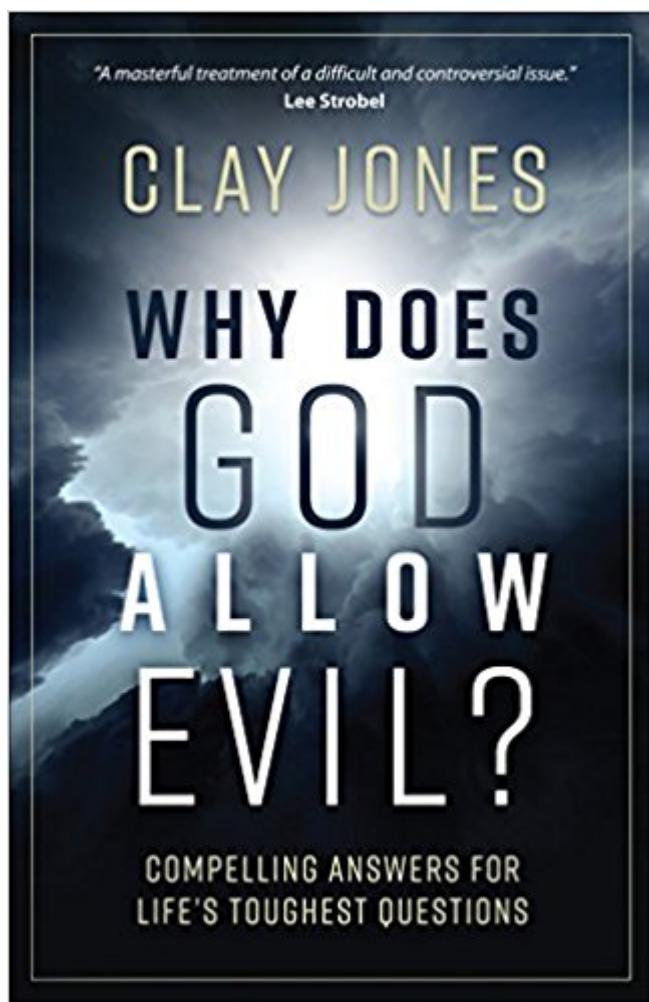


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# Why Does God Allow Evil?: Compelling Answers For Life's Toughest Questions



## Synopsis

"If you are looking for one book to make sense of the problem of evil, this book is for you." Sean McDowell *Grasping This Truth Will Change Your View of God Forever* If God is good and all-powerful, why doesn't He put a stop to the evil in this world? Christians and non-Christians alike struggle with the concept of a loving God who allows widespread suffering in this life and never-ending punishment in hell. We wrestle with questions such as...Why do bad things happen to good people?Why should we have to pay for Adam's sin?How can eternal judgment be fair?But what if the real problem doesn't start with God...but with us? Clay Jones, a professor of Christian apologetics at Biola University, examines what Scripture truly says about the nature of evil and why God allows it. Along the way, he'll help you discover the contrasting abundance of God's grace, the overwhelming joy of heaven, and the extraordinary destiny of believers.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Insightful and engaging...here's a masterful treatment of a difficult and controversial issue by my friend Clay Jones. Readers will benefit greatly from his thoughtful analysis of a topic that has troubled many through the centuries. Read it with a pen in hand to underline the nuggets of wisdom!" Lee Strobel, Professor of Christian Thought, Houston Baptist University "I have read a number of books on the problem of evil, but this is one of the very best yet produced. Professor Clay Jones fearlessly and deftly addresses all the hard questions head-on with rational responses to them. There is no ducking of issues. Moreover, Jones skillfully weaves theology, biblical studies, and philosophy into a coherent, well-integrated book that is suited for both the

scholar and the layperson. I highly recommend it." •J.P. Moreland, Distinguished Professor of Philosophy, Talbot School of Theology, Biola University; author of *The Soul: How We Know It's Real and Why It Matters* "Dr. Clay Jones doesn't shy away from tough subjects. Instead, he tackles them with honesty, diligence, and resolve. In *Why Does God Allow Evil?* he engages one of the most difficult questions facing believers and skeptics alike. His treatment is God-honoring, straightforward, and accessible. If you're looking for a resource that acknowledges the severity of evil and the gravity of sin while taking the justice and grace of God seriously, get this book!" •J. Warner Wallace, senior fellow at the Colson Center for Christian Worldview, Adjunct Professor of Apologetics at Biola, author of *Cold-Case Christianity*

Clay Jones (DMin) is an associate professor of Christian apologetics at Biola University and the chairman of the board for Ratio Christi, an international university apologetics ministry. Previously he hosted the nationally syndicated talk radio program Contend for Truth and served on the pastoral staff of two large churches. Clay and his wife, Jean E., live in Southern California.

Author Clay Jones is an associate professor of Christian Apologetics at Biola University, and the chairman of Ratio Christi, a campus apologetics alliance. He is a former talk show host and has served on the pastoral staff of several large churches. Jones received a BA in Philosophy from California State University, an MDiv from American Theological Seminary, and a DMin from Trinity Evangelical Divinity School. (Because of his doctorate and the topic of this book, which is his main area of teaching, I lovingly refer to Clay as “Dr. Evil.”) Synopsis A common complaint from skeptics as well as saints is that there is so much evil in the world. How is this possible if a good and loving God exists? While there are many well-reasoned arguments that show this is not a problem, it is still a challenging topic. It can be especially difficult to discern what is behind the question. Is it intellectual curiosity, skepticism seeking an excuse, or the gut-wrenching reality of the death or suffering of a loved-one. Each kind of questioner needs a different approach. For those in the third category, I would say this book is not for you right now. There is no book on this topic that will really meet your need. You don’t need a book. You need a community of people to come along side you, love you, and hurt with you through this. Go to your community and get the support you need. For those who want an answer, this book is for you. For those hoping to justify your skepticism with the Problem of Evil, I challenge you to read this book with an open mind. Why God Allows Evil is written from the perspective of a Christian worldview. It offers answers based on what God has revealed in the Holy Bible. If you read this book assuming that Christianity

is false, you will find the arguments within meaningless. That would be a great loss. The book is divided into 11 chapters, with an introduction setting the stage and defining terms. Chapter 1 starts at the beginning, which is to say how evil was actualized by our first parents. Chapters 2 and 3 deal with the question of bad things happening to good people. Chapter 4 deals with the unevangelized, or “if people never hear about Jesus, how is it fair to punish them?” Chapter 5 addresses the fairness of Hell. Chapters 6, 7, and 8 deal with free will and how it plays into these questions. 9, 10, and 11 explain how eternity sets the context for the whole question. The book is then summarized on the epilogue, followed by an appendix that takes a stab at explaining the ultimate origin of evil.

**Analysis**

Having sat under Dr. Jones’ teaching on this material in graduate school, I could hear his voice in my head as I read this book. This was an advantage for me. However, for those who have never met him, it could be a challenge for you. Jones goes to great pains to express his heart for those who are wrestling with these issues, but because of his no-nonsense approach, that might not be obvious. He is offering tough answers to tough questions. Trust me when I tell you, he is giving these answers with a pastor’s heart. From my studies of these issues under Jones and others, I agree with most of what he has to say in this volume. Jones ascribes almost all suffering and death to Adam’s sin and God’s curse on the earth that resulted. I am a little hesitant to agree. I realize Jones’ view is from what he would call “an unforced reading” of the Biblical data. What gives me pause is the number of things that have been discovered to be beneficial to life on earth that are often shown as examples of “natural evil.” For example, earthquakes, which unfortunately cause thousands of deaths around the world, are the result of a natural process, plate tectonics, that makes earth habitable. Hurricanes have a major role in regulating the climate of the planet. However, in the final analysis, I think Jones nails it. We suffer because of sin, ours and that of others, but our suffering will fade into insignificance in eternity. This book is accessible to even the high school reader, but not dumbed down such that a reader with an advanced degree would be bored with it. It is a must read. I urge you to read it BEFORE you encounter a crisis..

There are many books in print trying to explain why Christians believe in an all powerful good God yet find we have evil in the world. I have read many of them. I think this one stands out. Jones writes that it took him over twenty years to write this book. It shows. There is a deepness of thought and presentation that I have not seen in other books on the topic. He has studied the subject well, reading many books as well as pursuing Scripture. A few of his many teachings stood out to me.

One was his questioning whether there were any “good” people. The question of why bad things happen to good people loses its meaning when we realize that there are not any good people. Jones uses history and Scripture to prove his point. Another part of the book I particularly appreciated was his teaching on evil entering the world through Adam’s sin. I understood his explanation of why we are punished for Adam’s sin. We are born with a nature inclined to sin & related to why there are no good people. Even though I had studied this topic, I found new insights from Jones. This is a book for Christians. It explains why a good God has good purposes for allowing evil. Jones writes about being prepared for eternity, comparing the suffering here with the experience there. Lest readers think he knows nothing of suffering, he shares his own experience with excruciating pain from bone cancer. Jones does a great job of answering the arguments of critics, such as atheists. He points out the fallacy of their arguments clearly. I highly recommend this book to Christians who want a biblically based and well reasoned explanation as to why an all powerful and good God allows evil. Jones wants our understanding to be shaped by what Scripture says and he presents that well. I received a complimentary galley of this book from the publisher. My comments are an independent and honest review.

compelling and leaves no answer unanswered. easy reading and recommend it to anyone who is suffering, knows someone in dire straits or has lost a loved one. Very thought provoking and good pondering material. Well researched, well written, very well supported with scripture. Read it all at once and now will go back through and meditate on key points and leaving my mind more open and looking forward to the great hope ahead. then ever before.

Dr. Jones manages to give profound perspectives on why God allows evil while keeping the book very readable and engaging. My young adult sons plan to read the book and we look forward to a family discussion on it. It really is worth the time to read this book.

This book explains the whole frame work of why God created the world and why a benevolent God would permit tragedy, sufferings and pain in the world. It’s a must read for all who endeavor to know the true God and His plans to free the world of evil.

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