

# San Juan church of Christ

1414 Hawk Parkway, Unit C  
Montrose, CO 81401 | (970) 249-8116  
[www.sanjuanchurchofchrist.org](http://www.sanjuanchurchofchrist.org)

## What Does God's Word Say About...

### Evil, Pain & Suffering - Part 1

A question asked by many is: if "God is love" (1 John 4:8), why is there so much suffering in the world today? To answer this question we would need to understand the creation account in Genesis. On the sixth, and final day of creation, "God saw all that He had made, and behold, it was very good" (Gen. 1:31).

One of the greatest blessings God has given mankind is free will, or the power to choose. In the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve were given one commandment: "From any tree in the garden you may eat freely; but from the tree of knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day you eat from it you shall surely die" (Gen. 2:17). When Adam and Eve chose to eat of the forbidden fruit, sin entered the world causing physical death and immediate spiritual death [separation from God] to all mankind. The apostle John wrote that "the whole world lies in the power of the evil one" (1 John 5:19) because of the separation sin caused between us and God. (Isa 59:2)

Therefore, because of Adam and Eve's choice to disobey God, pain and suffering entered the world. There are various causes of pain and suffering such as decisions made by others, even those made before our birth. Who knew that asbestos, in a later generation, would cause cancer? Who knew that spraying foliage with Agent Orange would have such devastating effects?

Violating natural laws can also cause much suffering. God, in His love, created an orderly universe, and ignoring His laws will have consequences. A father may be injured falling off a roof while working, and a car-load of kids tries to beat a train across the tracks and fails. Then we ask the question, "Why God?" Why did God not cradle the man, or stop the train? What would this world be like if God suspended His laws every time someone encountered a life threatening situation?

Suffering can be caused by our own poor choices. Someone may take up the habit of smoking cigarettes, using drugs, or drinking alcohol. Peter wrote, "For by what a man is overcome, by this he is enslaved" (2 Peter 2:19). When we make poor choices we look around and try to blame others, or God. Paul wrote, "Whatever a man sows, this he will also reap. For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption" (Gal. 6:7-8).

A question we need to ask ourselves is: If there was no suffering, would we need God? When Jesus walked this earth, "He offered up both prayers and supplications with loud crying and tears to the One able to save Him from death...Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered (Heb. 5:7-8). Next week we will offer scripture that will teach us how to endure pain and suffering as they are part of this life. (John 16:33).