

Does God Cause or Allow Bad Things to Occur in My Life Study Guide

Key Concepts

This teaching seeks to **eliminate misunderstandings** that can lead to bitterness toward God, helping believers understand that evil is not caused by God. It emphasizes the **power of prayer** in partnering with God by His design. Understanding these truths helps us trust God fully and hear His voice clearly.

Biblical Insights

1. God Does Not Cause Evil

- **James 1:13 (NKJV):** “Let no one say when he is tempted, ‘I am tempted by God’; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone.”
 - **Insight:** God is good, loving, and holy. He never causes evil, nor does He lead anyone into sin.
- **John 10:10 (NKJV):** “The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.”
 - **Insight:** Evil originates from sin, Satan, and human choices, not from God.

2. The Impact of Free Will

- **Genesis 2:16-17 (NKJV):** “And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, ‘Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.’”
 - **Insight:** God gave humans free will, allowing us to choose obedience or rebellion. Sin brought evil and suffering into the world.

3. God’s Sovereignty and Human Dominion

- **Genesis 1:26 (NKJV):** “Then God said, ‘Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle...’”
 - **Insight:** God entrusted dominion to humans. He respects the choices we make, whether good or bad, but calls us to partner with Him through prayer.

4. **God's Redemptive Work in Trials**

- **Romans 8:28 (NKJV):** “And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.”
 - **Insight:** Though God doesn't cause evil, He can redeem every situation for the good of those who trust Him.

5. **The Power of Prayer in Partnership with God**

- **Matthew 6:10 (NKJV):** “Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.”
 - **Insight:** God's will is accomplished when we pray. Human prayer activates heaven's resources to address earthly needs.

Practical Applications

1. **Trust in God's Goodness**

- Remind yourself that God's character is good, and He is for you, even when life is difficult.

2. **Use Your Free Will to Choose God**

- Commit to following God daily through prayer, reading Scripture, and practicing obedience.

3. **Exercise Dominion through Prayer**

- Partner with God by inviting His will into your circumstances through prayer, thanksgiving, and worship.

4. **Surrender Bitterness and Fear**

- Release any anger or resentment toward God and open your heart to trust Him fully.

Study Questions

1. Why is it important to know that God doesn't cause evil?
2. How does free will affect human experiences of suffering and joy?
3. What does Romans 8:28 teach us about God's ability to redeem difficult circumstances?
4. How can believers exercise their dominion through prayer?
5. What steps can you take to eliminate bitterness or mistrust toward God?

Personal Reflection

- Is there an area in your life where you've blamed God for something bad? How can you shift your perspective to trust in His goodness?
 - Are you exercising dominion through prayer, or are there areas where you need to grow in this practice?
 - What is one practical way you can invite God's will into your life today?
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Summary

God does not cause or allow evil to happen in our lives. Evil entered the world through sin and human choices. God, however, remains good, loving, and just. He invites us to partner with Him through prayer, releasing His power to bring good out of difficult situations. By understanding God's nature and our role in exercising dominion, we can overcome bitterness and trust Him fully.

Closing Prayer

“Lord, thank You for Your goodness and love. Help me to trust You in every situation and to partner with You through prayer. Remove any bitterness from my heart and teach me to hear Your still small voice. In Jesus' name, Amen.”

This guide aims to provide comfort, clarity, and practical tools to eliminate misunderstandings about God's role in suffering, empowering believers to grow closer to Him and exercise their God-given dominion through prayer.
