

## A Loving God

John 3:16 HCSB "For God loved the world in this way: He gave His One and Only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life.

### Introduction:

Take a moment to consider the following statistics:

- A Woman is battered every 15 seconds.
- 1.3 Adult women are raped every minute.
- 45 Americans were killed in alcohol related traffic crashes each day in 1994.
- Approximately 6 children are reported abused and neglected in America every 60 seconds.
- There was a murder every 24 minutes in 1985, and the rate has only increased since.
- There is a robbery every 51 seconds.
- There is a violent crime of some kind every 18 seconds.
- There is an aggravated assault every 29 seconds.
- There are 20 employees murdered and 18,000 assaulted on the job every week.
- A recent CIA report estimates 2 million women and children are sexually trafficked from all over the world, including the U.S. each year into prostitution and pornography. They are sold to brothels where they are beaten and raped.

And we won't even go into all the natural disasters, disease and Third World hunger. Why? Why must the innocent suffer? Why so much death, disease and destruction? This is a question that has plagued man for centuries, both believers and unbelievers alike. They have both asked this question.

### I. If God is really a Loving God...why does He permit all the evil done in this world?

Believer...What would you say if someone were to ask you that very same question? What would your answer be? Do you fear the answer you give will sound vague and unsatisfactory to your opposing skeptic? Friends...there is an answer to this seemingly unanswerable question. Two things will help us to understand.

#### A. God gave mankind a free will.

In the Book of Genesis we learn that God gave mankind a free will. That is, this God who created man in His own Image to bring Him Glory and Pleasure gave to every man, woman and child the power to choose for him\herself independent of God.

#### B. We have inherited a sinful nature.

The Book of Gen. also tells us that Adam and Eve fell in the Garden and that ever since man has been born with a sin nature to rebel against the Living God.

Just as you may have been the happy recipient of a Big Nose or a Long Nose or a certain Hair or Eye Color, or maybe you are Short or you are Tall. Just as we have received these things through birth so it is with a "Sin Nature". Once Adam and Eve Sinned every person born into the world inherited a "Sin Nature", that is to "Rebel against God; and so it has been ever since.

- **Romans 5:19 HCSB** For just as through one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so also through the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous.

This is the Case of "ORIGINAL SIN".

Then there is "WILLFUL SIN"- where we deliberately choose to sin against God.

- **James 1:13-15 HCSB** No one undergoing a trial should say, "I am being tempted by God." For God is not tempted by evil, and He Himself doesn't tempt anyone. (14) But each person is tempted when he is drawn away and enticed by his own evil desires. (15) Then after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin, and when sin is fully grown, it gives birth to death.

I am not going to get any further into the Doctrine of Sin than that. I only wish to remind us that man by "Nature" is Rebellious against God and that Man is "Willful"; that is man has the power to choose, to freely make a cognitive choice of his own volition and according to his own desires.

### **C. Free will is necessary for true love to exist.**

For just a moment, pretend that you are God and in your imagination you are going to recreate a perfect world. Keep in mind, however, that for every thing that you do there is a ramification, a certain consequence.

OK let's start by wiping out "all murder". POOF! NO More Murder! Whoops...now all the Pro-Choice people are mad at you because you forgot to exclude abortion.

Now let's get rid of "all rape". POOF! No More Rape! Oh, you can't stop there, why don't you stop all robberies. POOF! NO More Robberies!

While you're at it why don't you eliminate World Hunger? POOF! No More Hunger! People are helping to plant crops again and are giving food in abundance! People are being fed again. Great! Fantastic! Continue to wipe out every known evil till you are finished.

Oh wait a minute! Something is wrong. Oh yes, very, very different. No one is following you anymore. No one believes in you anymore and No one loves you anymore. "What do you mean" you may ask? "Why, didn't we just finish wiping out and eliminating all the evil in the world and you mean to tell me that no one loves me anymore!"

Well, remember in the beginning, I said, "keep in mind" that for everything you do there are ramifications, certain consequences?

1. When you wiped out all murder, you wiped out the "choice" of certain people to "commit" murder.

2. When you ridded the earth of rape, you ridded the "choice" of certain people to "choose" to rape.

3. When you stopped all robberies, you stopped the "choice" of certain people to "choose" to rob.

4. When you stopped World Hunger you took away certain people's "choice" to NOT help those in need. OR man's choice not to work in the fields in such a way to preserve its crop.

### **D. God created the earth we live on, man created the world we live in.**

So you see. When man's "choice" was taken from him; Man could no longer choose to do "evil", however, he could also no longer choose to do "good". If man cannot "choose" to hate man cannot "choose" to love either. Thus, mankind cannot "choose" to love a "loving" God who loved them first.

But God is a loving God, isn't He? God "chose" to create the earth we live on. Man "chose" to create the world we live in! The Earth is by "Design", the World is by "Choice".

### **E. God has been offering to help for millennia.**

A preacher and an atheistic barber were once walking through the city slums. Said the barber to the preacher: "This is why I cannot believe in a God of love. If God was as kind and loving as you say, He would not permit all this poverty, disease, and squalor. He would not allow these poor bums to be addicted to dope and other character-destroying habits. No, I cannot believe in a God who permits these things."

The minister was silent until they met a man who was especially unkempt and filthy. His hair was hanging down his neck and he had a half-inch of stubble on his face. Said the minister: "You can't be a very good barber or you wouldn't permit a man like that to continue living in this neighborhood without a haircut and a shave."

Indignantly the barber answered: "Why blame me for that man's condition? I can't help it that he is like that. He has never come in my shop. I could fix him up and make him look like a gentleman!"

Giving the barber a penetrating look, the minister said: "Then don't blame God for allowing the people to continue in their evil ways, when He is constantly inviting them to come and be saved.

- [Romans 5:8 HCSB](#) But God proves His own love for us in that while we were still sinners Christ died for us!
- [1 John 4:8 HCSB](#) The one who does not love does not know God, because God is love.

Yes...God is Love, but His Love does not dwell in the heart of every person in this world. Now that we have established God is a "Loving God", the next question a person might ask is:

## **II. How Could a Loving God Send Someone to Hell Just For Not Believing In a Jesus Christ? How Could God Condemn Someone to an Eternal Punishment Who Never Even Knew?**

First, we must remember that God has called sinners to repentance.

- [Romans 3:23-24 HCSB](#) For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. (24) They are justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

God demonstrated His love toward us on a cross 2000 years ago, dying in our place; that's "Love"!

- [2 Peter 3:9 HCSB](#) The Lord does not delay His promise, as some understand delay, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance.

So you see, God does not send someone to hell; they send themselves to hell, by their choice. The question, "How could a loving God send someone to hell" is not even a valid question. No! Rather, the question should be, "How could a loving God allow people to send themselves to hell? He allows people to "condemn" themselves to eternal punishment.

Now that the question is much clearer, then so is the answer. The answer is unveiled for us beginning in Romans Chapter 1.

### **A. God has given us the light of creation.**

- [Romans 1:19-20 HCSB](#) since what can be known about God is evident among them, because God has shown it to them. (20) From the creation of the world His invisible attributes, that is, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what He has made. As a result, people are without excuse.

So God has given us the "Light" of "Creation". There is not a person on earth who has not looked out their window, who has not left their house. There is not a person on earth who has lived in utter darkness separated from God's creation. God's creation extends even to the deaf, dumb and the mute. We have all experienced God with at least one or more of the five senses God created us with. Every living person has experienced God's creation in some way. They have saw, heard, felt or sensed it in some way. You can't go from point A to point B without experiencing God's creation around you. It is impossible that you got here without experiencing God's creation all around you.

If a co-worker asks you this question ask them how they got to work today? Whether you walked, took a bus, or drove a car; it is impossible that you got here today without experiencing God's handiwork all around you. Trees, grass, plants, flowers, insects, and people.

If you have ever watched a nature discovery show you will have seen wonders! One insect leaves something behind that helps feed another which will then eat another so that there won't be so much of that one kind, so that another may survive, feed on certain flowers and plants in the rainforest in order to produce a something that a certain animal needs to eat in order to...and so on. You get the picture.

It's all done with such great precision that intelligent scientists have begun to place their faith in God because of Creation alone.

What about the human body? Consider for a moment the incredible complexity of the human eye. It consists of a ball with a lens on one side and a light sensitive retina made up of rods and cones inside the other. The lens itself has a sturdy protective covering called a cornea and sits over an iris designed to protect the eye from excessive light. The eye contains a fantastic watery substance that is replaced every four hours, while tear glands continuously flush the outside clean. In addition, an eyelid sweeps secretions over the cornea to keep it moist, and eyelashes protect it from dust.

Further, Extraordinarily tuned muscles surround the eye for precision motility and shape the lens for the function of focus. Additionally, consider the fact that as you read tonight's text, a vast number of impulses were traveling from your eyes through millions of nerve fibers that transmit information to a complex "computer center" in the brain called the visual cortex. Linking the visual information from the eyes to motor centers in the brain is crucial in coordinating a vast number of bodily and mental functions that are part and parcel to the very process of daily living.

Even the most prominent Darwinian of our age said this in one of his books. The human eye is so complex and works so precisely that surely, one might believe, its current shape and function must be the product of design.

Let me read this excerpt from an article I read.

Darwin himself found it hard to accept the notion that the eye could be the product of blind evolutionary chance, conceding that the intricacies of the human eye gave him "cold shudders."

A certain man considered the greatest evolutionist of his time said in an interview quote, "I suppose that we try to explain the earth some other way so that we can continue to enjoy our sexual mores"; that simply means their sexual habits and manners. What a reason!

It is nothing more than man's attempt to explain away a Holy, Objectionable God who holds man accountable for his sin!

I would say this to any evolutionist: If little eddies or objects in space collided to form the earth, then before there was anything to collide what collided to create the universe? What collided to create the space before there was any space? Where was its beginning?

- [Isaiah 45:18 HCSB](#) For this is what the LORD says--God is the Creator of the heavens. He formed the earth and made it; He established it; He did not create it to be empty, *but* formed it to be inhabited--"I am the LORD, and there is no other.

What does this verse tell us? This verse tells that there are specific designs built into the earth that help support life. Why? Because life was intended by God!

The Psalmist says, "the heavens declare his glory!" The Sun, the Moon, the Stars. If the sun was just a "little" farther away we would all freeze to death. If the Sun was just a "little" bit closer we would all burn up!" If the moon would get any closer than can this earth would experience tidal waves and disasters in such magnitude of proportions that it would tear us apart. Yes, the Creator of the Universe has sustained the earth along its axle in orbit at the

proper distance from the Sun and the Moon with "mathematical pinpoint accuracy!" Why? Because He created "them" and "us" for His Glory; because He saw that it was "good" and because...He loves us. All of us have experienced God's creation in some fashion. And the Bible says it leaves us "without excuse".

So God has given us the "light of creation".

The evolutionist attempts to explain an alternative way of creation in order to escape his conscience.

## **B. God has given us the light of conscience.**

- **Romans 2:12-16 HCSB** All those who sinned without the law will also perish without the law, and all those who sinned under the law will be judged by the law. (13) For the hearers of the law are not righteous before God, but the doers of the law will be declared righteous. (14) So, when Gentiles, who do not have the law, instinctively do what the law demands, they are a law to themselves even though they do not have the law. (15) They show that the work of the law is written on their hearts. Their consciences testify in support of this, and their competing thoughts either accuse or excuse them (16) on the day when God judges what people have kept secret, according to my gospel through Christ Jesus.

They who do not have the Law of God will be a law unto themselves. Why? Because God has put into each one of us a "Moral Barometer", which gives us a basic sense of right and wrong. Let me give you this illustration:

**ILL:** A man named John came home from work one day and rushing through the door tells his wife of a man who lied to him at work. He said, there was a guy at work who stole my tools and I saw him from a distance. When I confronted him he down and out lied to me. He lied straight through his teeth even after I told him I saw him. I can't believe it, he lied to me he did.

Later in life John dies and standing before God he gives excuses saying, I never knew anything. I never knew right and wrong, I never even knew the Ten Commandments. God tells an angel play the tape, as if it were, and there replayed on the screen before him he sees himself running through the door shouting and telling his wife about the man who "lied" to him at work.

You see, every person knows "Basic" Right and Wrong. Just as a child here in America, for the very first time, can experience his conscious telling him it is wrong to steal, so can another child experience the very same thing who lives on the other side of the earth. It's not culture. It's not religious background. It's not how you were raised. It's in your conscience.

So God has given us the "Light of Creation" and the "Light of Conscience".

God says, "If you seek me you will find me, when you search for me with all your heart".

It's not that God has not given men enough light...in this world. Whether in a "Jungle" or in "America". No. For in the Gospel John we read, "...men loved darkness rather than the light". God promises us that if we respond to the light He has given us, then he will give us "more" light. And that light my friends is Jesus Christ.

Yes. God is a "Loving", "Caring" God who is "long-suffering" with us and whose mercy endures forever.

## **C. God has given us the light of the Holy Spirit**

- **1 Corinthians 12:3 HCSB (3)** Therefore I am informing you that no one speaking by the Spirit of God says, "Jesus is cursed," and no one can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit.

- **Romans 8:26 HCSB** In the same way the Spirit also joins to help in our weakness, because we do not know what to pray for as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with unspoken groanings.

#### **D. God has given us the light of Scripture**

- **Luke 16:29-31 HCSB** "But Abraham said, 'They have Moses and the prophets; they should listen to them.' (30) "'No, father Abraham,' he said. 'But if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent.' (31) "But he told him, 'If they don't listen to Moses and the prophets, they will not be persuaded if someone rises from the dead.'"

#### **E. God has given us the light of Christian testimony**

- **Matthew 5:16 HCSB** In the same way, let your light shine before men, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.
- **Matthew 10:32-33 HCSB** "Therefore, everyone who will acknowledge Me before men, I will also acknowledge him before My Father in heaven. (33) But whoever denies Me before men, I will also deny him before My Father in heaven.