

# Coach House Church BEACONS

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## WHY DOES IT HURT?

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Have you ever had the feeling that something in the world wasn't right? Like things are too painful or too unjust? Or that there was something missing, but you just couldn't put your finger on it. I know I have. There are so many things that seem so unfair. Why do the young long to be old and the old long to be young? Why do bad things happen to good people? Why do natural disasters happen?

The question has been asked, why would a perfectly good all-powerful God allow pain? Why would he allow us to hurt or see us in painful situations and allow it to continue? It can be so hard in moment of deep pain to understand. Pain isn't a loving God who for a moment isn't loving. It's not an all-powerful God that has things he can't do. It's a symptom of what's wrong.

If you were injured and your body didn't tell you, you would cause yourself a lot more injury. There is a condition called congenital insensitivity to pain where you can't feel physical pain at all. These people end up hurting their bodies more because they can't feel if they are being burnt or being cut. They can even die of this condition. Sometimes, pain is necessary to tell us that something is wrong. So what is it?

God made the world to be good. He didn't make it to have anything wrong with it. He didn't make it to have loneliness or hurt or people taking advantage of each other. The bible says when he made the world, God said it was good. Everything was made perfectly. But he let humans have a choice. He didn't want people to love him and follow him because they had to. He wanted them to choose His way of life, so he allowed humans a choice. Then Adam and Eve chose to do the one thing that God had asked them not to do, and as a result sin entered the world. This meant that the rest

of us would end up doing bad things but also that bad things would start to happen. This is why the world isn't as it should be. So pain only exists because we do things wrong. We are separated from God.

God allowed humans to have choices and that has to include the choice to do good or bad to others. Sometimes, when we choose to do wrong it hurts other people, sometimes it hurts ourselves. There are consequences to what we do wrong, and it wouldn't be right for God to completely remove that. If He did, we wouldn't really be free to choose.

We also have to remember that there's a bigger picture than we can see. Sometimes we see glimpses of that bigger picture. Sometimes "coincidences" happen and we later see why. Sometimes something bad happens and we see the good come out of it. Whether that be our growth or something that we never could have imagined.

My family went through a time of immense pain before I was born. My parents gave birth to a little girl called Jane, who had down syndrome. She then had a hole in her heart that the doctors tried to operate on but then she got pneumonia. My family were understandably devastated and desperately prayed and prayed that she would get better. Unfortunately, she died. But about 18 months later I was born. I would never have been born if she hadn't died. My parents would have been too busy looking after their poorly child and I wouldn't be the person I am today if she had lived. It also meant that my parents could help others that went through similar bereavement over the years. It was a dreadful thing to happen, but we can see a little of the bigger plan of God's goodness years later.

Jesus also went through some hard times on the earth. The hardest of these was dying on a cross. Not only was there all the physical hurt and shame, but he was separated from his father. The two had never been separated ever, but while Jesus took our sin and shame, God could no longer look at him. This would have been the worst, heart-wrenching pain, worse than we could even imagine. But there was a bigger picture. God knew that through this pain, He could have us as His children and we could dwell with Him for all eternity.

So sometimes we experience pain just because the world is broken, sometimes it's because we're allowed to do things wrong, and sometimes we experience pain because there's something bigger at play. God promises us in Romans 8:28 that "God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God".

God doesn't take away our pain or answer all our questions while we are here. He won't always let us see the bigger picture, but He is someone that has experienced it, that can sympathise with us. He can be our comfort and our help in times of struggle. We need to not give up and keep going, but God will be our strength every step of the way.

One of the hardest things I have experienced is my grandad dying, without knowing whether he trusted in God or not. He was so angry when my sister Jane died that he turned his back on God and refused to go back. He could never understand why she died, and he never saw the good that came out of it. We need to trust God throughout it all, even when it looks like the path is dark and He's not in control or doesn't care. Until I go to heaven, I will never know whether my grandad decided to trust God in the end or not. All I know is I trust God and I will trust my future to Him, however much pain that involves.

The really good news is that this broken, hurting world isn't the end. One day God will wipe away every tear and we will be in heaven with him. That's the opportunity we are given. Yes, we will still yearn for a better world while we're here, but we have the promise that something better is coming. One day there will be no crying or pain. One day all things will be made right.

Jane is now in heaven with God, her father, and one day we will see her again. The story doesn't finish because she's died. She is now not in pain or suffering and never will be again. We have this amazing hope for the future, a secure hope that is ours. Let's hold on to that and look to God in our pain, cry out to Him and let Him comfort us.



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