

What Went Wrong? The Orgins of Sin and Evil

Description: Did God create evil? If not, where did it come from? If God is all-powerful, why doesn't He shut evil down? If He is good, why doesn't God stop suffering and put an end to the troubles of our world?

Key Verses: Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7; Book of Job; Isaiah 45:7; Matthew 22:34-40

Prompt: The media tend to focus on the bad news. Suffering and sin claim the headlines. Give the students a few minutes to discuss the latest batch of bad news before segueing into Randy's talk.

Play: Video of Randy Smith, "What Went Wrong?" buildmomentum.org/resources

Process: Select from the following questions to help students remember, rekindle and reengage.

- ⏪ Philosophers, professors, and everyday people have various approaches to the problem of evil. Randy explains five ways people handle the origin of evil. **What are these five approaches?**
- ⏪ **How does the biblical teaching on evil provide a better (i.e., more coherent) story than other religions or philosophic approaches? How well can you articulate it to others?**
- ⏪ **How does Randy use a stool to illustrate the meaning of evil?**
- ⏪ **Read** Isaiah 45:7. **What does this verse say about God and evil (calamity)?**
- ⏪ Randy attacks a common but naïve belief: "If I do right, I'll get right." We also believe if I do wrong, I get wrong (see Job). **How does this misunderstanding show up in your life?**
- ⏪ Review Randy's key principle: "The design of our world included the possibility of painful troubles, then sin came. God created the world this way." **What does he mean?**
- ⏪ "Sin is of the heart, not of the hand," Randy says, referring to Eve's sin and all acts of rebellion thereafter. **How did Eve's heart mislead her about God? What lies lead your heart astray?**
- ⏪ **Read** Genesis 2:15-17. What do these verses say about God's design and decree?
- ⏪ Randy stresses the uniqueness of humanity, both their dignity and moral agency. **What does this mean? How does Genesis 1-2 and make a case for human dignity and moral agency?**
- ⏪ **Read** Matthew 22:34-40. **What is the core of Jesus' moral code? How are you living it?**
- ⏪ **Read** Genesis 3:1-7. **What role does Satan, the deceiver, play in the problem of evil?**
- ⏪ **Read** Genesis 50:20. **What does Joseph's comment teach about God's use of evil? How have you personally experienced suffering result in good for your life?** Be specific.

Pray: Take students through the Lord's Prayer, reading Matthew 6:9-13 aloud. Pause after each phrase, giving students a chance to personalize it. Give special weight to request for deliverance.