

OUR GOOD GOD AND THE PROBLEM OF EVIL



THEOLOGICAL QUESTION

Why does God allow evil in this world?

BIG IDEA

God chooses not to completely eradicate evil and suffering yet, even though He could, because His power is tempered by His nature, and His goodness is balanced by His justice. Because He is the ultimate source of good, we can have faith that His plan is the best.

SCRIPTURE USED

John 16:33

"I have told you all this so that you may have peace in me. Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows. But take heart, because I have overcome the world."

Colossians 2:13-15

You were dead because of your sins and because your sinful nature was not yet cut away. Then God made you alive with Christ, for he forgave all our sins. He canceled the record of the charges against us and took it away by nailing it to the cross. In this way, he disarmed the spiritual rulers and authorities. He shamed them publicly by his victory over them on the cross.

Hebrews 2:14-15

Because God's children are human beings—made of flesh and blood—the Son also became flesh and blood. For only as a human being could he die, and only by dying could he break the power of the devil, who had the power of death. Only in this way could he set free all who have lived their lives as slaves to the fear of dying.

Prep for Teaching Time

Leaders: This lesson instructs you to "teach in color." This is quite easy and simply involves displaying a color in coordination with the particular piece of the lesson you are talking about. Please do not skip this element of the lesson presentation. The use of color association with the material you are teaching helps students visualize and recall some of the incredibly important things you are discussing. The colors needed for this lesson are green, black, red and white. The following are just a few examples of how you might choose to do this:

- Use a large, powerful flashlight or spotlight in a dimly lit room and have tissue squares or thin paper for each color. Shine the light on the wall or ceiling and as you move through the lesson simply change out the papers—and thus, the color of the light.

- Use a projector and Power Point equipment to “color” an entire wall or screen in each color (some speakers stand in front of the light and even color themselves!)
- Purchase one large size square of poster board for each color, and lay them out in a line (or however space permits) in front of your students. During your discussion, as you transition through the lesson, make a deliberate point of stepping from one color to the next.
- Give everyone a small disposable cup or bowl and pass out a different color M&M for each teaching point (note that you will have to purchase “Mint M&Ms” or find white ones at a party store).

Note: During your closing activity, you will also need colored (or construction paper) in green, black, red and white, tape or staplers, writing utensils and copies of the handout found at the end of this lesson.

OPENER

For the opener you will need:

- DVD of the movie *Signs*
- Video projection equipment

EXPLAIN

The movie *Signs* was released in 2002, so if anyone has not seen it, yes it does contain spoilers, but the movies been out long enough that anyone who seriously wants to see it has had time to! Pastor Graham Hess (Mel Gibson) is questioning everything after his wife dies in a brutal car accident. He is angry at God and seems to have lost his faith altogether. In brief, crop circles appear everywhere signaling alien activity. These aliens are deadly and begin to attack the small community where Hess and his teenage son, Merrill, younger son, Morgan, and small daughter, Bo, live. There are a few things you should know before watching this clip. One is that the reverend’s wife’s last words were a seeming scramble of nonsense. She said, “Swing away, Merrill, swing away.” Other important things you should also know that are emphasized throughout the movie are that Merrill was on track to be a very successful baseball player, but he ended up not taking that route. Bo, the young daughter, leaves half drunken glasses of water literally everywhere all over the house and is constantly being reprimanded for it. Finally, young Morgan has a very serious form of asthma which can cause his lungs to temporarily shut down. Watch what happens when the aliens attack the Hess family.

Show the clip from *Signs* (2002): From the scene selection menu, second to last, select “Swing Away.” This is at the 1:36 time mark. You may then play the