

Friday, April 18, 1997

**Subject:** Evil in a good world

**Dear Dr. Ryrie:** If God truly is good, benevolent, and all-powerful, how is it that evil can exist in a world he created? Isn't that tantamount to God doing evil (which, by definition is impossible, with good being defined as God's will)? -- Brian T.

**Dear Brian:** This is a question that is not easy to think about carefully. God is not only good, benevolent, and all-powerful, but He is also all-knowing. And that all-knowing God chose a plan for this world which clearly allowed evil to be a part of it. This plan also included man's ability to make choices. So we have to acknowledge that sin was within God's eternal decrees, and yet He is not the author of the sin. We must also conclude that since God is rightly angry with sin, the sinner must bear the blame for his sin. It is a false assumption to conclude that what ought not to be sin [in His plan] ought not to be permitted [our ability to commit sins]. If you are a parent, you know that good parents permit their children to make wrong choices (even though the parent wants to prevent that from happening), and yet the blame for doing wrong belongs to the child, not the parent. Likewise, God has a plan which permits us to sin, but the blame for sin rests squarely on us, not Him.

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