

Pastor John, if deception is sin, how did you justify juking someone out as a wide receiver?

Well, that's—that's not an ideological reality or spiritual reality, okay? That's part of the game. That's part of the game, okay? All right, we're moving on.

Okay, so one of the biggest objections to the Christian faith, Pastor John, is that if God is good, He's powerful, He's sovereign—why does so much evil and suffering and pain exist in the world?

Yeah, when I—when I used to do a lot of stuff with Larry King, yeah, that's where he would always go. That was his agnostic... um, rabbit hole. He would go down that rabbit hole and stay there until the conversation was over. That's where he hid, because he said, "If God is good, then why is there so much bad in the world? And if God is all-powerful, He would fix it." So either He's not good or He's not powerful, but the Bible says He's both good and powerful.

And so the answer to evil is simply the fact that it's designed by God to be allowed so that He can manifest His glory. Everything is for His glory. If you go starting in the Book of Genesis, you'll find a phrase: "for the sake of the name," "for the sake of the name," "for the sake of the name." Just take a concordance sometime and look up that phrase, "for the sake of the name." It's all over the Old Testament, and it's all over the New Testament. Everything is for the sake of the name.

So, why did God allow evil? In order that He might put His glory on display. If there's no evil, there's no sin, then there's no forgiveness, there's no grace, there's no mercy, there's no compassion, there's no kindness, and God doesn't display that part of His glory. So ultimately, it's all for His glory. Uh, God allows evil; God does not cause evil. He is absolutely holy; He cannot cause evil, but He allows it for the sake of His own glory. And then, of course, in the light of evil, He redeems those who put their trust in Him, and that shows the ultimate glory—that's the glory of His grace, as Paul calls it in Ephesians 1, which is the greatest expression of His glory as far as we're concerned, because that's what redeems us.

So you would say that God allows suffering and pain to display His glory, and that God's glory is most evidently portrayed by redeeming people? And that's why, when we look at the world, we see that it's frustrated and futile and broken—to create opportunity for God to be able to display His glory and redemption?

Right. Look, God's glory is the ultimate end of God, and we think that might be weird because we're sinful, and—and we—we—we don't want to be raising our own profile and elevating ourselves. We see that as sinful as believers, but God is all-glorious. His glory is on display in creation, right? His glory is on display in—in history, providence, as He runs

history and accomplishes His will. But nowhere is His glory as great as it is in His grace, because that's where it captures us and takes us to glory. So He displays that, and when we get to heaven, what are we going to be doing there? We're going to be praising Him, and what are we going to be saying? "Blessed is the Lamb that was slain." Yeah, and without that suffering and without that pain, we would not be able to understand the grace of God, which is really the—the fuel behind His glory, right? And forever in heaven, we will praise Him not only for His creative power and His majesty, but for His grace in particular.

That's so good and so clear. Thank you, Pastor John.

Pleasure.