

THE AREOPAGUS

New Course Announcement

The Theodicy Issue: Reconciling the Realities of God and Evil

If 'God is great' and 'God is good,' why are evil and suffering so pervasive in this world?

Instructor: Dr. Jeffrey Breshears

Begins: Tuesday, August 11th, 7:00 PM

Location: Johnson Ferry Baptist Church, Room 320

Christians affirm God is both all-powerful and all-good — and yet evil and suffering remain undeniable, pervasive realities in this world. If God has the power to end suffering, and the goodness to want to, why does it persist? This is the question theologians call a *theodicy* — a question that has confronted philosophers and believers alike since the time of Plato and Aristotle, and one Thomas Aquinas himself acknowledged seems to contradict our whole understanding of God's character.

This course takes that question on directly — not with easy answers, but with a serious, three-part exploration through biblical theology, philosophy, and literary art. Over the course of the series, we'll examine:

- What are the sources of suffering?
- Is the problem of God and evil evidence for atheism?
- The nature of good and evil — and the irony of human freedom.
- What about natural disasters that kill innocent people?
- How the Bible itself wrestles with suffering.
- Why God allows evil and suffering — and why he didn't create a world without it.
- Suffering as a pathway to grace and redemption.

Supplemental Readings

- Philip Yancey, *Where Is God When It Hurts?* (Anniversary Edition, Zondervan, 2002)
- C. S. Lewis, *A Grief Observed* (HarperSanFrancisco, 1961)
- Alexander Solzhenitsyn, *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* (Ballantine Books, 1977)

About the Instructor

Jeffrey Breshears, Ph.D., is a former university and seminary history professor and the president of The Areopagus, a Christian education ministry in Atlanta, Georgia, dedicated to Christian apologetics, history, bibliology, contemporary cultural issues, and literature and the arts. He is the author of several books, including *The Case for Christian Apologetics* and *Introduction to Bibliology*, among others.

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