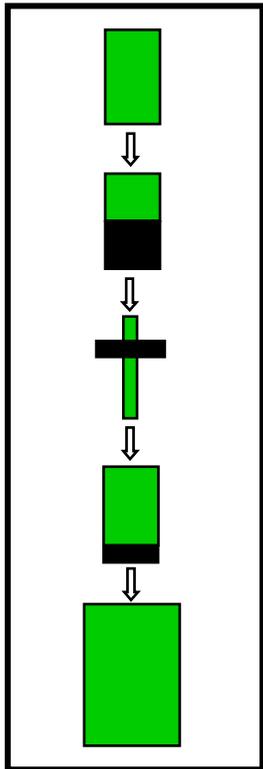


# THE BIG PICTURE



## Introduction

Why do we experience both good and bad things in life? Family and friends, a scenic view, and a wholesome meal are all good things. But we also get sick, lose jobs, and hurt each other by our words and actions. What does the Bible say about good and evil? Here's a summary with green representing good and black representing evil.

### God created everything.

 According to the Bible, there's only one God. In the beginning God made all things. And everything God made was very good. Originally human beings had a close and special relationship with God.

### We rejected God.

 Unfortunately, the first humans rejected God's authority. Their decision to live for themselves damaged their relationship with God and with each other. Selfishness and shame became a common

human experience. While God responded with mercy, he also judged the first humans for their disobedience. As a result, we now only know life in a world of good and evil.

You may be thinking, "So why are we suffering for *their* sin?" We're not. The Bible says, "There is no one righteous, not even one" (Rom. 3:10 NIV) and "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23 NIV). Like the first humans, we too are guilty before God.

### God sent his Son.

Although God sent punishment into the world, his ultimate posture toward humanity was love. And because God wanted to repair our broken relationship with him, he sent his only Son into the world to save us. Two thousand years ago, God's Son was born into a Jewish family in Israel and given the name Jesus. Jesus taught people to turn back to God and love one another. And he demonstrated love by healing the sick and feeding the hungry.

## Jesus died for us.

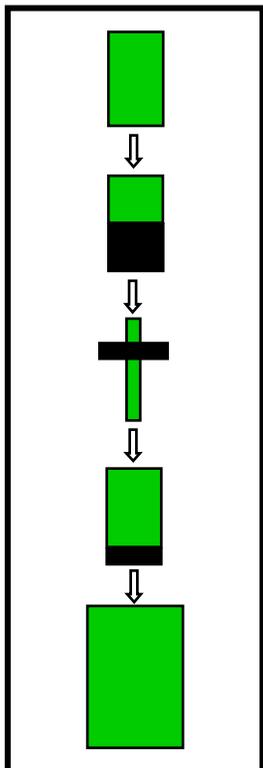
 Sadly, although Jesus only went around doing good he was rejected by the religious leaders in Israel. He was arrested, beaten, and then nailed to a cross where he died. For a time, evil seemed to defeat God's goodness. But on the cross, Jesus was paying the penalty for our disobedience.

### Jesus conquered death.

Three days after Jesus died, the good news resounded "He has risen!" And during the next forty days, Jesus appeared to his followers and "gave many convincing proofs that he was alive" (Acts 1:3 NIV). Afterward he ascended into heaven and sat down at God the Father's right hand. Then Jesus' followers went out and spread the good news: "Jesus is alive" and "Jesus is Lord."



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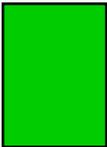
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## **Life with Jesus**

 Through Jesus, the victory of good over evil has already begun. Believers in Jesus are forgiven for their sins and given the hope of eternal life. But following Jesus doesn't mean life will be easy because evil still exists in the world. Jesus told his followers, "In this world you will have trouble" (Jn. 16:33 NIV). The final victory of good over evil will only take place when Jesus returns. He will then rid the world of evil and reward the righteous.

## **God's new world**

 God has promised to make all things new. The new creation will put God's goodness on display once again without a trace of evil. But the end will be greater than the beginning because God and humans will live together forever in perfect harmony. Here's a partial description of God's new world: "Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away" (Rev. 21:3-4 NIV).

## **Conclusion**

Evil is real, but it was not a part of the original creation nor does it have a permanent place in this world. God is good and he's working to completely eradicate evil. The good news is that the removal process has already begun with Jesus' death and resurrection.

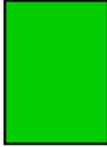
## **Your response**

To receive God's mercy and the hope of eternal life, **admit** that there's a problem between you and God and that problem is your sin. Second, **believe** that Jesus came to remove that problem and repair your relationship with God. And third, **confess** Jesus as your Lord and Savior. Then continue your relationship with God by talking to him in your own words, reading the Bible, and spending time with other followers of Jesus.

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