

“Philip Yancey...is my favorite Christian writer—so human and regular and wise....” --Anne Lamott

What Good is God?

Bestselling author Philip Yancey Investigates the Essential Question of Belief

Philip Yancey has spent his life on a quest to answer questions that skeptics raise, questions he often struggles with himself, in bestselling books such as *Where Is God When It Hurts?* *What's So Amazing About Grace?* and *Prayer: Does It Matter?* His latest book grapples with the question at the very heart of belief: *What Good Is God?* (FaithWords/Hachette Book Group, \$23.99, October 19, 2010).

It's a universal question, one that “occurs in some form to every person who experiences pain or death or poverty or unfairness—in other words, to everyone,” says Yancey. It's asked by atheists, who naturally think the answer is ‘no good at all,’ and by believers of all kinds. What good is God in a world where terrorists attack tourist sites in Mumbai, where women and children are sold into sexual slavery, where a gunman kills 32 people on a college campus, and where six million people in South Africa alone suffer with HIV/AIDS? Or, what good is God when you're struggling with an addiction, when you are laid off from your job and your home is in foreclosure, or when chronic depression sets in?

A journalist by trade, Yancey investigates this question by going out into the field and examining how faith works, especially under extreme conditions. He compares it to how technology manufacturers test products to ensure they'll survive actual use by consumers. Yancey looks for similar real-world tests in the realm of faith.

Bringing together his two roles as speaker and writer, the book recounts his meetings with leaders of the underground church in China, with Dalits (untouchables) in India, with prostitutes, alcoholics, and Bible college students in the U.S., and with charismatic Christians in Johannesburg, among others. “If Christian faith is true, it must have some effect on all these distinct groups,” he says.

Yancey reports stories from his travels to ten places that have experienced terrible suffering and violence, yet which show the power of grace to heal and transform. He also provides a version of the talk he gave on each occasion, centering on the glimpse of grace he encountered there:

- In Mumbai, India, where he was present on the night of the terrorist attacks, Yancey encountered the church as a haven of comfort for those who grieve.
- China, where the church grows spectacularly despite an atheistic government, provided Yancey with snapshots of a religious revival that may change the history of Asia and the world.
- In the Middle East, where a once-thriving church barely hangs on, Yancey reports that the beleaguered Christian minority's compassion for social outcasts and respect for women's rights may do more to advance democratic values than any imposed political solution.

- South Africa presented Yancey with at once the most excitement and the most daunting challenge. There, the church is flourishing and people of all races are working to tackle enormous problems of poverty, AIDS, crime, and corruption.

- At a convention of sex workers and people who minister to them, he heard several dozen wrenching accounts of the power of evil to control and destroy lives, and the power of God to overcome that evil.

Yancey says he has been privileged to see remarkable evidence of God, whether it's the reconciliation miracle of South Africa, Indian Christians reaching out to the most outcast group on the planet, or the church responding to the health care crisis in Memphis, TN. "As a writer, I want to bring that good news to the jaded West, for such stories rarely make the headlines on CNN," he says.

What Good is God? is an open question that is lived out in the lives of believers, Yancey says. The ten places he reports on here, from Mumbai to Memphis, offer answers "incompletely as it must be when entrusted to ordinary people, yet in a way that assuredly releases the fragrance of hope and transformation."

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About the Author

Philip Yancey (<http://www.philipyancey.com/>), a journalist by profession, is a bestselling writer and speaker. His books have sold 15 million copies worldwide, including bestsellers such as *What's So Amazing About Grace?*, *Where Is God When It Hurts*, *Soul Survivor*, *Finding God in Unexpected Places*, *Prayer: Does It Matter?*, and *The NIV Student Bible*. He is known for his honest, thoughtful explorations of Christian faith, particularly in areas of questions, struggles, and mystery. His devoted readers have bonded with him on his own journeys through doubt and faith, and they count on him as a trusted companion in the search for a faith that matters amid the world's deepest problems as well as its shining joys.

What Good Is God?

by Philip Yancey

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