

WHY DOES EVIL ALWAYS SEEM TO WIN?

JOHN 18; 19; 20

Theme: Jesus is the answer to life's hard issues

Purpose:

- **To provide biblical insight on questions that are hard and universal to every culture.**
- **To point the listener to Jesus as the ultimate answer to these questions.**

Episode 7 of 7
HARD QUESTIONS ABOUT GOD SERIES
(15 MIN. FORMAT)
CHRISTIAN RADIO DRAMA
“THE STORY WITHIN”

007



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Hard Questions About God Series
Episode 7 of 7: Why Does Evil Always
Seem to Win?
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DIRECTORIAL INFORMATION

CAST OF CHARACTERS: (note voice quality required)

- **Each voice should be recognizably different from any other character.**
- **Some characters appear in multiple episodes of this series. Use the same voice for the same character.**

Thomas: **Narrator, a disciple of Jesus** (voice of a mature man)
Philip: **Disciple of Jesus** (voice of a mature man)
Mary: **Friend of the disciples** (voice of a mature woman)
Jesus: **The Son of God** (warm voice of a mature man)

Director's notes to all readers:

- These are radio **dramas**. The action and emotions are in the words. Take your time in reading the story; remember that the listener will hear these words only once; speak distinctly with appropriate emotion; carefully observe all punctuation (i.e., pause at commas, stop at periods, intensify at exclamation points, and give special emphasis to words in **bold** type).
- Observe all **music** cues (bold/small print) throughout the script.
- Observe **sound effects** directions (bold print) throughout the script.
- Observe all **voice** instructions (bold print) in parentheses throughout the script.

Note to translators: When Scripture is used, the print is in italics, and it is the NIV (1984). Scripture references are given to aid the translators and should not be read as part of the script.

WHY DOES EVIL ALWAYS SEEM TO WIN?

Scripture references: John 18; 19; 20

(Music: Theme music begins, then gradually fades to underscoring during comments by Program Host)

Program Host

Welcome to “The Story Within.”

We have been following a series of stories dealing with difficult questions; today we address perhaps the most difficult question of all. Consider with me these five universal words which seem to define human history: War. Violence. Persecution. Hatred. Oppression.

Since the dawn of time, mankind has been locked in a struggle between the strong and the weak; between murderers and their victims; between tyrants bent on dominion and those poor souls whom they would dominate. Everywhere we look, we see shocking evidence of this mighty struggle between right and wrong, between good and evil.

And although we long for right to prevail and wickedness to be stopped, in every generation we seem to witness exactly the contrary, and we are moved to cry out and ask this hardest question of all: If God is good, and if He is truly in control, why does evil always seem to win?

Dear friend, if you have ever asked this question, I have good news for you: God indeed is in control, no matter what our eyes and our senses tell us, and

evil will not always prevail. But as we seek answers to this most difficult of all questions, we must first admit that God did not invent evil; we humans did. God does not grasp for authority and mastery over others; we do that. So if we are to find the answer to overcoming evil, we must first recognize the true nature of the problem, and the problem is **us**. We, or more specifically, our sinful rebellion against a perfectly good and loving God is the real problem.

Join us now as we conclude our series, Hard Questions About God, and take up the last, most troubling question: “Why does evil always seem to win?”

(Music: swells to indicate scene change; then fades to soft underscoring)

Notice that scene changes are depicted with music.

Scene One

INSERT: (Sound effects: nighttime; soft breeze; crickets chirping in the background)

Thomas: (narrating) My name is Thomas, and I was a disciple of Jesus. For three years I followed Him as He traveled the countryside, preaching good news about the coming Kingdom of God, and healing hundreds of people of every sickness, disease and affliction imaginable.

INSERT: (Sound effects: sounds of a softly crackling fire)

Thomas: (narrating, sighs) But that was before we took to the road one last time toward Jerusalem. **(softly)** Little did I know at the time where that road would lead us. I do not understand what happened: Jesus was . . . He was a

good man. And if He were still here, I would ask Him one more question: why?

Why did evil win . . . again?

INSERT: (Sound effects: we hear a twig snap nearby and the hoot of an owl in the background)

Thomas: (startled) Who . . . who is it? Is someone there?

INSERT: (Sound effects: Thomas listens; but we hear only nighttime sounds)

Thomas: (softly) You must forgive me. I am a little jumpy since . . . since they killed Jesus. We were camped out here, in the olive grove above the city, when they swooped down on us in the middle of the night with torches and clubs, arrested Him, and dragged Him away. Peter tried to fight them off, but . . . well in the end we all fled, all twelve of us. I do not know what the others did, but I hid out here in the hills above the city all night, dreading the sound of footsteps, and fully expecting them to return for me. **(softly)** But they did not.

INSERT: (Sound effects: owl hoots again)

Thomas: At the first hint of daylight the next morning, all alone and fearful at every sound, I left the safety of the olive grove, and carefully made my way into the city, avoiding eye contact with anyone – especially soldiers – who seemed to be everywhere. I had never seen so much display of power; there were Romans on every street corner, and even more stationed around the garrison, where, I presumed, they were keeping Jesus, their prisoner.

INSERT: (Sound effects: twig snaps nearby again)

Thomas: (startled) Is someone there?

INSERT: (Sound effects: Thomas listens, but we hear only nighttime sounds)

Thomas: (softly) Perhaps I should extinguish the fire. No, no, for then I would be worried about wild animals. **(to himself)** Courage, Thomas! Do not let the night sounds frighten you! **(takes a deep breath)** Now – where was I? Oh, yes. Jesus was their prisoner. I listened to conversations around the streets as best I could without being too obvious, and soon found out that Jesus had already been tried by the religious authorities, and had been turned over to the Romans for execution. **(raising his voice)** Execution! **(to himself)** Shh! Careful, Thomas. Careful.

INSERT: (Sound effects: the owl hoots again)

Thomas: (whispering) They took Him to the Roman governor, who refused to condemn Jesus and sent Him to King Herod, who likewise refused to condemn Him. When I heard this news, my hopes began to brighten just a little. **(raising his voice with a little heat)** But when the soldiers brought Jesus back to the governor, somehow the religious leaders of our nation – those fine, upstanding men of God – demanded that Jesus be executed like a common criminal.

INSERT: (Sound effects: Thomas pauses; we hear only the sounds of night for a moment)

Thomas: (softly) And that is just what they did. They nailed Him to a cross, and crucified Him. By sundown, Jesus was dead. I saw it with my own eyes. This kind, gentle Man who had healed so many, who had spoken nothing but truth and shown nothing but love and compassion to everyone, was cruelly beaten, tortured, and murdered at the insistence of His own countrymen.

INSERT: (Sound effects: Thomas pauses; we hear only the sounds of night for a moment)

Thomas: When they were certain that He was dead, they took His lifeless body down from the cross, wrapped it in a shroud, and sealed it in a tomb. He was gone. He **is** gone, and nothing will ever be the same again. **(pauses)** I do not know where to go, or what to do. **(sighs)** And I have not seen any of the other disciples for the last two days since Jesus was buried. They have probably all gone home to their families and their former occupations. Home! How can I go back home, as if nothing has happened? Three years ago, I met the most wonderful, most gracious Man I have ever known, and now He is gone. Evil has won again.

INSERT: (Sound effects: twigs snap again; this time it is obvious the noise was created by footsteps)

Thomas: (crying out in fear) Who . . . who is there? I have a sword, and I swear, I will . . .

Philip: (hissing) Shh! Thomas! Not so loud! It is me, Philip!

Thomas: (unsure, still fearful) Philip?

Philip: (hissing) Yes, it is me; I have been looking all over for you. Now, put out that fire and come with me before someone else spots you.

Thomas: You have been looking for me? Where are we going?

Philip: To join the others.

Thomas: The rest of the disciples?

Philip: Yes.

Thomas: But . . . why? Will that not make us more of a target?

Philip: There is news. Now, hurry, Thomas.

Thomas: News? What news?

Philip: There is no time to explain. Put out the fire and come with me.

Thomas: Well, okay then. Give me a moment.

INSERT: (Sound effects: sounds of shuffling feet, soft thuds as Thomas dumps handfuls of dirt on the fire; crackling dies, replaced by sizzling as fire dies)

(Music: swells to indicate scene change; then fades to soft underscoring)

INTERMISSION

Program Host: Thank you for tuning in. You are listening to "The Story Within." Today we are concluding our series called, "Hard Questions About God," based on events and people found in God's Word. Previously in our story, Jesus, the wonderful Teacher and Healer, has been arrested and crucified, and His disciples have been scattered. Without their Leader, they are frightened

and expecting at any moment for those who killed Jesus to come after them as well. Two days have passed since Jesus was buried, when Thomas, one of the disciples, is reunited with his friend and fellow disciple, Philip. Join us now, as we conclude our series and address this hardest of all questions: If God is good, then why does evil seem to always win?

(Music: underscoring fades out as sound effects return)

Scene Three

INSERT: (Sound effects: nighttime – soft whispering in the background; crickets chirping and a dog barking occasionally)

Thomas: (whispering) Philip . . . what is this place?

Philip: (whispering) It is a rented room, owned by a friend of John's. I believe we are safe . . . for now.

Thomas: (whispering) Now: what is this news that you have to tell me?

Philip: (whispering) How long do you suppose it is until sunrise?

Thomas: (surprised, hissing) What?

Philip: (whispering) Sunrise; how long until sunrise?

Thomas: (whispering) Well . . . let me see; it was well into the fourth watch when we entered the city . . . sunrise should be any time now.

Philip: (whispering) Yes! That is my opinion as well. That means that they should be arriving there as we speak.

Thomas: (hissing) Come, Philip; who are you talking about? And where should they be?

Philip: Mary Magdalene, James' mother, and Joanna. They have gone to the tomb.

Thomas: (raising his voice) What? Are they out of their minds?

Philip: (whispering) Shh! Not so loud, Thomas!

INSERT: (Sound effects: whispering in the background suddenly stops; all that we hear for a moment are the sounds of crickets and a barking dog)

Thomas: (whispering) Sorry about that. But why did they go to the tomb?

INSERT: (Sound effects: the whispering resumes)

Philip: (whispering) In order to finish embalming His body. We warned them not to go, but they insisted.

Thomas: (whispering) But this is madness! The tomb is sealed and protected by a Roman guard detail!

Philip: (whispering) I know . . .

Thomas: (whispering) And even if they somehow get around the Roman guard, how would they ever move the stone sealing the tomb?

Philip: (whispering) I agree, Thomas; in fact, we all agreed. But the women would not listen to us. They said that after all that Jesus had done for us, the least they could do was to give Him a proper burial. With, or without our help.

Thomas: (hissing) And get killed trying! Or worse yet, get captured, and suffer torture until they tell the Romans about our little hiding place here, and kill us all! Why then are we waiting here? **(louder)** This is lunacy!

Philip: (whispering) Shh!

INSERT: (Sound effects: whispering in the background suddenly stops; all that we hear for a moment are sounds of crickets and the barking dog; after a moment a rooster crows in the distant background)

Thomas: (whispering) It is sunrise. We must get out of here, Philip. Now.

Philip: (whispering) We plan to, but we are waiting for the women to return.

Thomas: (whispering) But . . .

Philip: (whispering) We cannot leave without them, Thomas.

INSERT: (Sound effects: they pause for a moment; sounds of crickets fades, birds begin to chirp; we hear the rooster crow again, and then the whispering in the background quietly resumes)

Thomas: (sighs, then whispering) I suppose not . . . but when will they return?

Assuming that they are not killed or arrested, of course.

Philip: (whispering) They said that if all went well, it would take two or three hours. Now that the sun is coming up, they should be able to get a look at the tomb and decide how to proceed.

Thomas: (whispering) So . . . the best that we can hope for is for them to return in about two or three hours? Meanwhile we just sit here and wait?

Philip: (whispering) I suppose so . . .

INSERT: (Sound effects: a sudden, though not loud, 3 taps, pause, and 1 more tap at the door; all whispering stops and we hear only the birds chirping)

Thomas: (hissing) It must be the Romans! They have killed the women, and have come for us!

Philip: (whispering) No, no; it is our secret tap! It must be a friend!

Thomas: (hissing) Or the Romans extracted the information from the women before they killed them! Do not answer it!

Philip: (raising his voice just a little) Open the door!

INSERT: (Sound effects: soft footsteps, followed by the sound of a latch; door opens; footsteps shuffle in quickly; door closes again)

Philip: Mary! Why are you back so soon?

Mary: *“I have seen the Lord!”* (John 20:18).

INSERT: (Sound effects: murmuring rises from all of the disciples trying to speak at once)

Thomas: What? Did you get in?

Philip: Did the Romans open the tomb and let you in to see the body?

Mary: No, no! We saw Jesus, alive! I spoke with Him, and . . .

INSERT: (Sound effects: murmuring increases, nearly frenzied)

Thomas: You spoke with Him!

Philip: (raising his voice) Quiet! Let Mary speak!

INSERT: (Sound effects: murmuring slowly dies out)

Philip: (softly) What do you mean, Mary, that you . . . spoke with Him?

Mary: When we arrived, the Romans were gone, and the stone had been moved. I looked in the tomb, and there were two men, dressed in white, seated where the body should have been.

INSERT: (Sound effects: murmuring springs back to life)

Philip: (raising his voice) Men . . . let her finish!

INSERT: (Sound effects: murmuring slowly dies out)

Mary: They asked me, “*Woman, why are you crying?*” I said, “*They have taken my Lord away, and I do not know where they have put him*” (John 20:13).

Thomas: Someone has stolen the body of Jesus!

Mary: No! As I turned to go, I saw another man outside the tomb, and He asked me the same question: “*Woman, why are you crying?*” (John 20:15) and then He said my name.

Philip: (alarmed) He knew who you are? But . . .

Mary: He said, “*Mary*” (John 20:16). At the sound of my name on those wonderful lips, my eyes were opened. **(raising her voice)** It was Jesus! He has risen from the dead, and He is alive!

INSERT: (Sound effects: murmuring roars back to life as everyone is talking and shouting at once)

(Music: underscoring fades out as sound effects return)

Scene Four

INSERT: (Sound effects: daytime; birds singing in the background, and a soft breeze)

Thomas: (narrating) That was seven days ago. Peter and John raced back to the tomb, and verified that the body was no longer there. Philip and some of the others believed the story the women told us, but I did not. **(pause)** Jesus was dead, and nothing was going to change that. Good had been vanquished, and evil had won once again. I left town, returned home, and spent the week with my family, trying to forget that I had ever met Jesus. **(sighs)** But then Philip found me once again, and convinced me to return to Jerusalem, one more time. He promised me a surprise, and that I would not be disappointed.

Philip: Are you coming, Thomas?

Thomas: I suppose I am. We may as well get this over with.

INSERT: (Sound effects: Thomas rises to his feet, and we can hear them climbing a set of steps; door opens and closes; we are now inside; daytime sounds suddenly diminish into the background)

Thomas: You know I believe none of this, Philip.

Philip: I do.

Thomas: Jesus is dead, Philip, no matter what Mary or anyone else said.

“Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe it” (John 20:25).

Philip: Check the door, Thomas – is it locked?

Thomas: It is locked. Now, what is this all about?

Philip: (softly) Turn around, and look for yourself.

Jesus: (softly) *“Peace be with you”* (John 20:26).

Thomas: (shocked) Jesus! How did You . . .

(Music: underscoring music begins softly)

Jesus: *“Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe”* (John 20:27).

Thomas: (choked with emotion) *My . . . Lord . . . and my God!* (John 20:28).

(Music: underscoring music swells; then begins reprise of Theme music; softly underscoring comments of Program Host during Our Response to God’s Word)

OUR RESPONSE TO GOD’S WORD

Program Host

Evil only seems to win, my friend. But no matter what your eyes or your experience or your feelings tell you, suffering and oppression and wickedness will not last forever. Even in death, evil does not win; for Jesus has risen from the dead and now stands alive forevermore as our Savior and Friend! For those of us, who like Thomas change our hearts and believe, Jesus promises to give us eternal life and victory over sin and wickedness, and evil, and even death! For God, you see, loves you and me with an eternal love. But our sins have separated us from God. The righteous and holy God has made a way that our sins can be forgiven. That way is through Jesus Christ, God’s Living Word and sacrificial Lamb. Jesus died for our sins. He rose from the dead and is alive

today. He has power to come into our lives and forgive sins and bring eternal salvation.

Forgiveness of sins and eternal life is the free gift of God. We do not work for it; we receive it as a gift. To receive forgiveness and eternal life, we must turn from our sins and place our faith and trust in Jesus and receive Him into our lives as Savior and Lord.

I'm going to pray a brief prayer from my heart to God. Listen to my prayer, and then when I have prayed, I will lead you to pray the same prayer.

Dear Father, I know that I am a sinner. I believe that Jesus died for my sins. I believe that He rose from the dead and is alive today. I now turn from my sins. I am placing my faith and trust in Jesus alone to be my Savior and to forgive me. I receive Jesus into my life as Savior and Lord. From this day forward, I will follow Jesus. Thank You, Lord Jesus, for loving me and for coming into my life. Amen.

Now pray the prayer aloud after me. We will pray it a portion at a time. Make the prayer your very own to God. Mean it with all your heart as you pray.

Dear Father, (pause for person to repeat)

I know that I am a sinner. (pause for person to repeat)

I believe that Jesus died for my sins. (pause for person to repeat)

I believe that He rose from the dead and is alive today. (pause for person to repeat)

I now turn from my sins. (pause for person to repeat)

I am placing my faith and trust in Jesus alone to be my Savior and to forgive me. (pause for person to repeat)

I receive Jesus into my life as Savior and Lord. (pause for person to repeat)

From this day forward, I will follow Jesus. (pause for person to repeat)

Thank You, Lord Jesus, for loving me and for coming into my life. (pause for person to repeat)

Amen. (pause for person to repeat)

Welcome into the family of God!

When we trust Jesus Christ as our Savior and commit our lives to follow Him as our Lord and Master, He wants us to grow as believers. The Word of God says, *“Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ”* (2 Peter 3:18).

One of the best ways to grow is to read the Word of God each day. Through His Word, He gives us guidance on how to live. We discover what pleases Him. We also discover what actions to avoid, the things that will harm us.

In addition to reading the Word of God each day, another way to grow is by praying. When we read God’s Word, He speaks to us. When we pray, we speak

with God. We should always confess our sins to Him and ask for forgiveness. Trusting Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord does not mean that we will never sin again. We should try to live without sinning. But when we do sin, we should ask Him to forgive us. We should pray for guidance as we live each day. We should pray for others. This includes our family and friends. It also includes those who might be our enemies!

It is not always easy to follow Jesus. A believer is often persecuted for being a follower of Jesus. We should not be surprised when others persecute us and give us a hard time because we are believers in Christ. Jesus said, *“If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also. . . They will treat you this way because of my name, for they do not know the One who sent me”* (John 15:20-21).

Love and forgiveness should characterize our lives, even in the face of persecution. We do not face persecution alone. God knows about every trial we face and He is with us. God has said, *“Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you”* (Heb. 13:15). Because of His presence in our lives, we can say in words of Scripture: *“The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?”* (Heb. 13:6).

May God bless you richly as you live for Him each day.

(Music: Theme music swells dramatically and fades as broadcast ends)

Note to Broadcaster, Program Host, and Director

There should be a “listener tag” at the end of the broadcast, announcing the next series of dramas.

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