

TRUTH in LOVE

Apologetics Conference

Is God Good?

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Is God Good?

Is Jesus God?

Can God Be 3-in-1?

Why Does This Matter?

This Is Why We Worship

The Problem of Goodness...



If there isn't a very clear moral component to a decision, you and I have NO IDEA what is good and what is bad.

God is moral...

God is worthy of
approval...

God is the creator of
good things...

God is kind...

The Problem of Evil...



Even one moment of
evil would disprove
the goodness of God.



God appears to do
things that are
most certainly not
good



God does not
seem to stop bad
things from
happening



Tell Stories to Communicate Difficult Truths

The Death and Resurrection of Lazarus



Therefore his sisters sent unto him,
saying, **Lord, behold, he whom thou
lovest is sick.** (John 11:3, KJV)

⁴ When Jesus heard *that*, he said, **This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby.** ⁵ Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus. ⁶ When he had heard therefore that he was sick, he abode two days still in the same place where he was. (John 11:4-6)

When God Doesn't Show Up

- ▶ Sometimes our suffering exists to show us things about God.
- ▶ Sometimes our suffering is an opportunity for God to show his glory and power.

Principle 1

In those times when God does not seem good, he is always working for a higher good.



Just because God **USES** suffering and evil for a higher good, doesn't mean he **CAUSES** suffering and evil.

We do not have to defend God by naming the higher good.

²⁰ Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met him: but Mary sat *still* in the house. ²¹ Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. (John 11:20-21)

When God Shows Up Wrong

- ▶ Wrong time: God does show up, but he is too late.
- ▶ Wrong way: God does show up, but not in the way we expected.

Principle 2

God welcomes our grief and knows that we will not understand how he is working.



We should **never discourage honest questions** and honest grief in the face of what God is doing.

It does not show more faith when you refuse to question God.

³³ When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled, ³⁴ And said, **Where have ye laid him?** They said unto him, **Lord, come and see.** ³⁵ Jesus wept.
(John 11:33-35)

When God Weeps

- ▶ Some said: “See how much he loved him.”
- ▶ Others said: “Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man also have kept this man from dying?”

Principle 3

God is touched by the evil and suffering that we are going through.



The atheist cannot imagine a God who purposely chooses to allow pain and suffering to exist for a higher good and then suffers with us.

⁴³ And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, **Lazarus, come forth.** ⁴⁴ And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, **Loose him, and let him go.** (John 11:43-44)

When God Shouts

- ▶ God shouts in judgment over sin and evil.
- ▶ God shouts when he restores the world.

Principle 4

While God is willing to allow pain and suffering to exist for a time and for a purpose, he is not willing to allow it to exist forever.



Evil and suffering are examples of God holding back his judgment and restoration.

God is not holding back because he hates us or is indifferent to what we are going through; he is holding back because **it is better this way.**

The Problem with the Middle...



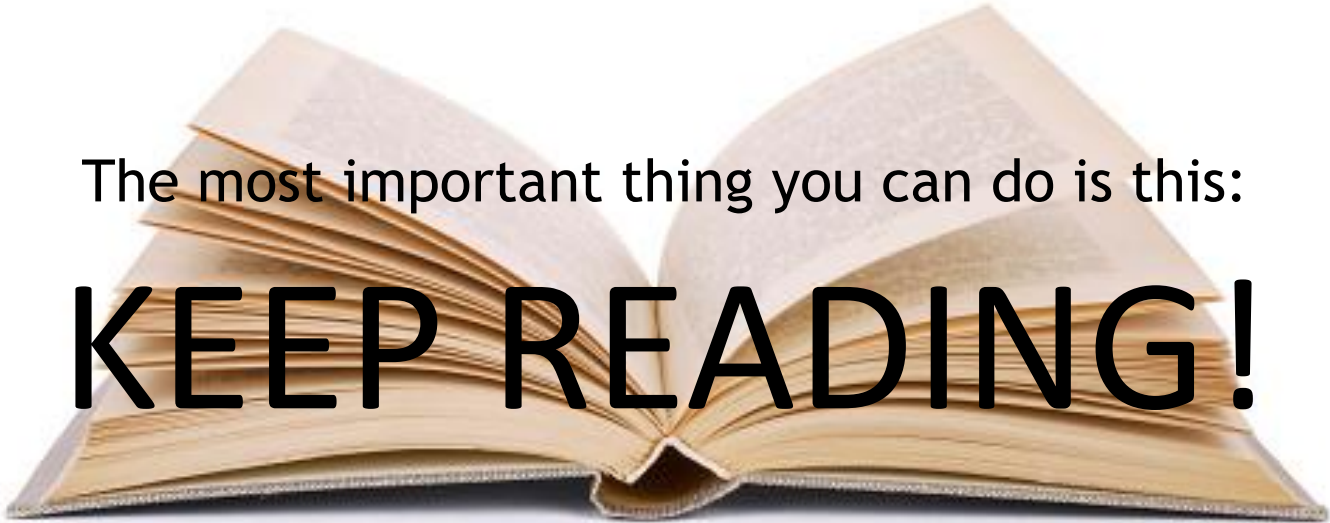
People who doubt
God's goodness
are in the middle
of the story.

“I cannot imagine where this
author is going?”

“How is she going to fix
this mess?”

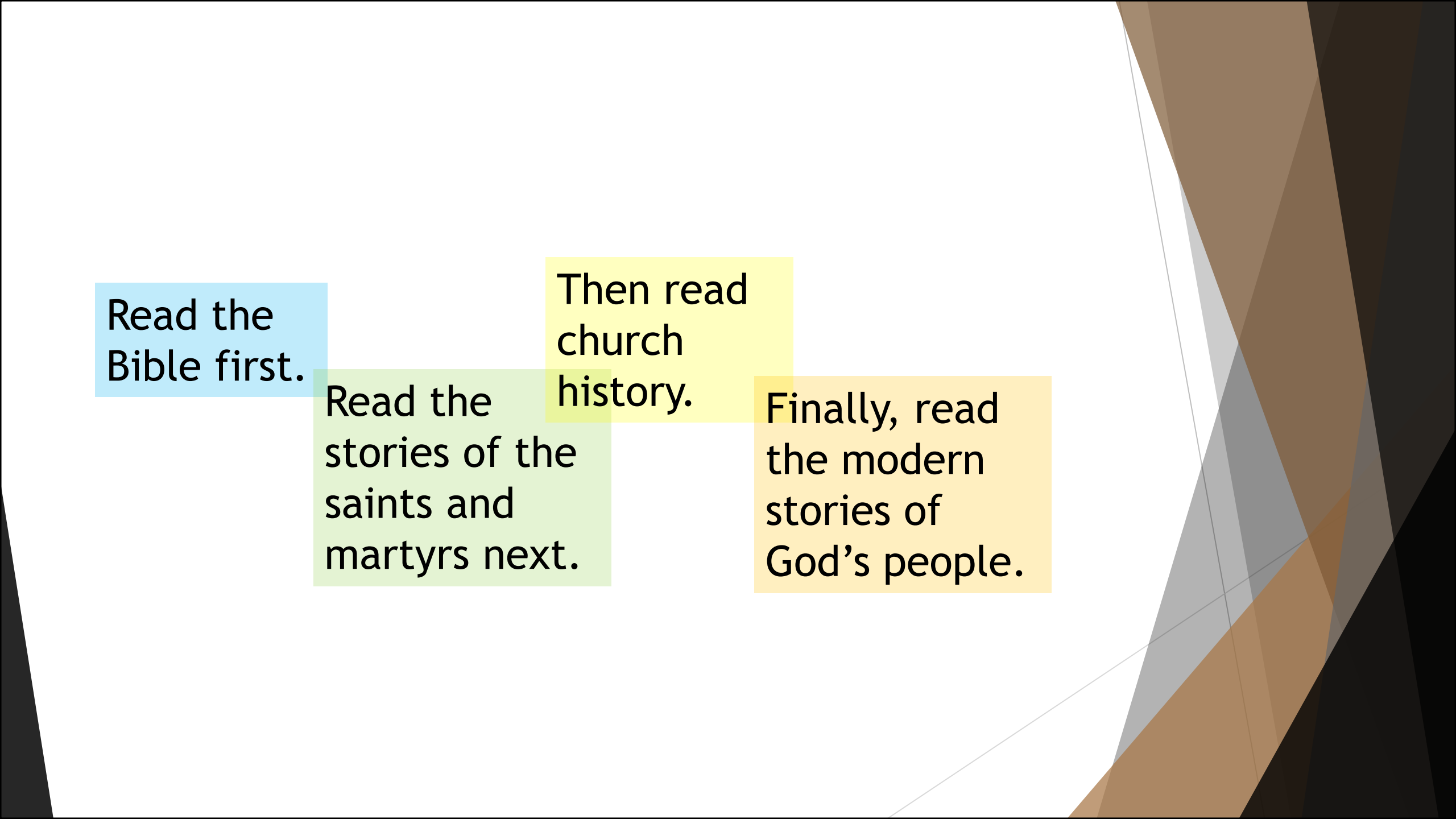
“There is no possible good
outcome of this story.”

“Did he really need to put
in that detail?”

An open book with yellowed pages is shown from a top-down perspective, lying flat. The text is centered over the book. The entire scene is enclosed in a thick black rectangular frame.

The most important thing you can do is this:

KEEP READING!



Read the
Bible first.

Read the
stories of the
saints and
martyrs next.

Then read
church
history.

Finally, read
the modern
stories of
God's people.

We are in a great tale ourselves. The great story of a good God and how he sets about to rescue those he loves from the great evil and suffering of this world. **But we are still in the middle** and it is only at the end that we will see what it all meant and why it all had to happen as it did. Until we read those final chapters, the very best thing we can do is to trust the author and, of course...

KEEP READING.