

Evangelism: Our Most Sobering Task

Christian evangelist Ray Comfort explains why natural disasters, such as earthquakes, only confirm God's existence rather than deny it.



"I was actually in this earthquake ... I live in Tokyo and it was the scariest thing that I have ever been in. I was in Kitasenju teaching English when it struck and after the initial shock we all ventured outside. I saw a mother of about 27/28 clutching her newborn to her chest in fear as the temperature got colder and colder and colder. Fallen creation? What are you talking about? I will NEVER accept this. NEVER. Do you hear me Ray? You can SCREAM this in my face for the rest of time. I WILL NEVER ACCEPT WHAT YOU SAY."

Creation is absolute evidence of a Creator. It didn't make itself. So to suddenly say that God doesn't exist because we have killer earthquakes and horrific tsunamis (such as the March 2011 tragedy) is to be in denial of something we all intuitively know. The question is rather, "Is God impotent?" Did He have the ability to create this infinite universe, with suns that dwarf ours massive sun, and yet He can't

stop a tremor on this little earth? The question itself is rhetorical, but it's covered in Scripture when we are told, "With God, nothing is impossible." So it then becomes, "Why did almighty God *allow* it, and its terrible train of unspeakable suffering and death?"

Atheism has no consolation for us, other than to say that such pain is the result of an indifferent "nature" that created itself, and is still in the process of creating. Richard Dawkins said, "Nature is not cruel, pitiless, indifferent. This is one of the hardest lessons for humans to learn. We cannot admit that things might be neither good nor evil, neither cruel nor kind, but simply callous – indifferent to all suffering, lacking all purpose." [A Devil's Chaplain & Other Selected Essays, by Richard Dawkins]

However, the Bible has the consoling answer. It says that we live in a "Fallen Creation" (see Genesis 1-3). We are like an alcoholic who is in denial, adamantly saying that all is well, and yet the symptoms of alcoholism are clearly evident as he staggers toward you.

Here is just some of the evidence that humanity has a serious problem—earthquakes, tsunamis, hurricanes, tornados, disease, suffering and death. The Bible says the

whole of creation “groans in travail” under the Fall (see Romans 8:22)—the “curse” of Genesis. Those who understand this don’t lose faith in God when terrible tragedies shake a world in denial. Each one of them instead reminds us that all isn’t well. For the world they should be a wake-up call—a slap in our drunken face—a reminder that we are not apes with no moral responsibility, as so many are trying to have us believe. All is far from well between sinful man and a holy God. We have a problem. A big one, that is more serious than a heart attack.

For someone to accept that we live in a fallen creation means that they have to accept that we are sinners—that we aren’t the good folks we say we are. It means that we have moral responsibility—that when a man rapes a woman and slits her throat, God will hold him accountable. It means that Hitler will face God on Judgment Day for the mass murder of so many innocents. It means that God is just, and that Hell therefore is a real place of punishment for the wicked. These are not pleasant thoughts when we realize that God is morally perfect, that he sees the thought-life and considers lust to be adultery and hatred to be murder. That puts all of us, with our unquenchable thirst for (and addiction to) sin, in deep trouble.

Earthquakes tend to make us tremble. They show us that we don't have total control. In the *Book of Acts*, there was a big quake that caused a hardened Philippian jailer to cry out to his prisoners "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"(see Acts 16:30). He wasn't talking about the quake (that had already happened). He was talking about his relationship to the One he had angered by his sin.

Fortunately, God has more than a 12-step program for the hopeless alcoholic. When Jesus suffered in our place and rose from the dead, He balanced the scales of eternal justice. He paid the fine so that we could leave the courtroom. The cross is an expression of the love and mercy of God. He is "rich in mercy," and can make us clean and sober with a new thirst for righteousness, and the ability to walk the straight and narrow.

I contacted a friend early in March of 2011, whom I hadn't seen for twenty years. He lived in my hometown of Christchurch, New Zealand, had always mocked me for my faith, and so I was surprised that he emailed back. He said that "god" greatly scared him in 2010 (he used profanity) with a 7.1 earthquake. When I then shared the gospel with him, he wrote back and mockingly said that he was guilty of breaking the Commandments, and that he going to Hell to "party." The next

day a killer quake
hit, taking over 165 lives. When I contacted him again to see
if he was okay, he
soberly replied, "Tell your God I am sorry and please don't do
that again." This
time he used a capital for "God."

Tragedies have a way
of putting the fear of God into those of us who are still
living. Most of us,
that is. Sadly, some may stay in denial and say, "Fallen
creation? What are you
talking about? I will NEVER accept this. NEVER. Do you hear me
Ray? You can
SCREAM this in my face for the rest of time. I WILL NEVER
ACCEPT WHAT YOU SAY."
I hope you are not one of them.

*Check out Ray Comfort's book The Defender's Guide For
Life's Toughest Questions, [here](#).*