

## **Questions for discussion**

### **1. What are the best examples of the bad?**

Oh I could list a book of my sins. Most of my friends would say “I knew it.” What is the bad in this world? What is the bad in your life? Do you know a bad person that others say is good? We all have those examples. Yet, who is right? Is anything really good or bad these days? In Paris they might believe religion is bad. In Egypt they might believe it is good. It’s so hard to know anymore.

*“I wish the church knew their role. They are supposed to represent all that is good in this world. Often, their bad actions are all we have or see. It’s not funny that two pastors recently posted articles blaming the congregation of bad behavior. Rule of thumb is that after three years’ leadership causes all the problems they have. Bad pastoral leadership thrives because their mirror is always facing the audience rather than towards themselves. It’s sad really, but we have been conditioned about what is good and bad through the lives of the church.” Chapter 3, p, 4*

### **2. How do you see bad?**

At the beginning of time we have two choices. The world was formed from something along the lines of the big bang theory. The other choice is that a pure God made creation that was very good. Which is it in your mind? Maybe you have another hypothesis. How would you describe the good and bad? Was it always there or did humans corrupt this place? Ask yourself why some see things as bad and others do not. How do you see the bad in this world?

*“Our perception about good things (that seem bad) is real. We have seen what they can do. Connecting the bad in this world, to things, is a bad way to live. God did make everything “very good.” I have read articles about questioning if small amounts of poison are beneficial to our health. One side says yes because it builds the immune system. The second side says any amount of poison is bad. People bent on ridding us of oil will drive what? Perception and reality are deadly partners.” Chapter 3, p, 5*

### **3. Who makes things bad in this world?**

Again, one side says Satan and another says God allows the bad to survive. Another group of people says people are free to choose. They can kill or love, but it’s their choice. It’s the freedom of survival of the fittest. That is the Darwin way. Why don’t other animals kill for fun. Why do they protect rather than say “Sucks to be you?” The laws of nature apply to everything but humans. Did we make up our own rules because

## ***Blessings and Curses*** Chapter 3 (The Bad)

we can think better. Does thinking better, deeper, or smarter mean we have evolved to kill, rape, and murder. Do humans make this world bad?

*“People make things bad in this world, for the most part. I will admit that “God made” versus “man made” is subjective. God made horses so they’re safe to ride, right? Man made cars and people die. I love cars but prefer a greener way to drive. Horses take a long time to get anywhere. Leaders in church perceive that the congregation has bad apples in the pews. The congregation knows the pastorate has bad apples right from the bottom to the top of the barrel. Perception is everything.” Chapter 3, p, 7*

### **4. Bad is bad and good is good, right?**

It seems so obvious that bad people do bad things. Are there good gangs? Maybe there are. Church people are generally nice. That is true but there are nasty ones that appear good. The wife and I have a favorite debate on why some people are evil. We have told each other several times “I knew it.” We know bad from good. It’s generally plain. Are their good things that turn bad and visa versa?

*“The bad is honestly bad. I find that if I know in my gut it’s usually true. How often are we blindsided saying, “I didn’t see that coming.” Not too often because it does not happen often. Usually it is what it is. Murphy’s Law is popular because it is true most of the time. Fine then, a blessing is usually good, fair enough, but I feel we should treat blessings the same as curses. A curse is bad because things went wrong, yet how often do good things come from a disaster? A lot.” Chapter 3, p, 9*

### **5. Are curses just blessings left unattended?**

I find honesty is lacking in this world (duh). I guess it comes down to the truth. If truth is subjective then how can we criticize anyone. However, leadership is bad much of the time in church and in business circles. I think it’s played out in politics. In our institutions we tend to be quite and complain in small circles. With government we tend to voice it out in public. A vote gets rid of bad leadership, but in business and church we don’t play by the same rules. These unattended leaders are killing the places we worship and work. Maybe it’s time we voted them out.

*“Curses are considered bad mainly because they are blessings left unattended. It’s saying what started out so good went so wrong. It would be so easy for you to think I hate churches or Canada Post. Both these institutions are dear to me and I want them to do well. However, I will not put up with their bad behaviour. In the Bible, King David acted badly. He was chosen to be King by God. However, chickens do come to roost. He is a blessing as a King. Unattended, he ran amuck killing his friend and cheating in adultery. His other friend, Johnathan remained quiet. Yet, Nathan the Prophet in 2*

## ***Blessings and Curses*** Chapter 3 (The Bad)

*Samuel 12 confronted David (at the risk of his own life). David wrote some of his best Psalms after his confession and guilt.” Chapter 3, p, 10*

### **6. Do you believe curses are only bad?**

I believe that a blessing can be a curse. What if I found twenty dollars and bought a movie ticket. On the way I trip and twist my ankle and am off work for six weeks. Who knew? Imagine getting hit by a car but in the coming weeks you fall in love with your care giver and get married. Who knew? Blessings are nice but a curse can teach us. Curses grow us if we let them. Maybe there can be more to be learned from a blessing and a curse.

*“Sometimes blessings can be a curse in disguise, so don’t embrace them as if you won the lottery. Curses begin with bad intentions. Our motives are not always the best. In a way, we breed curses from our own desires. Be a believer in the good. Choose to embrace curses as blessings in disguise. Matthew 6:34 says, “Therefore, do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Let the day’s own trouble be sufficient for the day. A blessing is only a blessing if you believe it is. A curse is only bad if you believe it is.” Chapter 3, p, 13*