

EDITOR'S NOTES: Theodicy's Challenge

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On the day after Christmas just past, a young man in our town of St. Helens, Oregon, was working at the tree farm where he had worked for the past few years. Working around a burn barrel, suddenly something exploded and he was engulfed in flames. Over ninety percent of his body has third-degree burns or worse. As I write, he is undergoing his fifth skin-graft surgery and is clinging to life. The doctors have amputated both arms and legs, and certainly he faces an agonizing road to recovery if he survives. The young man is a Christian, and the church community here has been rocked to its foundations by this tragedy. Once again, the old question makes itself heard: "How can a just God allow innocent people to suffer?" (Of course, the truth is that there are no "innocent" people.)

Well, that is just the question theodicy seeks to answer, and which we will explore in this issue of the *WRS Journal*. Many have sought the answer to this question using their own minds and hearts as the resource for their answers. Of course, such answers will always be unsatisfactory. The Scriptures, however, have much to say about this issue, however, and the answers they give are infallible. We must depend upon God's justice as revealed in Scripture, or we truly have no other option than despair.