

## 7. Romans: Theodicy

*Surely the Lord is in this place—and I did not know it!* Genesis 28.16

*Where can I go from your spirit? Or where can I flee from your presence?*  
Psalm 139.7

*When we cry, 'Abba! Father!' it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God....* Romans 8.15-16

*Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Let anyone with ears listen!* Matthew 13.43

What is the question of \_\_\_\_\_? "How could an all-powerful, all-knowing, all good-God permit evil in the world?"

Let there be no question, suffering is \_\_\_\_\_, but even more, God redeems our suffering! That doesn't make suffering good, but demonstrates, again, God's goodness!

Why did God choose to work in and through a man as evil as Jacob? Because God is God, and God is \_\_\_\_\_!

Jacob's encounter with the \_\_\_\_\_ God in a dream was a life changing experience for him. It changed the course of his life, and he was ultimately reconciled to his brother.

God's faithfulness did not exempt Israel from suffering the consequence of her sin. Just the opposite, the goodness of God \_\_\_\_\_ her judgment that she might wake up to God's Presence with her once again.

God has an \_\_\_\_\_ to our mixed bag dilemma -the Cross!

Now, in and through Christ, in spite of our faults and lack of trust, the Holy Spirit bears witness to our spirit that we are the \_\_\_\_\_ of God, and we cry, *Abba*, Father, the most intimate form of address for God that the Spirit could take from cultural traditions.

Jesus taught that good and evil are intrinsically linked, and Paul taught that they are bound within us as individuals as well as within the community of the Church. So, taking into account the whole counsel of God, on a deeper level, the parable speaks not just of the world, not just of the church, but also to the state of my own soul; **I am** a mixed bag of good and evil.

I can't explain evil in the world beyond humanity's propensity to sin. But I do know that God is not standing by with folded arms and closed eyes. The \_\_\_\_\_ is the ultimately proof of God's engagement with evil and victory over it. Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!

Jesus concluded the explanation of the parable with these words, *Let anyone with ears \_\_\_\_\_!* A word to the wise for all of us!