

# Intersections: Christianity & Today

Stan Schmidt

## What Then Can God Do?

1. “Love is the one thing no one, not even God Himself, can command. It is a free gift, or it is nothing.”  
—Nahum N. Glatzer, *Dimensions of Job*
2. Complete the following: I didn’t get what I prayed for because. . . .
3. Is God capable of relieving all of the suffering of this world? (This is the can/can’t question.)
4. Why doesn’t God relieve all the suffering of this world? (This is the will/won’t question.)
5. Does it hurt any less when you are in the middle of suffering to know that God is with you?
6. Can God, the Father, suffer?
7. Is it necessary for God, the Father, to suffer in order for Him to really care about your misery?
8. God is all-powerful. So tell me: Can He build a wall so high that He can’t jump over it?



## Prayers that deny the reality of God . . .

9. “Praying for a person’s health, for a favorable outcome of an operation, has implications that ought to disturb a thoughtful person. If prayer worked the way many people think it does, no one would ever die.”

—Harold S. Kushner, *When Bad Things Happen to Good People*, p. 113

10. Does God sell His blessings?  
“Please God, make this work out well, and I’ll do whatever you want.”
11. Can we go back and ask God to rewrite the past?  
Your spouse has undergone emergency heart surgery. You’re in the waiting room, and the doctor comes out to announce the results. “Please God, let it be good news.”

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Jack Riemer’s Prayer

Jack Riemer's Prayer

We cannot merely pray to You, O God, to end disease,  
For you have already given us great minds with which  
To search out cures and healing.

If we could only use them constructively,  
Therefore we pray to You instead, O God,  
For strength, determination, and willpower,  
To do instead of just to pray,  
To become instead of merely to wish.