

# WEEKLY SERMON

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## Why do bad things happen to good people?

We've all been appalled by some horrible, wicked murders over the last month. First, there was the death of primary school teacher Sabina Nessa in south-east London.

Within days Sarah Everard's killer was sentenced at the Old Bailey and so the distressing details of her abduction and death earlier in the year were all over the news.

And then on Friday 15 October Sir David Amess, Member of Parliament for Southend West, was brutally murdered while holding a surgery in his constituency.

Every murder is a tragedy, but I've found these three especially distressing because it's become apparent that each of the victims was a lovely, caring, selfless person.

There's been no hint of pretence in the glowing tributes that have been paid to all three; each was clearly much loved and respected by those who knew them. And so inevitably in response people have been asking the age-old question: "Why do bad things happen to good people?"

It has to be admitted that the Bible doesn't give us an answer to that question. It doesn't explain why David Amess (and Jo Cox) lost their lives.

But that doesn't mean that Christians have nothing to say in the face of such wickedness. We admit that there's much that we don't understand in this cruel world but there are some things we do know – and those things can help those who go through dark times.

And the most significant thing we know is that Jesus was the best of people and yet an unspeakably bad thing happened to him at the cross.

God himself experienced the worst possible thing. When we feel frustrated and dismayed by events, at least we can say that God has not remained aloof from the horrors that happen.

In Christ, God himself was wronged by wicked men and passed through the valley of the shadow of death, and so he offers comfort, hope, healing, peace and salvation to those who feel the deaths of Sabina, Sarah and David most keenly.

Please join me in praying for those families and friends: *"Help them to remember that however dark the valley, the darkness does not hide them from you. May it not hide you from them, but may they know that you are always near them, sharing their burden and entering into their grief."*  
(adapted from a prayer by Frank Colquhoun.)

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