

Rom. 14:19 So then let us follow after things which make for peace, and things whereby we may edify one another.

THE LENEXA EDIFIER

John 8:32

“And ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free”

May 24, 2020

WHEN WE DON'T KNOW WHY

by Doy Moyer

We have so much difficulty grasping why bad things happen in this world. How can God be in control when we see so much heartache, sickness, and evil? This has long been a point of doubt for many. Books like Job, Ecclesiastes, Habakkuk, and many Psalms grapple with this problem.

The reality of evil and heartache in this world need not sink our faith. The fact that Scripture devotes so much space to the problem of evil, and indeed is a major theme of Scripture, is evidence that its existence in no way impugns the integrity and purposes of God. Scripture is a testimony of God's response to the problem that includes Jesus dying for our sins so that we can be reconciled to Him.

Times like these require that we make a decision about whom we will trust. Trust will be tested the most when we are required to give up the most. Think about Abraham sacrificing Isaac and trusting that God knew what He was doing, even to the point of believing that God would raise Isaac from the dead (**Gen 22:1-14; Heb 11:17**). When Abraham was asked to give up the most, he trusted God all the more.

When we don't know why, we must trust that we know the One who does know why and that He always has good reason to act, to allow, and to arbitrate between the various events and issues that we face in this world. Since we are to walk by faith not by sight (**2 Cor 5:7**), and since faith undergirds our hope (**Heb 11:1**), then we ought to remember that faith is the demonstration of our trust in the reality of what we cannot see. We don't see what is going on “behind the scenes,” but we know the One who owns and manages the stage.

God is all-knowing, all-powerful, all-wise, all-understanding, and all-loving. None of that changes

when we do not understand something. Our lack of knowledge about greater matters of reality should never be a reason to turn from God; rather this is all the more reason to turn to and trust God.

“When I am afraid, I put my trust in you”
(**Psalm 56:3**).

Trusting God in a world that is full of “bad things” requires that we be prepared both spiritually and physically. Spiritually, we prepare our minds for action and seek to obey His will and to be holy as He is holy (**1 Pet 1:13-16**). Without spiritual preparation, we will be open to the schemes of the evil one (**Eph 6:10-18**). Physically, we prepare because *“your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God” ... and “you are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body”* (**1 Cor 6:19-20**).

Spiritual interests are always more important than what may happen to our physical bodies (not that our bodies are unimportant). Recall that when Jesus had healed the man who had been paralyzed for thirty-eight years, He later found him in the temple and told him, *“See, you are well! Sin no more, that nothing worse may happen to you”* (**John 5:14**). Sin will be more destructive to us, body and soul, than any particular physical illness. One can be physically ill yet spiritually robust, and one can be physically in good shape yet spiritually anemic. The former condition would be far better than the latter. After all, if we are reconciled with God, we trust that the resurrection is coming.

On the other side of the spectrum is the problem of panic. This is generally some kind of sudden or overwhelming fear and can lead to irrational behaviors. Sometimes panic results in an outbreak with larger groups of people acting irrationally at the same time. This type of fear can be very destructive, and not only

with physical properties. Our peace of mind is ruined. There is no joy in a mind full of fear. Think about the difference panic and preparation:

Panic is irrational.

Preparation is rational.

Panic is based on fear.

Preparation is based on trust.

Panic loses sight of the needs of others.

Preparation cares for the needs of others.

Panic forgets God is in control.

Preparation submits to God's control.

The child of God is called upon to trust God. God has given us tools by which we may overcome our anxieties and fears. Paul put it this way:

“Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. (Phil 4:5-7).

As we think on things that are excellent (v. 8), determine to practice what is right (v. 9), show our care for others (v. 10), and learn to be content in our circumstances (vv. 11-12), we know that Christ will strengthen us (v. 13).

When we don't know why, trust the only One who does know.

Is Today's Bible Like The Original?

It is obvious that we do not have any of the original autographs of the Bible writings. (By "autographs" we mean the actual letters written by the hand of Matthew, Luke, Paul, Moses, Isaiah, etc.) Therefore, the question arises as to the accuracy of our copies. How do we know that they are like the original?

Textual criticism is the field of study which is devoted to examining this issue. Thousands of volumes have been written about this scholarly area of investigation. At the risk of oversimplification, let us illustrate how the process works:

1. Joe writes a letter to Sam.
2. Sam decides that others need to read Joe's message.
3. Having no copy machine available, Sam sends hand-written copies to Tom, Dick, and Harry while keeping the original himself.

4. Later, Joe (the original letter-writer) dies and the original letter is inadvertently destroyed by Sam.
5. At this point, how can Tom be sure that his copy of the letter is true to the one originally written by Joe?
6. There is only one way: He can compare his copy to the ones held by Dick and Harry. If all three are identical, then Jack can conclude with a high degree of certainty that his copy is accurate. Obviously, the level of confidence increases with the number of copies available for comparison.

This is how textual criticism works. We should be impressed that here are thousands of manuscripts and early versions of the Bible which are available for the kind of comparison we have just explained. (Manuscripts are copies written in the same language as the original letters, and versions are the translations of the original text into other languages.) Concerning the New Testament alone, there are over 5,000 manuscripts and 10,000 documents of versions. These provide abundant evidence for the purposes of textual criticism. Some of these date to the second century A.D., reducing the time period when any errors might have crept into the text.

by Greg Gwin

JOHN THE BAPTIST

“When the messengers of John had left, He began to speak to the crowds about John, ‘What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? But what did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? Those who are splendidly clothed and live in luxury are found in royal palaces! But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I say to you, and one who is more than a prophet. This is the one about whom it is written, ‘Behold, I send My messenger ahead of You, who will prepare Your way before You.’ I say to you, among those born of women there is no one greater than John; yet he who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he” (Luke 7:24-28 NASV).

Jesus, in the minds of many, did not act as a Messiah, a Deliverer. True, His kingdom was a kingdom of peace—peace between God and man, though, not peace among nations, or peace among two groups of people who hated each other—the Jews and the Gentiles. Add to the mix the thumb of Roman domination, and the 1st. C. was ripe for turmoil. Jesus didn't answer the call of the Jews to sit on an earthly throne (**John 6:15**); His rule of the universe was inward. He called for changed hearts among all who accepted His invitation (**Matthew 11:28-30**).

What about John the Baptist? John was the messenger sent by the Lord. Jewish familiarity with the

OT should have whetted their appetites for his advent; John's message about someone greater to come should have stirred greater interest in his message. For some it did. John ended up in Herod's prison because of the truth he had preached. John certainly had the courage of his convictions. What were the people expecting when they went to see John in the wilderness? Would they meet a soft-spoken man in soft raiment? Would they find someone who was living a life of luxury or sacrifice? Would his message be palatable? If the Jews listened carefully, they could know that John was preparing them for the coming of someone greater. The Shekinah went before Israel as they left Egypt; John went before, ahead of Jesus, and preached a message of repentance—the One to come expects this of you if you want His kingdom. Get ready John says!

John was a great man; Jesus said so. But what of those who would come after John and be part of Jesus' kingdom? The OT prophets anticipated something greater than the old confines of Judaism. *"For truly I say to you that many prophets and righteous men desired to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it" (Matthew 13:7).* These faithful men of old set forth God's intent to bring peace and salvation to all. *"As to this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that would come to you made careful searches and inquiries, seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow. It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves, but you, in these things which now have been announced to you through those who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven—things into which angels long to see" (1 Peter 1:10-12).* What they longed for is here for all, now. The least among men are great before God in His kingdom. A new day has dawned; a new status is available. We can be greater than the prophets and John. Because of what we have or because of who we are? No! The Messiah says come; that is what makes the difference.

Randy Harshbarger

The Blessings of Understanding the Kingdom

I made the point last week that the Kingdom of God was established in the first century by Jesus just as He had promised and that it was the church which fulfilled that promise. Otherwise, in light of **Mark 9:1**, *"And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, There are some*

here of them that stand by, who shall in no wise taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God come with power" Jesus must be considered a liar. As it is, Jesus delivered a spiritual kingdom, the church, the Body of Christ (**Ephesians 1:22f**), uniquely designed to fulfill man's need for forgiveness and fellowship with both God and likeminded men and women throughout the ages. One of the benefits of this truth is that it shields you from "religious sensationalism". Now you'd have to be hiding under a rock to not have been exposed to what I am talking about. Every week or so a new book comes out purporting to tell us what's going to happen next in the Middle East, and when Jesus is going to come and establish his kingdom, "Who's the Anti-Christ?" "Covid-19 is foretold by scripture!" and so on. All of this sensationalism is based solidly on the misunderstanding of the kingdom: that Jesus either lied or was impotent to fulfill his promise to deliver the kingdom. And THAT, my friend, is unacceptable!

When I understand the simple truth that the Church of the New Testament and the Kingdom are one and the same I suddenly find all the religious sensationalism I really need in the Cross of Jesus. Can you find a story more sensational than God's own Son dying for sinful men? What has more glory than the Blood of the Cross?

Cleveland Reddinger

Fidelity Joe Works

I'm guilty of adultery

There I said it. I feel better publicly confessing it. I've asked for forgiveness and have received that. I want to move on and I want to never repeat that act. But the truth is, the temptation is great. I need to fight harder.

I'm not talking about cheating on Beth. I've not done that. I'm speaking in the spiritual sense of adultery (**James 4:4**).

Perhaps you've breathed a sigh of relief. "Oh good, he just means he's not been faithful to God and he doesn't mean physical betrayal of his wife."

If so, does that show how little we think of our relationship with the Lord? We are disgusted at the person who betrays his/her spouse. How much more should we see as detestable our own spiritual cuddling with the world.

Earlier James says that Abraham was called a friend of God because of his faith (**James 2:23**). It is the same word for friend as **4:4**.

Either I have my faith in the Word or in the world. I can't have both. I have to fight harder.

I've been guilty of adultery. You have also.

Let's commit our faithfulness to Him, our Spouse!

Psa. 1:1 Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the wicked, Nor standeth in the way of sinners, Nor sitteth in the seat of scoffers: 2 But his delight is in the law of Jehovah; And on his law doth he meditate day and night. 3 And he shall be like a tree planted by the streams of water, That bringeth forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also doth not wither; And whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. 4 The wicked are not so, But are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. 5 Therefore the wicked shall not stand in the judgment, Nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. 6 For Jehovah knoweth the way of the righteous; But the way of the wicked shall perish.

HOURS OF WORSHIP

Sunday A.M. 9:30 Bible Study
Sunday A.M. 10:20 Assembled Worship
Sunday P.M. 5:00 Assembled Worship
Wednesday P.M. 7:00 Bible Study and Worship

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PECK. (ZOOM)**

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SUNDAY MORNING SERMON

YOUTUBE AND ZOOM - **EATING THE
BREAD OF LIFE**



What Must I Do To Be Saved?

Hear the gospel - Romans 10:17

Believe in Jesus Christ - Hebrews 11:6

Repent of sins - Acts 17:30

Confess Christ as Lord - Romans 10:9,10

Be Baptized for remission of sins

Acts 2:38

Be Faithful unto death - Revelation 2:10