



Sermon:

Is There Really a Reason For Everything?

Many times we will ask the question, Why, looking for a reason behind bad news. Some will answer with: “Well, there’s a reason for everything” and I agree with that, but we must make sure we answer the WHY question correctly, according to the Word of God. When people use this phrase it’s as if they believe that God had something to do with a particular evil event. Although it is not directly expressed this way, the underlying meaning is that God knows a lot more than we do, (and this is true) but they indicate that in His infinite wisdom, which we could never understand, He enforced an evil act for a really important reason: one that will only be revealed to us in heaven someday.

A good example of this kind of thinking happened recently when a high school boy was hit by a car and killed while riding his bike to work. Friends, relatives, pastors and teachers all said that God took his life and had a reason for doing so. It was even said that this was the “contract” that God made for this boy before he was ever born. (God had a contract out on this boy?) So the reason he died is because God decided so? Some believed this was God’s plan for this young man. They say it’s just too mysterious to understand all the reasons why God would do this; but after all, He knows better.

The truth is those who saw this young man moments before he was hit noticed he was riding recklessly and did not go to the corner and wait for a good opportunity to cross the street, but steered into the middle of the highway as cars were coming both ways. He didn’t use wisdom, which would have saved his life. It wasn’t God.

I am sure many good things came out of this tragedy. Some may have thought of the reality that life could end at any moment and made some positive changes in their own life; some could have realized they needed a Savior and became born again; others may have started teaching Sunday School to invest in the lives of young people.

Good things can come out of bad situations and this is one of the reasons that some think God had to be involved in some way - because so much good came out of it. But to credit God as the author of any tragedy is just not what the Bible teaches.

Jeremiah 29:11 says: *“For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.”*

The original Hebrew meanings of some of these words will give us the full impact of what God wants to reveal to us:

“thoughts” - plan, purpose, intervention

“think” - plan, devise, impute, esteem, value

“peace” - with family and with God, completeness, safety, health, prosperity, contentment.

“evil” - bad, malignant, unpleasant, pain, misery, unhappiness, displeasing, worse than, wicked, distress, injury, calamity.

“expected” - things hoped for; outcome

So this verse is saying that He knows the plans and purposes that were originated by Him, that He thinks very highly of, and that He imputes toward us, plans of peace with God and each other, plans of safety, health, prosperity, contentment and completeness and NOT of evil, bad, malignant, unpleasant, pain, misery, unhappiness, displeasing, worse than, wicked, distress, injury or calamity, but to give us hope in our final outcome.

This sounds to me that God is good; very good; only good; all the time. His plans are good and to say that God ordains evil is a gross misrepresentation of His character.

A few years ago my husband shattered his pelvis. He fell off of a 4 ft. ladder. During his recovery, I received a phone call from a christian friend who told me that God did this to him to try to get him to slow down so he could get closer to God! She said that Al should take God's advice and slow down. What?

Unfortunately, this is the prevalent thinking in the Body of Christ. First of all, Al was already close to God, and I would think that if God was trying to get a message to Al, he could come up with a better way than to crush his pelvis; after all, He is God! So God put us under a huge trial, broke his bones, took our money, stole our time and all because He wanted Al closer to Him because He loves him so? Really?

The reason why he fell was because he ignored the promptings of the Holy Spirit to come down off the ladder! God didn't do this to teach him something. We are taught, corrected and reprovved by the Word of God, not by tragedy. *“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness...”* 2 Timothy 3:16

Some say that God doesn't necessarily ordain evil, but He allows it. God showed me that His allowing any kind of evil would be like He signing a petition to make it happen. Anytime we sign a petition we are saying that we are in agreement with it's purpose. So what's the difference between ordaining it or allowing it? Either way it's still the same outcome. The pain is still there; the loss and grief is still there; people's lives are still changed forever. God would never sign on for tragedy because then He would be in agreement with the destruction. And according to the verses we just read, God is never in agreement with any kind of death or destruction for anyone!

Would you allow your child to cross a highway with cars coming in both directions knowing he or she would get hit by a car? Of course not. We would do anything to protect our children. If we, with our limited capacity, would go to great lengths to protect our children, how much more would God protect us? (See Matthew 7:11)

Jeremiah 29:11 clearly states that God has a perfect plan for every person's life. But He doesn't force us to fulfill

that plan. He has given us a free will to choose either life or death in this life. *"I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life."* Deuteronomy 30:19. It's our choice; we can make right choices or wrong choices. We control our destinies, not God!

And then there's the devil. James 4:7 - *"Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."* Some things are from God and some things are from the devil. But it seems that most of the time, the devil gets a free pass. But the truth is the devil is behind all evil, whether directly or indirectly. *"The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy..."* John 10:10

Many articles have been written about the recent Newtown tragedy trying to answer the question Why? Could God have intervened? Does the devil have more power than God? The devil does not have more power than God. God has ultimate authority but does not directly control what happens on earth. He gave us free will, dominion and authority over the earth (Psalm 115:16) and we could use it as we please. If we cooperate with Him, the outcome is good; if not, the outcome is evil.

It was never God's intention that man would choose evil. His plan for us is always good, but we must cooperate with Him. One news commentator asked, "Then why did God give us a free will?" God didn't want to force us to love Him. He wanted us to choose to love Him and to have a relationship with Him. We wouldn't want to have to force someone to love us; we would want them to love us of their own desire. And God does too.

What God has set in place He will not change. We will always have free will and He will never override it. It's important that we represent God correctly. (Job 42:7) He is Love and where there is Love, there is no evil whatsoever! Thank You, Jesus.