

Outline - Why? - John 9

- 1- Xmas trip to L.R. Safe - 180 CCC stranded, some injured - ~~some~~
- 2- the mystery of why
- 3- C. A. Lewis - "why I am an atheist"
- 4- text - Disciple question - their belief that all suffering connected w/ specific sin = all suffering is a result of original sin - Paul in Rom 8 - whole creation groans & travail - awaiting redemption of body -
- 5- Jesus response = didn't answer their question - many questions he left unsolved, questions unanswered.
- 6- the right question = Result - (V.a, not purpose, but result = works, & made manifest in Him.
- 7- Outline of message (1 puts focus on D's sovereign control, glory, & purpose = off ourselves - save from self-pity & self-condemnation, guilt & judgment of others. (2 saves us from the moment - instead of looking backwards & asking "why me?" or "why?" or "what did I do or didn't do" - we look forward to what D is going to do. The forward look - Eternity rather than time - Paul in 2 Cor 4 - "The faint not."

(3 an occasion for D to manifest His work -

a - what we call miracle, He calls a work, a normal, everyday activity for D - The rising of the sun & the blooming of a rose as much a work of D as healing the sick or raising the dead - we need to see the supernatural in the natural - Dr Joseph Parker: - the people were intrigued because of a physical miracle but was forgotten when he began to preach - ~~so~~ ~~wasn't~~ ~~known~~ at well wishing to tell him, but no excitement in reporting a platitude.

Where then does sickness, etc come from?
1- God
2- Satan
3- Lifestyle
4- Human nature

Joy may be
misunderstood
only the Lord discerns the good.

Gr - work manifested, made clear, obvious - I is always
at work but we don't recognize it. Sometimes I must
get our attention w/ a "miracle" so we can do what
really needs to be done.

→ (C) What is that work? Here it was healing - but often it
is patience, growth in character & grace, humility,
gentleness, compassion, faith.

8. Suggestions on how to cooperate w/ this - so I can
manifest His work in us. So it will be obvious that, regardless
of healed or not, I has been at work -

Submit: the
means of manifestation
may be eccentric,
distinctive -
"the spot"

(I) Wait & Submit to His (often strange) ministrations
(3) Obey = "Gr work" (4) use occasion to testify - Frankly,
I would like to hear someone say, "I'm dying of cancer but
G's grace is overwhelming & His presence more real than ever"
5 - worship & trust

9 - Close w/ M. Clarkson's poem - The Thorn

On works & miracles = Earth's crammed w/ heaven,
and every common bush afire w/
God's light;
But only he who sees takes off his
shoes -
The rest sit round it & pluck black-
berries -

Elizabeth Barrett Browning

Additional material on chapter
"WHY?" p. 2.

We will probably discover that our problem is not a failure to get the answers to our questions, but a failure to ask the right questions. As Christopher Morley said, "I had a million questions to ask God: but when I met Him, they all fled my mind; and it didn't seem to matter." The closer we draw to God the less we need to know "why?" The more we are able to trust Him, the less we need to know the reasons.

- There is no comfort in knowing "why?" - Because the answer, explanation might depress us more & because it changes nothing, really. Had Jesus indulged the disciples (narrow) theological questioning & told them why, the men ~~was~~ would still have a lifetime of darkness behind him - still be blind.
- Sometimes explanations only deepen our despair.

Because the need for answers appears so strongly, if we cannot come up with the actual answer, reason or explanation, we will create or manufacture one of our own. It may not make much sense to objective observers, but it will satisfy the need. In fact, a lot of the "answers people come up with through rationalization are nothing more than euphemisms and platitudes. Nevertheless, they do meet the need to explain and thus make the acceptance of loss more bearable. (Quote from When Going to Pieces Holds You Together, William A. Miller, p.79,80).

We ask "why?" basically for two reasons. Two things we're looking for. The first is obviously, the reason, a rational explanation, something that makes sense, according to their idea of sense. But second, and more important, they are looking, not so much for answers, but absolution. This brings us back once again to the subject of guilt. Somehow in the irrational thought process, they see themselves as partly or wholly guilty for what happened, either in the sense that they actually brought about the tragedy, or could somehow have prevented it. Hence, the guilt. But if there is an explanation that absolves them from all guilt, that proves, nothing in their power could have prevented it, that is enough.

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Why the persistent why.

- 1- Curiosity, at the lowest level.
- 2- If logical reason, then repetition can be avoided.
- 3- Assurance that we live in a ~~crop~~ ordered life, not at a throw of dice, life not a crop shoot, not a ~~mercy~~ picky fate.
- 4- we seek absolution - from guilt, for we feel partially to blame.

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