

Have you ever scratched your head and looked up to the sky and said, “Why God did you allow this to happen? As a pastor, I have heard that question again and again. I have walked into an emergency room, where a father is holding his dead infant son in his arms. He is saying, “The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord.” Meanwhile his wife is sobbing in a side room saying, “God, God, why a baby? I have seen it when a 22 year old Lutheran School teacher, suddenly gets a killer strep in Chicago, is rushed to the hospital and dies in 5 days. Her parents are asking me, “Why did God take a young 22 year old girl who was teaching children about Jesus in a Christian Day School?” What about you? Have you asked the “Why question? Maybe it was your spouse who was supposed to live with you well into your early 90’s but now is gone? Maybe it was not being able to have children or your teenage son or daughter that was taken from you. Maybe it was a health issue that causes you to spend most of the day either in bed or in a recliner. Today, let’s find some answers to the why question? I pray God leads all of “Trust His Ways Are Best!”

Sometimes, even when God does explain the why, it is hard for us to swallow. I think for instance of the command that God gave the Israelites. When the LORD your God brings you into the land you are entering destroy all the people totally. Make no treaty with them, and show them no mercy. My mind naturally asks the question, “why? Why didn’t God allow at least the infants to live? God’s answer to the why question. I want you to put to death every last one of them so that you don’t fall into idolatry yourselves. They have hardened their hearts from me, as well as their children. I am trying to protect you. Accept my reasoning, even though it may be tough to swallow.

Or remember the story of Ananias and Sapphira. They had tried to cheat the Lord. They had sold a piece of property - but instead of deciding to give all of the proceeds to the Lord, they decided to only give a portion of it to the Lord. So when they brought their offering to Peter, they lied about how much they had given. As a result, God first struck Ananias dead on the spot, and then He struck Sapphira dead as well. I look at that situation and say to myself, “wasn’t that kind of harsh?” Why would God act in such a way? God’s answer. I want you to see that all sin is a serious offense to me, and deserving of punishment and death. Even a sin that you may do regularly, that you don’t think is that bad, like telling a lie to someone. It is damnable. You need the remedy I alone have provided for your sins.

At times, God may give us an answer to the Why Question, but it may be really tough to swallow. Or God may give us the answer to our why question, but it comes years later. Joseph may have wondered why God allowed him to be sold into slavery at age 17. Framed by Potiphar’s wife on a bum rape charge. Tossed into jail for 2 years. But God’s wisdom showed through when Joseph ended up as 2nd in power in Egypt, and saved thousands of lives during a famine by his pre-planning. Joseph had an answer to his why question but it came many years later. Same with Job. Much later he saw that he was blessed with greater humility and twice as much physical blessings as he had in the 1st place.

Indeed we can search God’s Word and find some answers. But how often is it that we are still left with questions. Life doesn’t always end up neat and tidy - as it did in the case of Joseph and his family. Sometimes wives are left to fend for years and years alone after they lose their spouses. Sometimes couples spend a lifetime yearning for a child while thousands of others are given children they never wanted in the first place. Things never come together or end

happily ever after - at least not physically. Many people - even Christians - die lonely and disheartened with life on this earth. It's at times like this - when things don't work out as planned - that we tend to cry out more and more - wondering to God, "why?"

It's kind of strange, isn't it? Dogs are content with their dogginess, and sheep with their sheepishness, but not human beings. When God does something that is beyond our understanding, we stomp our feet at God and demand to know "why?" We accuse God of not caring or being unloving. In the back of our minds we wonder if God really knows what He's doing. You might compare it to a husband and a wife that has been married for 34 years. The husband goes away on a business trip, but he can't tell her about it due to company policy. So the wife decides to hire a private detective to check up on him. Such a move would be a slap in the face to the husband, a vote of no confidence. We do that to God when we look at him with a questioning glance.

When something in God's Word doesn't make sense to our own human reason, we try to use our brains to explain it. It isn't good enough for us to know that God created the world in six days. There has to be more to it. So we try to explain it by saying that we evolved as the result of a great crash somewhere in the sky millions of years ago - or that six days of creation were actually thousands of years. When God says that He saves us only because of His mercy, that doesn't make sense to man's reason. So he says, "no! There must be some reason WHY God chose us! We have to do something to be worthy of God's choice! He must have chosen us because He saw what good Christians we would be - yeah, that's it." When God's Word says that three men survived in a fiery furnace, modern day scholars try to explain that they were dropped in a spot of the furnace that had no fire! They try to explain away God's miracles. When we try to explain things that are beyond our comprehension, we get in trouble.

How does God feel when we angrily question if he knows what he is doing.

Listen to how he responded to Job. Then the LORD answered Job out of the storm. He said: 2 "Who is this that darkens my counsel with words without knowledge? 3 Brace yourself like a man; I will question you, and you shall answer me. 4 "Where were you when I laid the earth's foundation? Tell me, if you understand. 5 Who marked off its dimensions? Surely you know! Notice how God dealt with this situation. He never even gave Job an answer to his questions. His answer was, "don't question me! I know what I'm doing.

Why did God deal with Job like this? Why does He often not give us reasons for what He does in our lives? Paul gives us basically three reasons that I could find in today's text. Number One - Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out! "Who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been his counselor?" The simple fact is that often times we can't understand! It's like when a little child comes up to you and asks you, "daddy, why does it turn cold out?" Do you give him a long in depth explanation of the seasons, explaining that at certain times of the year this part of the earth is further away from the sun? Or do you just say, "that's how God made it." Sometimes you can't go into an in depth explanation, because the child just can't understand it at that point. So it is with God. At this point, we just can't understand it with these minds of ours. And that's what Paul says - God's judgments are UNTRACEABLE! Our minds are not able to comprehend the how and why.

This is especially true when we look at God's rescue plan for mankind. It seems

completely irrational. Instead of giving up on the human race and just annihilating it and starting from scratch - He kept Noah alive through the flood. And then, He even sunk so low as to send His own Son to become one of these weak human beings. He allowed His own Son to be mocked, flogged and crucified for the sins of the world. Instead of making us suffer for questioning His judgments, God decided to suffer for us and judge His own Son! He decided to love us when there was no reason to! Even when we reject Him, He never stops reaching out to us - taking every step possible to bring us back into His fold! Why would God send His only Son to die for a world of sinners who hated Him in the first place? Why would He blame His Son for what WE did and send Him to hell instead? Why would Jesus volunteer for such a thing - when He would know that a majority of the world would still reject His free gift? Why would a God of justice decide to save a known murderer and allow him into heaven why he takes the greatest humanitarian and sends him to hell? Who of us can really understand this judgment? Who of us can really comprehend such mercy? It's beyond our mind and our sense of justice. Oh the depths of God's love.

Then Paul proceeds with the second reason why God doesn't always explain Himself: "Who has ever given to God, that God should repay him?" This is a quote of God's response to Job in Job 41. For us to even ask "why" insinuates that we think God owes us something. But what does God say in Romans 3:23? All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. God doesn't owe us a thing. He graciously gave us a body, food, clothing, shelter, and we repeatedly break his commandments. If anything, we should be cast aside from Him into hell for the times we have broken his commandments. And we are going to question his judgments. Answer 2. He doesn't owe us an explanation. We don't deserve one.

The third reason that God doesn't need to explain Himself is as follows: All things are from Him and through him. The sun wouldn't shine if God didn't let it. The earth wouldn't move if God didn't move it. The Detroit Lions wouldn't win if God didn't let them. Let's take it a step further. Cancer, AIDS, and every other epidemic wouldn't exist if God didn't allow it or even cause it to happen. The devil would have no power if God didn't give it to him. Hell itself would cease to exist if God didn't keep the fire burning.

That's hard to us to swallow, until Paul tells us "to him are all things." You might compare it to a runaway train. Imagine that you owned a country - and within this country a train had gone out of control and was going to do a mass amount of destruction. But you had the power to direct the train. Instead of having the train wreck a palace or a nice building, you could use it to destroy an abandoned warehouse that needed to be destroyed anyway. You could use it to wipe out a decent building that you wanted to rebuild even better. That, in a sense, is how God controls evil. The evil seems out of control in this country. Yet all things somehow work out to God's glory. As Paul said to him are all things. The devil, as evil as He is, somehow ultimately serves God's purpose either to punish those who reject Him or to discipline His children. When we know this, we can be content when God doesn't give an answer to our specific questions.

Paul understood that sometimes we may never know the "why" in this life. In 1 Corinthians 13:12 he said, Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror. Instead of being frustrated over this, think of how glorious it will be then, on Judgment Day, for God to reveal to us His whole plan. A time when every Why question will be understood. So for now people, be assured, "God Knows What He is Doing!" Trust Him! He won't let you down.