

Day #7: The Uncomfortable Truth About Trouble: God Could Stop It!

Read: Ephesians 1:11

For the next two days we venture out into waters that will feel choppy and uncomfortable regarding the connection between God and trouble.

One month after 9/11, Christian apologist John Piper wrote an article entitled, “Why I Do Not Say, ‘God Did Not Cause the Calamity but He Can Use It for Good.’” In it, he establishes a difficult but biblically irrefutable truth: that God chose not to prevent 9/11. Indeed, ~~that~~ on that day – and every other – God was working “all things after the counsel of his will.” (Eph. 1:11) Below are excerpts from that article.

“Among the ‘all things’ under God’s sovereignty are the:

- fall of sparrows (Matthew 10:29)
- rolling of dice (Proverbs 16:33)
- slaughter of his people (Psalm 44:11)
- decisions of kings (Proverbs 21:1)
- failing of sight (Exodus 4:11)
- sickness of children (2 Samuel 12:15)
- loss and gain of money (1 Samuel 2:7)
- suffering of saints (1 Peter 4:19)
- persecution of Christians (Hebrews 12:4-7)
- repentance of souls (2 Timothy 2:25)
- gift of faith (Philippians 1:29)
- pursuit of holiness (Philippians 3:12-13)
- giving of life and the taking in death (1 Samuel 2:6)
- crucifixion of his Son (Acts 4:27-28).

“From the smallest thing to the greatest thing, good and evil, happy and sad, pagan and Christian, pain and pleasure – God governs them all for his wise and just and good purposes (Isaiah 46:10).

“Lest we miss the point, the Bible speaks most clearly to this in the most painful situations. Amos asks, in time of disaster, ‘If a calamity occurs in a city has not the LORD done it?’ (Amos 3:6). After losing all ten of his children in the collapse of his son’s house, Job says, ‘The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away. Blessed be the name of the LORD’ (Job 1:21). After being covered with boils he says, ‘Shall we indeed accept good from God and not accept adversity?’ (Job 2:10)

“IT IS A MYSTERY, INDEED, how God governs all events in the universe without sinning, without removing responsibility from man, and with compassionate outcomes!”

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Why do you think the truth that God is sovereign and in control over all makes some feel confident and others feel fearful?

What would be some underlying beliefs (true or misconceived) about God's character that each reaction – confidence and fear – reveals?