

Kingdom News

Yours is the kingdom, the power and the glory, forever... (Matt. 6:13)

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Why All of the Suffering?

If God is loving and caring...

A few weeks ago, I was talking with a young lady; who when I met her was reading the book *"The Secret."* I asked her what she thought of the book; she began to explain; I listened. I then asked her how the primary thoughts of that system of beliefs accorded with the God of the Bible. She began to respond and we engaged in discussion on the topic; we each shared our beliefs. The conversation was intriguing; as you could imagine.

Somewhere in the conversation (as if to indict God), she asked the proverbial question. "If God is so loving and caring, why is there so much hurt and pain in the world?" I discussed the biblical response to this question and referenced man's causal and contributory affects of the situation. As one could appreciate, our time did not allow for a more in-depth discussion on the topic. God is gracious, because it is likely that I would not have then been able to do the topic justice, had time been afforded us. Our conversation ended, rather graciously. As I left, I asked the Lord what would be an appropriate, God-honoring response to this long-standing philosophical question. "Appropriate" in the sense of an answer that the consciences of all men could at least appreciate for its truth and relevance. This question I left before the Lord.

Not very long ago, while listening to a theological debate on the *"Philosophical Proof of the Existence of God"* between one of my "mentors" Dr. G. L. Bahnsen and an avowed Atheist Dr. G. Stein; this philosophical question surfaced,

Why All the Suffering...

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The Leadership Corner *Leadership Living, Inc.*

Do Leaders Fear?

Have you heard the saying, "Fearless Leader?" I'd like to bring some clarity to this phrase for the sake of leaders who grapple with issues of fear from time to time. I submit that all leaders (and we will focus on Christian leaders) become fearful from time to time. For the purpose of our discussion when referring to fear I mean anxiety, worry, or a troubled state of mind.

At this point any well-versed Christian would counter this suggestion by quoting II Timothy 1:7 stating "God has not given us a spirit of fear; but of power, love, and a sound (healthy) mind" (KJV paraphrased). I would quickly agree with you, but allow me to explain. Recently the Lord directed me to resign from my place of employment to get my family business up and running. This conversation between God and me had been brewing for a couple of months. Then, he finally put his foot down (so to speak) and gave me the directive to leave.

Although the working conditions at my old employer were quite stressful, I was fearful of walking away from a lucrative salary. Of course I obeyed (after discussing it with my husband). Tell me, did my fear make me less than a good Christian leader? Did it mean I wasn't trusting in God? Had I forsaken my trusted Lord, and didn't even know it. Thankfully, none of the above hypotheses were true.

Here is what happened. After God told me to leave the job, his Spirit spoke to my spirit and I immediately agreed. However, my natural (human) mind did not have enough information about what God had (and still has) planned. As a result, my mind perceived potential danger and reacted with fear (a

signal that something wrong or harmful may be approaching). This process is normal for every human being. It is how God wired us. In order, however, to bring my natural mind back to its rightful place of peace, the Holy Spirit (who is the express mind of God) reminded me of how God has never “dropped” me before. He reminded me that God loves me more than I could ever understand; and what he has in store for me is much greater than my mind is able to comprehend, etc. Additionally, God had a close friend of mine (who was aware of the situation) call and tell me not to wait too long to leave now that God had told me what to do.

All of this happened on a Friday. By the end of that day, I was at peace again. The following Monday, I turned in my resignation. Amazingly, a few days afterwards, several colleagues contacted me to let me know how they could help my business grow. I immediately began setting up appointments to get the business rolling. In a nutshell, each of us will encounter times when fear will rise up in our human minds. Don’t be alarmed. This is perfectly normal. During these times we are to allow the Holy Spirit to minister to us (and he will do so in a variety of ways) to bring our minds back to a place of peace (by having faith in God’s word). This is really what II Timothy 1:7 means. God has given us the Holy Spirit to enable us to overcome human thoughts of fear every time they arise. Therefore, the “fearless leader” is really the Holy Spirit and because he lives in us, we don’t have to walk in fear. ☪ ☪ ☪

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DIAMONDS



“Run, John, Run” the Law demands, but gives us neither feet nor hands.

Far better news the Gospel brings it bids us fly and gives us wings.

- John Buyun



again. The response given at this time was, in short, that “God planned it;” a response which to some extent the respondent left to the sovereignty of God. This, as you may appreciate, could serve to only strengthen one’s resolve to the contrary? Upon hearing that response, I again recalled the matter before God. In revisiting this, I asked the Lord for a more reasonably coherent, valid response to this question.

The Lord began to show me the following parable and series of analogies:

A furniture engineer designed and built a table. It was absolutely beautiful. All of his fellow craftsmen and designers were in awe of it. He earned the annual Furniture Design Award for its beauty and functionality.

The table was made of the choicest woods and materials. The ornate carvings along the base of the table top and down the legs of the table were reminiscent of Corinthian art. Its design was a symphonic orchestration between the natural, physical, geometric and mathematical laws. In a word it was beautiful; no one could refute its beauty or the brilliance of its design and construction. Both the designer’s colleagues and competitors were obliged to admit of its awe-evoking qualities. You get the point.

An affluent gentleman purchased that table for a very handsome price. It was set, almost enshrined, in the great room of his home. All visitors and comers spoke highly of the soundness of its qualities, its beauty and artistic expression.

A few months later, a seemingly small construction project was underway. A near-by room was being remodeled. One day, an unlikely thing happened. A builder lost control of a pipe; which struck one of the table legs about mid-height. As the weight of the table and its contents bear upon the compromised leg; it snapped. The table leg broke clean in half; and as you could appreciate, other laws of physics began to operate. All of the items and artifacts on the table, along with the table itself came crashing down to the floor. Great was the fall of that table. A masterpiece of workmanship and beauty had become void and chaotic.

The person responsible for the accident was very concerned with the outcome of this mistake. But his co-worker, who came by later, was outraged that the table leg broke. He spoke with great disdain, against the designer and maker of the table. He berated their technical expertise and their overall competence. He does not regard that there was a violation of some very important laws. The violation of these laws has requisite effects on us and on our lives. Laws that when obeyed, provide a very favorable living environment.

And so it is with man’s perspective of the “reason for and effects of sin.” Man “looks at God,” as he shakes his

conceited, self-righteous fist at the heavens and asks; “if you are all loving and all caring how could you allow this to happen to us?” We often do not regard the causal events that shape our worlds.

When laws are violated there are repercussions on so many levels. The Law of Cause and Effect supports this in every area of our lives. Some of these repercussions are readily identifiable, others not so readily identifiable. Some repercussions of the violation of law are immediate and others seem to have a delayed effect.

- The sudden collapse of the table would be classified as both an immediate and readily identifiable repercussion. The Laws of Physics and Gravity were inadvertently violated.
- The repercussion of Adam’s and Eve’s disobedience (which was a direct violation of the command of God); could be classified (in the eyes of mankind) as not readily identifiable and “quite delayed.” Delayed by about 930 years or so (Gen. 5:5 KJV by reference). However, in the eyes of God, the repercussion of this violation would be classified as ‘immediate;’ and “readily identifiable.” (Gen. 3: 9)

Where there is no law, there can be no infraction (Rom. 4:15 KJV by reference); contrariwise where there is no penalty for violation or noncompliance, our experience teaches us that there exists be no sanctioned law. A “sanctioned law” without a corresponding penalty for violation is “a suggestion;” but it is not a law.

Now back to our original topic of this discussion. “If God is so loving and caring, why is there so much hurt and pain in the world?” A question well stated if we are given to the belief that God alone is responsible for the current circumstances. Perhaps there is more to be considered in this case; and just for the sake of this discussion; let’s all concede to the following. After this discussion you may, if you choose, return to your original systems of belief. Okay?

If God is the Creator of the universe, then He has a right (almost an obligation) to establish law(s) to govern His creation. I don’t imagine that anyone would dispute the existence of the many brilliant, invariant; and often interactive, laws that govern the universe and its inhabitants. Even Atheists seem to agree that there are laws governing our universe. The whole of our existence relies on, and respects, these Laws (natural laws; cosmological laws; physical laws; mathematical laws, etc). They are wise and very useful, as they help us to understand how to interact with our environment. They are also invariant (unchanging) and often unforgiving (as in the case with many of the characteristics of the Laws of Gravity). All of that being the case, we still appreciate and respect these Laws.

God is a Spirit and is also Creator and Governor of the spiritual world(s). We are created in His image and we have a spiritual component to our being. Thus it is reasonable, to me at least, to expect that there are laws that govern the spiritual realm of our existence. I believe that we can all attest to the fact that the aforementioned laws only govern the physical universe. As is representative in our physical universe, its Creator is an orderly and lawful Governor. I am certain that we can expect the same orderliness and lawfulness to be inherent in the Laws that govern the spiritual realm. Trust me, I’m going somewhere with this. A mosaic is, probably, best constructed one tile at a time.

Let’s briefly consider a civil law:

Think of one of the laws that govern how we operate motor vehicles on public streets. Imagine that someone violates this law by running a red light, and by chance causes a fatal accident (including a mother and her three children). When that person is brought to trial, how reasonable or how legally defensible would it be for that person to blame the City or State government for having established such laws? Better still, what if this violator wanted to indict the City government for allowing this law to be capable of breach. His position is that since violations to such laws are potentially fatal; the government should have enacted laws that could not be thus broken. Can you begin to see how unreasonable this plea would appear? I am not aware of any legal precedence that shows that this line of thinking is at all effective.

At a higher level, consider violations to some of the physical laws:

Take the Law of Displacement, which in essence represents that no two objects can occupy the same space, at exactly the same time. It is not necessary to give examples of the validity of this law. However when this law is violated, it draws to itself much attention. Like two vehicles or people attempting to occupy the same physical space; at the same time. Or various disagreeable chemicals being made to co-exist in close proximity; resulting in an explosion. Perhaps, we all have personal experience of the repercussions of violating one of the principles of the Law of Gravity.

While violations of civil, federal, natural or physical laws (to name a few) have repercussions primarily in the physical realm or in this universe; violations of spiritual laws have far-reaching and eternal, repercussions in both the spiritual and physical realms of existence.

Take for example the Moral Law (Exod. 20:1-17), wherein it is stated that, “We should not kill; or steal; or bear false witness against our neighbor...”

Violations of these three components of the Moral Law have both moral (eternal) and physical or judicial repercussions. Killing and stealing are so detrimental to the peaceful existence of mankind; that these violations have both moral and judicial repercussions. On the other hand, violation of the component of the Moral Law that speaks to “bearing false witness against our neighbor” seems to only have judicial ramifications if you are testifying “under oath.” Otherwise, I am not aware that there are any judicial penalties against lying; albeit, there are always spiritual repercussions to this violation (Reference Prov. 6:16-19 KJV). Our conscience, in many cases, is a most able Prosecuting Attorney. Otherwise, the spiritual repercussions of these violations would be classified as “not readily identifiable;” and “somewhat delayed.” This unfortunately, leads many persons to become callous, or blind, to these moral violations; and their resulting repercussions.

Returning again to the question at hand: “If God is loving and caring, why is there so much hurt and pain in the world?” The answer, simply stated is because of “Sin.”

The Biblical definition of “sin” is “transgression of the law.” (1 John 3:4 KJV) But what law? There are lots of laws.

Q) A physical law?

A) No, violation of one of these laws is generally termed a “disaster.”

Q) A judicial law?

A) Probably not; such violations are known to us at “crimes.”

Q) A universal law?

A) Closer, but still no. Laws that are solely universal in nature are far less variable; as many of them cannot be influenced by mankind.

Q) The Moral Law? (Exod. 20:1-17)

A) Unequivocally, yes!!

It all boils down to this; when we violate the Moral Law of God, there are repercussions generally resembling disaster, chaos, death, hatred, disease etc. Generation, after generation, has proven that it is difficult (translated: impossible) for mankind to observe the Moral Law, without the help of God. The fallen nature of the flesh is prone to commit sin; leaving us perpetually in violation of the Moral Law. The fallen nature of mankind also leaves us perpetually deserving of eternal punishment, if God judges us by the Moral Law (which He must). At this point, this sounds like a “lose-lose” situation. One might even think, hmmm, if that is the case, then why doesn't God simply forgive everyone, since no one can keep the Moral Law anyway?

Try to conceptualize that proposition in a judicial environment. One state, in the U.S., has the following statistics: 85% of its citizens are guilty of some form of theft, or another. There is so much theft that the law enforcement body, can't keep up with it. The fear and anguish of the population is disproportionately high, in this state. People are afraid to move about for fear that something will be taken from them. Even the thieves, themselves, are fearful.

One day, a criminal finds herself before the judge in this state; having been caught stealing (go figure). She is aware of this statistic, therefore she pleads as follows:

“Your Honor, this is crazy really. About 85% of the population of this state is a thief of one sort or other. Instead of trying to stop people from stealing, why don't we just repeal the law? This way, it won't be against the law to steal.”

Apart from the unreasonableness of this proposal, it probably would not “fly” in any judicial court, in any state of the union. But if it did, approximately how long before this type of lawlessness would spread, unmitigated, across the whole U.S.; then across the world?

Because people don't obey the law, does not make the law unjust. To do away with a just law, because the citizens, by and large, won't comply is a greater evil than the violation of the law itself. And so we understand God's predicament with the issue of “sin.”

If we break a civil law, we incur a civil penalty. If we violate a federal law, we incur a federal penalty. If we disobey an eternal Law, we are deserving of an eternal judgment. Because sin is violation of a spiritual, eternal Law and is an offense to an infinitely Holy God; it is deserving of the penalty of eternal death and hell.

It grieves the heart of God that our sin and disobedience have brought ruin on our world and our lives. However, it would be infinitely, more, wicked for God to turn a “blind eye” to the sins of mankind or do away with the Moral Law altogether (if that were even possible); then that He should Himself design a solution to this “sin” problem.

Enter Jesus Christ and the great love of God (John 3:16)

A man is brought to law for a debt that he owed; but he could not afford to pay. He stands in violation of the law; and has incurred upon himself a penalty. But you walk in and pay his debt in full; thus restoring him to a right and acceptable disposition with regards to the law. The accused is free to go home; as he is no longer indebted to the law. When you get outside of the court, you pull him aside and explain to him that he now has an obligation to not put himself back into that situation. You then explain to him how to avoid that situation in the future. Most

likely you have gained both his gratitude and his loyalty. He goes away and heeds your instruction. With the gift of freedom and knowledge you have given him; he is able to comply with the law. He lives quite a different life and never again finds himself at odds with the law again.

Such is God's Plan of Redemption, through Jesus Christ. And such is the solution to our problem of sin and suffering in our world and in our life. < 96N >

JoAnn C. White, sMHG

JEWELS



Whenever you have spoken with exaggeration, you must find opportunity to correct it before your children.

Perhaps you exaggerate three cows for two cows or eight birds for five birds.

Learn to correct these figures before your children, showing them the sacredness of words.

Everything in family life must establish good Christian character.

Taken from *Do All to the Glory of God* by Watchman Nee (p88) reference 1 Cor. 10:31



Other Gods

By David L. White

Let me start this article off with a story. I am currently taking a class at a local college. On this particular day, we were going over a quiz taken in the previous class. The professor, in speaking to the class about how he would grade the tests and quizzes; said something that gendered a bit of confusion in me. He led us to believe that he would use a particular grading model for our assignments and tests. However, this newly described grading model was completely contradictory to how he had actually graded my paper. I asked a question; intending to gain clarity on what he would actually be expecting from us. He didn't answer the question; even after my having rephrased the question/inquiry a number of different ways. We move on. Sometime later he completely contradicted himself again. Now, mind you, these aren't slight mis-statements; these are akin to someone giving directions along the lines of "go left ... no go right ... no, no, no, go left." Now I'm thinking he's a couple gallons short of a full tank. I raise my hand and rephrase my original question yet again. By this time, my professor thinks that I'm challenging his authority. I have no intention whatsoever of challenging his authority; I don't even think like that. I'm just trying to get an understanding on how he will be grading our work; so that I can meet his expectations and conform. During this dialog he asks something along the lines of "who's in charge here?" He's MAD, and I am CONFUSED. Next I hear, "Mr. White if you have any more questions get with me after class." I nod in acceptance.

To make a long story short; after class, the Professor was absolutely malicious in his conversation with me. My defenses are up, because he is angry with me and I cannot understand why. Somewhere in our conversation, he lets me know that he doesn't even understand what I'm asking. This kicks the heat up a few notches, for me. I'm so angry; it feels like I am standing in a steam room. I'm thinking "how can you be mad when you don't even understand my question?" Ultimately this conversation went on for about 20-30 minutes... after a night class.

When I got in the car to go home, the Lord dealt with me. Our conversation goes something like this.

The Lord: "Why did you get so angry, David?"

Me: "Because his attacks on me were unwarranted and unfounded."

The Lord: "I agree... but why did y-o-u get so angry?"

Me: "Because in all my questions he still didn't

answer me.”

The Lord: “He told you he didn't understand the question? How could he answer you?”

Me: “Lord, he understood the question. **He just wanted it to fit his own preconceptions. He read into the question what he wanted to read into the question.**”

The Lord: “Do I display My anger when you read into My Word what you want?”

Me: (at a loss for words, as He proceeds to “read my mail.”)

The Lord: “David, when I said, Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you (Matt. 6:19, 33 KJV). You somehow translate this to mean that I would add “treasures.” That part you got; but you managed to skip over everything else that will be added to you. Whenever My Word speaks of profit; David, you see “money.” When I speak of healing, David you see *your* healing; then *maybe* you see healing for others. When I said I would “...pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive” (Mal 3:10 KJV by reference); you missed that too. Somehow you think that I am saying I would pour out a blessing that *you* wouldn't have room to receive. What I'm actually saying is that I will pour you out *as a blessing to others* in such a way that there would not be room enough to receive. When I mentioned the fruits of the spirit in Gal 5:22 you somehow do not see your obligation to bear these fruits. But you certainly welcome the gifts of the spirit in 1 Cor. 12:8.”

By this time I was completely silent. I mean what could I say? This is God after all. I had read into His word exactly what I wanted; and thereby made in my mind a god that I liked. I had not read, into the text, the Lord God whose end purpose and intent is always righteousness; I had read into the text a god who fit my preferences.

I had read a god whose ultimate purpose was to make me feel good, make me healthy, make me rich, make my enemies suffer, love me more than other people, and who did things simply because I wanted him to.

I had **not** seen, understood or believed the GOD that said:

- “...*let your heart keep my commandment*; for length of days, and long life, and peace shall they add unto thee;” (Prov. 3:1-2 KJV by reference) or
- “...*fear the lord and depart from evil*...It shall be health to thy navel and marrow to thy bones;” (Prov. 3:7-8 KJV by reference) or
- “*By humility and fear of the Lord are riches, and honor, and life*;” (Prov. 22:4 KJV by reference) or
- “*When a man's ways please the Lord; he makes even his enemies to be at peace with him*;” (Prov. 16:7 KJV by reference) or
- “...*God is no respecter of persons*,” (Acts 10:34 KJV

by reference) or

- “*Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your own lusts*.” (James 4:3 KJV by reference)

I had made unto myself a false god by believing things about God that terminated on me and not on Him and His righteousness, breaking the second commandment thereby. “Thou shall not make unto thee any graven image or any likeness...” (Exod. 20:4 KJV paraphrased) Guilty, as charged!!! Thank God for Jesus Christ.

I would therefore admonish all of God's people to read God's word as consistent with God's glory. I would submit that we are to always intend that everything we do and desire; is to be for God's glory. If our prayer is not for the glory of God first and foremost; then we should rethink that petition. Likewise, if our actions are not for the glory of God first and foremost; then we should rethink that action. 



A Journey to Intimacy

Getting to Know Him

Allow me to share with you a beautiful piece I've been reading:

Providence – As Seen in the Book of Esther by Charles H. Spurgeon on November 1, 1874 (mildly paraphrased)

It is a somewhat rough method (no disrespect intended) for God to accomplish His purposes by stopping the wheels of nature and by reversing wise and admirable laws; certainly it reveals His power, but it does not so clearly display His immutability.

When, however, the Lord allows everything to go on in the usual way, and gives mind and thought, ambition and passion their full liberty and expression, and yet achieves His purpose it is doubly wonderful.

In the miracles of Pharaoh, we see the finger of God, but in the wonders of daily providence without miracle, we see the hand of God.

I will share a small, but beautiful, bit of providence from my own experience.

While visiting one of our remote offices, I had scheduled to meet an old acquaintance and very dear friend “we'll call him “Jack”. This particular visit was my last before leaving town. I was aware that Jack's

schedule had back-to-back meetings this day. He felt sure that he would have some time about 3PM. So we agreed to meet at his office about that time. He was not there when I arrived. No one knew of his whereabouts. It appeared that he might have been in a meeting that ran over. I waited as long as I could.

As I began to walk away, I said “Father, I really don’t want to leave without having visited with him.” It was so very important to me; I had not seen him in quite some time. But I was willing to accept the hand of God in this case. I went to the elevator.

The Lord said “go upstairs, to the 5th floor” I thought I was being directed to stop by to see one other person before I left. So I went up. This floor was newly remodeled I didn’t know where this other person’s office was. The Lord, directed me to walk the corridor; around the outer perimeter of the building. I did; not sure where I would find her office. As I walked, the corridor lead to a portion of the building that had not been populated as yet so the lights were a bit dim in that section. As I approached a corner of the building where the corridor would turn left. The door to a conference room opened (the timing was impeccable) there, right in front of me stood Jack. Not in a million years could I have coordinated that series of events. God honored a desire so seemingly small and insignificant. This was absolutely amazing to me; it was more than I could phantom.

Summary - Let our view of God not be so narrow as to look only for His miracles. Let us look daily for God’s Hand in providence. If you look, believing, you will see Him. It gives Him great glory to show how omnipotent He is.

This whole sermon referenced above (and much more) can be found online at www.AudioSermon.com, you’ll want to look up works by Charles H. Spurgeon.

JoAnn C. White, sMHG

SUMMARY



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While violations of civil, federal, natural or physical laws (to name a few) have repercussions primarily in the physical realm or in this universe; violations of spiritual laws have far-reaching and eternal, repercussions in both the spiritual and physical realms of existence.



The Leadership Corner –Leadership Living, Inc

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Other Gods

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A Journey to Intimacy

Let our view of God not be so narrow as to look only for His miracles. Let us look daily for God’s Hand in providence. If you look, believing, you will see Him. It gives Him great glory to show how omnipotent He is.



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