

WHAT WE BELIEVE – God is with us

Romans 8:18-39

Have you ever asked the question, *“Where are you God?”*

Where are you God when...

- A young Ukrainian woman is killed on a subway for no reason at all?
- A religious/political figure is assassinated for exercising his freedom of speech?
- Planes are flown into buildings in an act of terror on Sept. 11, 2001?
- Cancer, that was thought to be contained & removed, has metastasized?
- An email goes out saying that a church must let go of a beloved pastor?

Where is God when it feels like He isn't there, or He doesn't seem to care?

What I have experienced in my own life, and throughout my 22 years of pastoral ministry, is that when questions like these get raised it is often not God's presence, but His actions that are truly what's in question!

- God, if you are here... why didn't you do this, or that?
- God, if you are here, & you love us... why didn't you intervene?
- God, if you are here, & you are all-powerful... why couldn't you have...?
- God, if you are here... how could you let this happen?

The problem with these questions is that we presuppose that we know best what God should be doing in His position! It assumes that God should accommodate Himself to what we desire! But He is God, not us!

Does God hate senseless killing? Absolutely... He hates sin! But why would we assume that God must prevent all senseless taking of life?

Does God heal? Does He work miracles? Absolutely... But why would we expect Him to do that in every case & situation?

Does God love His Church, and does He provide for all their needs? Absolutely... But how He does that doesn't have to align with what we think!

The question *“Where are you God?”* is really more about, *“God, why aren't you doing what I think you should do, according to my own understanding?”*

God is with us... God is at work... God is good... God is loving... God is all-powerful... even when the things of this fallen world don't make sense to us!

How do we know?

- 1) Because we can trust His Word! It speaks truth!

Isaiah 41:10 – *“So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.”*

Psalms 23:4 – *“Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.”*

Romans 8:28 – *“And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to purpose.”*

But what if we can't see the evidence of these truths in our immediate context?

2) Look to Jesus, He makes the love, power, & presence of God visible!

“What shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare His own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?” **Vs. 31-32**

When we see the death of the innocent & question God... We ought to look to the death of God's own innocent Son. This is the reason why he came!

When we see the evil that resides within a human being who chooses to assassinate a religious/political figure who was advocating for freedom... We ought to look to what was done to Jesus who brought true freedom!

When we see & experience what cancer (other diseases) cause to our/loved one's body... We ought to look to Jesus and what He suffered in the flesh, in order to make the eternal healing of body & soul a reality for all of us!

When we feel like God has not been there... Look to Jesus & see what His eternal presence means for us... both here & now, & for all eternity!

“What/who can separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword... or _____?”

“No, in all things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.”

Footprints in the sand – *“My precious child, I love you and will never leave you. Never, ever, during your trials and testings. When you saw only one set of footprints, it was then that I carried you.”*

We are limited when all we can see is from a human perspective, but God gives us a glimpse of His ever-present, loving care in Jesus... Immanuel!

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