

Sermon Outline for FBC April 28th, 2019

“Does God Really Care?”

Good morning!

Today my message is entitled “Does God Really Care?”

This past two weeks I have had many discussions with people who have asked this question. They are wondering with all that is happening in our world, does God really care. It appears to them that God has chosen to ignore the world and let it go on its way to destruction.

They see people who have or are now suffering from health crisis, family disintegration, political and social decline, moral decay and violence running rampant. Is it hard to wonder where is God in all of this. Does God care?

I look back into the stories of the Israelite people found in the Old Testament section of our Bibles, and I see the same situation over and over again. God’s people being looked after in their weakness, given a light to follow in the darkness and protected from their enemies. Yet, they wander away from God’s presence and try to go their own way and it fails. Their lives become unbearable and they cry out to God for help, for salvation.

What does God do? He hears them and rescues His people. God cares so much for us that He allows us to try our own way and then comes to us in our lost and frenzied life and redeems us. God cares!

Look around at our world! What we see is a terrible mess. Mankind has wandered away from all the good that God has provided. We have taken control of this planet and we are destroying it and ourselves. Why has God not stepped in to stop us and destroy us? Because God cares and He wants us to choose to come back to Him.

In preparation for this morning’s message, I asked a few people to share with me a verse or passage that told them God cares. I want to share two of the responses I received, as they really do help us to see God’s perspective on this matter.

First, two passages that speak to this person of the way God should handle us but chooses to give us a way to come back to Him.

Nahum 1: 2-3 NIV

*2 The Lord is a jealous and avenging God;
the Lord takes vengeance and is filled with wrath.*

*The Lord takes vengeance on his foes
and vents his wrath against his enemies.*

*3 The Lord is slow to anger but great in power;
the Lord will not leave the guilty unpunished.*

*His way is in the whirlwind and the storm,
and clouds are the dust of his feet.*

Ezekiel 18: 23 NIV

23 Do I take any pleasure in the death of the wicked? declares the Sovereign Lord. Rather, am I not pleased when they turn from their ways and live?

“How does this show God cares? He has taken the time to warn sinners to flee the wrath to come. He doesn't have to, and He doesn't have to give us time to respond, but God in His mercy has made provision for all who will come to be cleansed of their sin and enter in to a blessed eternal life through the cross of Jesus. He has also warned us of His anger if we don't. We cannot plead ignorance.” ¹

A.W. Tozer said: “God never changes moods or cools off in His affections or loses enthusiasm. His attitude toward sin is now the same as it was when He drove out the sinful man from the eastward garden, and His attitude toward the sinner the same as when He stretched forth His hands and cried, “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” ²

The key verse I had for today is:

Zephaniah 3:17 NIV

*The Lord your God is with you,
He is mighty to save.
He will take great delight in you;
he will quiet you with His love,
He will rejoice over you with singing.*

When we chose to follow God, we know He is with us, He takes delight in us, loves us, and He rejoices over us. Now knowing the reality of God's anger at our sinful ways, it makes the fact of His love even more powerful.

Another person shared their favorite verse on God cares:

Psalms 31: 7 NIV

*I will be glad and rejoice in your love,
for you saw my affliction
and knew the anguish of my soul.*

Passion version: “In mercy you have seen my troubles and you have cared for me; even during this crisis in my soul I will be radiant with joy, filled with praise for your love and mercy.”

God always sees us. He knows our hearts, minds and souls. God cares so much for us and wants all of us to safe in His arms.

Here are some of my favorite passages that I go to when I am troubled or having doubt about where God is at that moment.

Ps 46: 1-3 NIV

For the director of music. Of the Sons of Korah.

*1 God is our refuge and strength,
an ever-present help in trouble.
2 Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way
and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea,
3 though its waters roar and foam*

¹ Quote from Gary Smith by email on April 25, 2019

² A.W. Tozer, Pg. 18

and the mountains quake with their surging.

What a great reminder when all the earthquakes, volcanos and hurricanes are so rampant.

Psalm 117 NIV Two verses make up this chapter in Psalms and cover it all.

*1 Praise the Lord, all you nations;
extol him, all you peoples.
2 For great is his love toward us,
and the faithfulness of the Lord endures forever.
Praise the Lord.*

God's love endures forever! We recently looked at the idea of eternity and what it would be like to be with God forever. We can chose to be there, right beside God – what a wonderful opportunity!

This next passage was one of the first ones I was given by God to help me understand His guiding hand in my life. It is a well-known chapter of Psalms and used in many times of grief and loss.

Psalm 23 NIV

A psalm of David.

*1 The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not be in want.
2 He makes me lie down in green pastures,
he leads me beside quiet waters,
3 he restores my soul.
He guides me in paths of righteousness
for his name's sake.
4 Even though I walk
through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil,
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff,
they comfort me.
5 You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies.
You anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.
6 Surely goodness and love will follow me
all the days of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of the Lord
forever.*

Then we have the comparison stated in

Ephesians 5: 29, 30 NIV

*29 After all, no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church -
30 for we are members of His body.*

We are God's family when we chose to take our place at God's table.

1 Peter 5: 7 NIV Peter tells us God cares.

“Cast all your anxiety on Him because He cares for you.”

Finally, this passage is the one which shows the God that we trust, our protector and provider, the one who never leaves nor forsakes us.

Psalm 121

- 1 I lift up my eyes to the hills—
where does my help come from?*
- 2 My help comes from the Lord,
the Maker of heaven and earth.*
- 3 He will not let your foot slip—
he who watches over you will not slumber;*
- 4 indeed, he who watches over Israel
will neither slumber nor sleep.*
- 5 The Lord watches over you—
the Lord is your shade at your right hand;*
- 6 the sun will not harm you by day,
nor the moon by night.*
- 7 The Lord will keep you from all harm—
he will watch over your life;*
- 8 the Lord will watch over your coming and going
both now and forevermore.*

Does God Really Care? Absolutely!

God cares so much for each of us that He came to earth in human form, to suffer just as we do, to teach us His love and to show us how to find our way back to His eternal presence. God died on that cross for our sins, not His. God rose from the grave to show us that we too can rise out of our spiritual death (separation from God) and be with God for all time.

God Cares!

Let's pray!

Bibliography:

The Experiencing God Study Bible (Broadman & Holman Publishers, Nashville, Tennessee, 1994)

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The Holy Bible, authorized King James Version (World Bible Publishers, USA)

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A.W. Tozer, A Treasury of A.W. Tozer (Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, 1980) as quoted in Nelson’s Book of Stories, Illustrations & Quotes, Pg. 357.
