

Sermon Outline for FBC June 23, 2019

“When God Doesn’t Make Sense!”

Today my message is entitled “When God Doesn’t Make Sense!”

When we are living for God and everything goes wrong, it doesn’t make sense. Why isn’t God blessing us? What are we to do? We will look at Scriptures that voice these questions and ones that give us God’s answers. The most important step is to trust God to show us His answers in His time.

I would like to thank Ian for the title and theme and Dr. James Dobson for his first chapter of research on this topic in his book by the same title as my message.¹

We will start in the Psalms where these musings are spoken of repeatedly. So many questions of “why God?” are asked and so many ways to handle the question.

We look at Psalm 77, where the Psalmist starts with searching for and questioning God.

Psalm 77: 7-8 NIV

7 “Will the Lord reject forever?

Will he never show his favor again?

8 Has his unfailing love vanished forever?

Has his promise failed for all time?

Then he decides to trust and remember what God has done before as his reassurance that God will come through again.

Psalm 77: 11-13 NIV

11 I will remember the deeds of the Lord, yes, I will remember your miracles of long ago.

12 I will meditate on all your works and consider your mighty deeds.

13 Your ways, O God, are holy. What God is so great as our God?

¹ Dr. James Dobson, Pgs. 3-69

Isaiah the prophet spoke of God's methods in dealing with the people's questions and doubt. He quotes God's own explanation of why we do not understand all that happens in life.

Isaiah 55: 8-9 NIV

*8 "For my thoughts are not your thoughts,
neither are your ways my ways,"
declares the Lord.*

*9 "As the heavens are higher than the earth,
so are my ways higher than your ways
and my thoughts than your thoughts.*

The rest of this chapter gives us a favorite song we sing today and the reassurance that God is everlasting, so take time to read it.

The writer of Hebrews reminds us of what we need to do just like those who came before us so long ago.

Hebrews 11:1-2 NIV

*1 Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.
2 This is what the ancients were commended for.*

Peter writes many encouraging words to the early Christians. Here is a man who swung back and forth in his faith while Christ was crucified and then arose to beat death. After Pentecost, Peter was a rock for God and encouraged all the Christians to be excited for trials because they bring us closer to God.

1 Peter 4: 12-13 NIV

12 Dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering, as though something strange were happening to you.

13 But rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed.

The writer of Hebrews continues in chapter 11 with encouragement to us to do just like the Psalmist did that we read earlier – remember what other's have done before and trust God to come through again.

Hebrews 11: 6-10 NIV

6 And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.

7 By faith Noah, when warned about things not yet seen, in holy fear built an ark to save his family. By his faith he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness that comes by faith.

8 By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going.

9 By faith he made his home in the promised land like a stranger in a foreign country; he lived in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise.

10 For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God.

No searching on why God does not make sense can leave out the man of God – Job. This man was doing everything right for God and yet everything was taken away from him and he was tortured almost to death. Still, Job’s faith made him take a stand and voice a famous quote.

Job 1: 20-22 NIV

20 At this, Job got up and tore his robe and shaved his head. Then he fell to the ground in worship

21 and said: “Naked I came from my mother’s womb, and naked I will depart.

*The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away;
may the name of the Lord be praised.”*

22 In all this, Job did not sin by charging God with wrongdoing.

Job did not charge God with wrongdoing! People too often want to blame God for all the bad in the world. If not that, then they charge God for not stopping all the bad in the world. After seeing the Scriptures we just discussed, we need to trust that God is in control and realize that our faith is what will get us through.

Peter gives us another perspective to consider in this query.

1 Peter 4: 17-19 NIV

17 For it is time for judgment to begin with the family of God; and if it begins with us, what will the outcome be for those who do not obey the gospel of God?

18 And, “If it is hard for the righteous to be saved, what will become of the ungodly and the sinner?”

19 So then, those who suffer according to God’s will should commit themselves to their faithful Creator and continue to do good.

Back to Job and another comment he makes about staying true to God in the middle of adversity.

Job 23: 10-12 NIV

10 But he knows the way that I take;

when he has tested me, I will come forth as gold.

11 My feet have closely followed his steps;

I have kept to his way without turning aside.

12 I have not departed from the commands of his lips;

I have treasured the words of his mouth more than my daily bread.

In Dr. Dobson's book, he tells the story of a vine and an oak tree. The vine climbs the oak tree to wind around and kill the tree. When you cut the vine off at the bottom, the rest withers and dies and falls away. Then Dr. Dobson states: "Christians who lose God during a period of spiritual confusion are like the vine that has been cutoff from its source. They are deprived of nurture and strength. They seem to cope at first, but the concealed wound is mortal. They begin to wither in the heat of the sun. they usually drop out of church and quit reading the Bible and praying." ²

The Bible is full of stories of men and women who go through troubles and rely on God to get them through. Here is what Jesus says to us about life.

John 15: 5-8 NIV

5 "I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.

6 If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned.

7 If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given to you.

8 This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.

When we are living for God and everything goes wrong, it doesn't make sense. God will bless us; we just have to trust God's process. We need to never give up, God has a plan and we will come to know it eventually. The most important step is to trust God to show us His answers in His time. For every plant to grow strong, there is a time of pruning and trimming. Trust God!

² Dr. James Dobson, Pgs. 19, 20

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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Dr. James Dobson, When God Doesn't Make Sense (Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., Wheaton Illinois, 1993)
