

Sermon Summary – July 28, 2024



The Bible Doesn't Say That "Everything Happens for a Reason." "God Works in Mysterious Ways."

We use these phrases to comfort the hurting or in response to inexplicable circumstances. Although they summarize biblical truth, they aren't Bible verses and are often misunderstood and misused.

Does Everything Happens for a (Good) Reason?

Everything happens for a reason doesn't mean that God **CAUSES** everything to happen. God is in control of everything that happens (Isaiah 45:7) but doesn't cause any evil or sin (James 1:13-15). To some people this distinction isn't a big difference, but it really is. The causes of sin, evil, and tragedy are sinners, Satan, and the effects of the consequences of sin. However, God didn't simply create the universe, curse it because of Adam's sin, and then walk away and watch. At times, **God does intervene**. All the miracles in the Bible are times when God intervened. Also, **God can use evil to bring about good** (Gen 50:19,20). God doesn't need evil to bring about good. He can accomplish good without sin. But since God doesn't always intervene, and there is no promise from God that everything that's ever happened to everyone happened to bring about good, it's possible some things don't happen for a (good) reason. God can use anything to fulfill His plan, but does he use *everything*?

Romans 8:28

The context. In Romans 8 Paul teaches about the place of the Holy Spirit in our lives compared to the law which he covered in chapter 7. Verses 18-39 (1) describe the incomparable glory of our eternal future compared to our present sufferings, (2) the sovereign plan of God to glorify us and (3) the eternal security we have in the love of Christ. *The point.* While we suffer in this world and even need the Holy Spirit's help to pray (v.26,27), God has a salvation plan that began with His foreknowledge and will end with us being glorified (conformed to Jesus's image). So, the verse promises God *in all things* (particularly suffering) works for the believer to make sure he/she is one day conformed to the image of Jesus. Notice this promise isn't made to unbelievers.

God Works in Mysterious Ways?

The fact we don't know when, why, or how God intervenes or uses evil to bring about good means we are usually in the dark as to what God is up to. People question why didn't God intervene for them or their loved one? God tells us in Isaiah 55:8-9 that His thoughts and ways aren't like ours. God taught Job that Job didn't understand how nature works so how could Job understand how God runs the universe. God certainly acts in ways we don't understand, are unexpected, and can't be explained. He chooses when to intervene, and what evil circumstances to use to bring about good. We will never understand how God's sovereignty and our free will work together. God doesn't tell us to figure out His ways, He tells us to trust Him.