



WHERE IS GOD??? WHY????

Years ago while officiating my older sister Margaret's funeral it was necessary to address two questions. To a church and community that had known our family all our lives and in the midst of a tragic event, I was required to give answers.

I had to answer:

1. "Where was God when Margaret was being beaten to death?"
2. "Why do these things happen to Believers?"

It took awhile for me to settle questions screaming in my own heart... but over the years, I am more certain than ever of what God spoke to me and our family during those days of immense tragedy and darkness.

1. WHERE WAS GOD?

I spoke at the funeral "that God was right there with every cruel blow of fists and feet" as my Sister was being brutally beaten to death.

2. WHY DO THESE THINGS HAPPEN TO US?

Once again, my answer: "because we live in this world."

The reason I have related this very private, personal example is because August 29th and September 24th, 2005 brought these same questions to the lives of millions with intensity.

WHERE IS GOD? and WHY DO THINGS LIKE THIS HAPPEN?

Victims of twin hurricanes Katrina and Rita have raised these questions worldwide: Where is God and Why?

As the death toll has surpassed one thousand, as children with parents and other family members are being united, as hearts dealing with death are broken, as victims of devastated homes and personal property are left wondering about tomorrow, as damaged property and cleanup is estimated over 150 billion dollars, as affects of the storms are erratically fluctuating oil/gasoline prices, building supplies, etc..... the questions present themselves again and again" WHERE IS GOD and WHY?

NO, THIS IS NOT GOD'S JUDGMENT! So many are taking this view... trying to explain what we can't comprehend with our physical senses.

SCIENTISTS ARE BAFFLED...

.....over the two category 5 hurricanes in one month. They rationalize.... Is it Global Warming? Is it simply cyclical changes in ocean temperatures? Is it "loop-

current" (the 100 mile swaths of 80 degree plus water between the mouth of the Mississippi and Florida Keys)? Is it the beginning of the Ice Age? Is it human activity that has caused release of carbon dioxide and other gases related to industrial activity that traps the sun's heat raising earth's temperature?

One article in the Los Angeles Times states: "... unanswered are the questions... the bottom line is, NO ONE knows..."

Al- Qaeda says...

.... it's God's judgment on America because of our aggression on what they call a "holy war."

I find that The Church also seems to be as baffled as the scientists.... Or at least some voices that "seem" to think they are speaking for The Church. More than one "voice" has said: "America, get ready.... God's judgment has begun...."

Would it at least be a clue for us to realize that a healthy voice from the Church would NOT be saying the same that the murderous Al-Qaeda is saying..... !!!?

I've talked to many believers via phone or while in pulpits across North America since these powerful storms have hit. Some quote "prophets" as saying, "God is mad at America and pouring out His judgment on us....."

I can not agree with this!

Why would God choose an area filled with many poor people, elderly or those living far below poverty level to "beat up on" because He's mad at us?

Some "prophesy" ...

..... that it's BECAUSE the Jews were forced from their homes along the Mediterranean shore in Gaza. That America treated Israel wrongly when God's land was divided and thereby brought upon OUR land divine judgment... quoting: "those who bless Israel will be blessed...those who curse Israel shall be cursed..."

Can we agree with this? AS a nation we HAVE NOT cursed Israel. Again, God didn't choose some unsuspecting vulnerable population to release rare beasts upon to say, "Aha, now I guess you'll be sorry!"

Some say.....

... that this is God's judgment against one of the most sinful cities in our land... so God got tired of the sin and debauchery and "made His statement."

How can this be a sane voice to represent the Church?

First: there are many other nations and cities with sin issues as great as those we see expressed in the U.S.A...

Second: Why would God "pick on" the underprivileged, impoverished, the working families, those of means, the righteous and unrighteous because He was "tired of sin?" Why would He choose such a diverse population and leave almost unscathed the "French Quarter" where their claim to fame is not just their rich culture, but also fortune telling, tarot cards, prostitution, etc. In fact, in the aftermath of Katrina – with much concern and effort for the care and protection of people's lives – there were those who "rode out" the storm practicing voodoo, reading fortunes, and using tarot cards in the French Quarter...

Let's be serious. Does this sound like our God? Is this the God we are representing and trying to "win others to"?

Was God also mad at China in their recent storms? Is He angry at Japan, Peru, Pakistan, so He sent earthquakes? Did He choose to damage little-known villages and capital cities to say, "You don't matter!" "I'm God and I'm bigger than you!" And leave thousands dead and hurting as homes and buildings collapsed around them?

Did He send intense rainstorms triggering landslides burying hundreds in Central America (Guatemala, San Salvador, Colombia)? As rivers are pushed over their banks flooding communities and unleashing deadly mudslides..... is this God's activity... is this His pastime?" Is the urgent need of food in Zimbabwe for a minimum of 4 million people (estimated by UN agencies) God's way of saying "I love you, so I've caused your harvests to fail"?

There are dozens of other places with recent destructive events we could cite.

THIS ISN'T MY GOD! This is not the FATHER I joyfully serve. This is not the character of Godhead. This is not how God is dealing with us individually, as nations, or as His Church during THIS HOUR.

GOD IS drawing us to Himself with mercy. We have NOT tasted of God's judgment. God doesn't have to use some cheap symbolism we've created and given as "interpretation" as to the "ways and whys" of storms and cataclysmic events that mark nations with destruction.

TRYING TO COINCIDE events of Israel with devastating storms is a "stretch" to say the least!

I've been grieved as I listen to ministers trying to explain what is so hard to comprehend in the face of human suffering. Our SOUND is so mixed and laced with human ideologies and philosophies.

Where is the SOUND voice? Where is the SANE voice? Where is the SAFE voice?

Some say....

....."I don't know what to tell my congregational members...." "Is this God or ????"

THE SANE VOICE will always be found in scripture. Romans 8:19-23 tells us the "whole creation and ourselves also are waiting and longing to be released from sin's weight." Creation is groaning and moaning in pains of labor and so are we. Sin's weight is suffocating. The scripture continues, "knowing there are blissful things to come when God's Church is Revealed." "... when resurrection LIFE is shown forth..." (2 Cor. 4:10).

For years, as Church people, we've been curious as to what God would speak to us through prophecy. Of course, our stance has been one of three things:

1. Receive prophecy but with no intent for it to impact our life.
2. Receive it to cover our insecure areas. Wanting to hear from God time and time again that, "he loves us", "You're special," "I care for you," "Come to Daddy God and let me stroke you," etc., etc.... We've kept prophecy impotent. Only accepting what would "tell us again how special we are." ...but not allowing Holy Spirit to work within to bring us to places of growth.... Places that we have some things "nailed down." Today's Believers need to have the fact secure that God "loves us" and "we're special."

Instead, we've kept our insecurities and used "personal prophecies" to speak to those areas but not necessarily allow growth or maturing. We've just wanted someone to prophesy away our insecurities and say, "I'm Okay, You're Okay.".... prophesy to help me "feel good."

3. There have been those who hunger for higher and allow the prophetic to speak of "kingdom," of "God's character," and our place of strength as His Sons and Daughters with knowledge of the Father's Business. People who sense what is vital – recognizing the highest and the best... not stumbling...abounding and filled with fruits of righteousness... that God may be both manifested and recognized (Philippians 1:10). Growing and being able to "stand firmly therefore..." having Truth and Integrity....girded with strength... strong feet shod to step forward... standing in position even with threat of bodily harm.... Steady, strong, established... making spiritual progress even in our places of trouble or responsibility (Ephesians 6, Habakkuk 3).

People who are not offended towards God or man no matter the circumstances," (Luke 7:23 Amplified). For me to live is Christ... and that Christ would be glorified and magnified in this body of mine. Christ would be boldly exalted in my person whether through my life or my death... Phil. 1:2.

But..... but.... I thought nothing like this ever happened to God's people.....

FAITH doesn't PREVENT EVERYTHING! But
FAITH does carry us through EVERYTHING!

"In this world you will have trouble (trials, distress, and frustration); but be of good cheer, (take courage, be comforted, confident, and bold).... for I have overcome (conquered, prevailed with victory) this world." John 16:33 Amplified

"Man is born few days full of trouble (commotion, restlessness, disquiet, crashing thunder, violet emotion, quake, quiver, shaking)" Job 14: 1

"But man is born to trouble.... (worry, misery, pain, sorrow, wearisome, wickedness)" Job 5: 7

"....we are troubled (crowded, afflicted, suffer) on every side..." 2 Corinthians 4:8

"....there will be earthquakes in various places; famines and calamities; intolerable anguish and sufferings – the first of the birth pangs." Mark 13:8

"... we shall suffer tribulation..." I Thessalonians 3: 4

"....the rain falls upon the upright and the wrongdoers alike." Matthew 5: 45

God observes the righteous and would have saved Sodom and Gomorrah in spite of their sin being exceedingly grievous for only the presence of 10 righteous. (Genesis 18: 26-32).

HEAR THIS: "God is my strength in times of trouble" (tightness, adversity, affliction, anguish, distress) Psalm 37:39

"God is our refuge and strength; a very present and well proved help in trouble." Psalm 46

".... Call upon Me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble..." Psalm 91: 15

"Though I walk in the midst of trouble... You will stretch forth Your hand...." Psalm 138:7

"O Lord... every morning You are my salvation in the time of trouble." Isaiah 33:2

God's heart is to raise up not tear down. It is the enemy who comes "to kill, steal, and destroy." John 10: 10

WHEN WILL THE CHURCH have a healthy concept of God's character and His dealings and His intentions?

I believe the prophetic is spoken to READY THE CHURCH! "....New things I now declare; before they spring forth I tell you of them." Isa. 42:9

The prophetic is the Voice within the Church that prepares Her for more than only distributing humanitarian acts (even though these should NOT be left undone). The Church has a call to be higher than humanitarian organizations. Oh, that we would rise to a higher level than our circumstances.... not allowing our "opinions" to be formed by newspaper headlines... but we let the Prophetic have it's perfect work. To allow the prophetic to prepare the Church BEFORE we see things happen! We're not to be the ones "surprised" but "prepared!"

Where is the tribe of Issachar?

Men who had understanding and knew the times but ALSO KNEW WHAT ISRAEL (the Church) was to do..." I Chronicles 12:32

THE VOICE OF THE CHURCH is to be higher than a category 5 hurricane! We're not to be overwhelmed at circumstances that go beyond our human comprehension. There is a Greater that we say, "Is in control!" Do we believe that?

Anyone who stands in a room full of questions with real and right answers will be the Leader. Oh, God, let the Church hear that voice and call us forth!

God is not judging but He's come to raise up the Greater – a Greater Voice than circumstances of loss and disaster! A Greater Voice that speaks to nations in crisis a Truth that brings encouragement, hope, and comfort.

The Church is here as SALT. If the salt has lost it's characteristics of preserving, purifying, seasoning, creating thirst, it is to be considered of no effect.... Unintelligent, morose.... dull

We're in the world to hold the world's attention by God's Glory (HIS character) upon and thru us! speaking spiritual wisdom instead of philosophies or intellectualism.

Natural disasters can make our hearts tender again. Can renew our impetus to advance "in spite of." It can cause us to reconnoiter, re-evaluate, "be judged" ("... the time has arrived for judgment to begin with the house of God...").

Judgment in I Peter 4:17 means to make some decisions – sense what is vital – turn our focus there!

It's to cry out, "make us bolder, reaffirm, freshen our confidence, purify our motives, let me not be offended by circumstance." Learning to humble ourselves, stripped from pride and arrogance... be well-balanced, temperate, sober-minded, vigilant, cautious, be firm in faith. Let God's strength establish and settle us. Philippians 1:12 – 14; I Peter 5.

LET US LEARN THE DIFFERENCE in "blessing." Is it merely goods, things, etc? "I'm blessed" goes beyond possessions and bank balances.

America has been raised up by God for a number of ministries to the World. One Ministry from this Christian nation is to be a bread-basket to other Nations. The enemy tries to steal and deplete America's purpose established by God to bless and lift up others.

The enemy (the one who kills, steals, and destroys) has tried to steal America's SEED. The seed that is to enlarge and keep prospering. Through disasters, the enemy tries to enhance hurt and suffering as a result, depleting America's resources that are to bless, establish, feed, nurture, etc.

The Church must find her Voice.... The Voice of Truth!"

The trumpet that gives the clear, distinct sound.
The Voice that speaks of a God who blesses and restores.
He heals no matter what happens (that is devastating) we know GOD REDEEMS!

AT LEAST THESE TWO THINGS hold us steady in times of Crisis:

1. Knowing God's character. As already stated, it is to heal, restore, establish, redeem, etc.
2. Know we live in this world. In the world we will contend with natural circumstances.

REMEMBER: "Our FAITH doesn't prevent everything... it carries us THROUGH EVERYTHING!!!"

If we truly KNOW GOD'S CHARACTER...
..... we will not ask, "Where is God?" We will KNOW! He is beside us.... Even when our paths may contain devastation....

We'll never have to ask, "Why do these things happen?" WE KNOW! It is because: we live in this world....there will be things to contend with... and rain falls on the just and unjust.

SO WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

We allow our hearts to be searched, perspectives changed, purging and purifying to take place in our relationship (daily walk) with God.

Yes, we will groan.... cry out... but the "sufferings of this present time are not worth being compared with the GLORY (God's character) that is about to be revealed to us and in us and for us and conferred on us!" Romans 8: 18

WE'RE GOING THROUGH PAINS of labor. But there are "blissful times to come" (Romans 8:23 Amplified).

REDEMPTION!
ADOPTION!
THE REVEALING OF GOD'S CHURCH!

The One He has called forth! The One that has learned Truth and His character. The One speaking spiritual wisdom, living by God's purpose, Sons with knowledge. Fathers, Mothers in the household birthing, speaking God's desire and intentions.

"Who shall separate us from Christ's love? Shall suffering, afflictions, tribulations, calamity, distress, persecution, hunger, destitution, peril, or even death itself?"

YET AMID ALL THESE THINGS we are more than conquerors....

Victorious...blessed....through HIM WHO LOVES US! Romans 8: 35-39



Joyfully His,
Dr. Lois

NEXT JOYFULLY HIS: "GOD'S PROMISED ABUNDANCE"