

THE QUESTION THAT NEVER GOES AWAY

AND THE ANSWER THAT NEVER CHANGES

Dear Friend:

As I write this, many Floridians and Cubans woke up this morning to a life that has been changed forever. They woke up to the aftermath of hurricane Ian. For millions of Floridians this is day one, for others this is day three or four of the hurricanes aftermath. Some of you reading this spend time in the cities of Ft. Meyers, Punta Gorda, Sarasota, and as far inland as Orlando. Like me, you have your favorite beaches, restaurants, and shops in those cities. The beaches have been altered and some shops may never rebuild.

The question that never goes away is this: "Why?". Why is there so much suffering in the world? Why does God let bad things happen to good people? Why do hurricanes happen, why did COVID happen, and perhaps worst of all, why do the most innocent of all...school-age children get killed in school shootings? The question that never goes away is, why. You may not like my answer but it's the answer that never changes and it's the only answer I can find in the bible: God is sovereign and humans have freewill.

God is sovereign: he knows all, sees all, and will bring justice to all. Asking God the why question is as old as the Bible. Hurricanes, tornadoes, and earthquakes happen. I will never forget the devastation I saw in Haiti after the 2010 earthquake where 220,000 people died. Why? I can only answer the question with: God is sovereign. Natural disasters happen, people die but God is still in control and there is a reason behind all this, a reason that I believe we will know when we get to heaven.

How do we cope with human tragedy? 9-11, Sandy Hook, and a dozen school shootings? I like the way Charles Chaput, former Archbishop of Philadelphia put it: "God is good, but we human beings are free, and being free, we help fashion the nature of our world with choices we make...and therefore we are responsible for both the beauty and the suffering we make". In other words, the answer that never changes is: humans have freewill and in that freewill they may choose to do evil. Hurricanes, tornadoes, and senseless killing will continue and the question of why will come up each time. I long for the day when God will make all things new, and I think you do too!

In Christ's Love,

*Pastor Mike*

Prayer Requests: Hurricane Victims, Faye Cooper (Assisted Living), Melvin Burdette (shut-in)