

The Vincennes Voice

“...The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight...” (Matt. 3:3)

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LIFE'S HARDEST QUESTION

Larry R. Ping II

It is the age-old question that perhaps has no one, concrete answer. It is the query of the unfaithful ones who seem to attribute the suffering, anguish, and distress of the innocent to the hands of a “loving” God who would not allow such. *Why do good people have bad things happen to them, and bad people have good things happen to them?* Asaph openly asked these kinds of questions (Psa. 73) as did Job (Job 21; Job 24). While we may not be able to fully answer this question, we must understand innocent people do suffer at times. Consider these Bible examples of such activity.

1) JEPHTHATH'S DAUGHTER. Take the time to read Jdg. 11:1-39. Here you see Jephthah vowing to give the life of the first thing through his door. It just so happened his daughter was that one. Had she done any evil that would account for her soon to be suffering? It does not appear so, even though she was innocent and free of charge!

2) JOB. Here is a man by God's own personal testimony described as “*perfect and upright*” (Job 1:8). Yet, he endured the loss of herds, servants, and his children (Job 1:1-19). Later, he endured boils from “*the sole of his foot unto his crown*” (Job 2:7). As bad, his wife told him to “*curse God and die*” (Job 2:9). Does it appear that Job was reaping what he had sown, as his friends fiercely told him (Job 4:8; Gal. 6:7-8)? Not so.

3) JESUS. Our Savior suffered tremendously through no fault of His own. The Record says, “*For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously*” (I Pet. 2:21-23).

It does not take long to figure out that innocent people suffer. Yes, even faithful

people of God suffer. They suffer at the hands of evil men doing evil things (I Pet. 4:15-16). Because of no fault of their own, they experience difficulties. In the case of Job, it was a direct result of Satan himself (Job 1:12; Job 2:7).

Suffering is a problem some cannot seem to cope with. They give up on God and do not remain faithful (Rev. 2:10). Remember, “*For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us*” (Rom. 8:18). How about it? Will you be able to stay strong when the tough times come? Will you stay “*steadfast*” and “*unmoveable*” in hard times (I Cor. 15:58)?

Faithful people of God must always remember, “*And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose*” (Rom. 8:28). As such, may we be “*patient in tribulation*” (Rom. 12:12).

IMPEDIMENTS TO BEING PERFECT & COMPLETE

Larry R. Ping II

To be Biblically perfect is to be “mature; aged; complete.” The Bible reports Noah was perfect (Gen. 6:9), as it says of Job (Job 1:1). They were not sinless, but they were “complete.” They had matured and grown as children of God. Do you realize there are those who have been Christians for years, or decades, but yet are “spiritually immature?” Why would this be the case? Consider these reasons.

1) THEY HAVE NOT STUDIED THE BIBLE. Part of the growing process is securing Bible knowledge (II Pet. 1:5). Getting hold of such knowledge comes with diligent study. Paul wrote, “*Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth*” (II Tim. 2:15). It should be a daily activity (Acts 17:11). The absence of study and the subsequent knowledge brings destruction (Hos. 4:6). It is as simple as this, “no” study

equals “no” growth. Are you growing (II Pet. 3:18)?

2) THEY ARE NOT WHOLLY GIVEN TO GOD’S WILL.

To “*stand perfect and complete,*” one must be “*in all the will of God*” (Col. 4:12). Did you catch that little word all? Until one fully takes his own will out and replaces it with God’s, maturing and aging will not take place. The Lord commanded, “*If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me*” (Matt. 16:24). We must give ourselves first to God and Christ (II Cor. 8:5). Are you fully given to God?

3) THEY DO NOT EXERCISE SPIRITUALLY.

Some focus too much on bodily exercise, which the Bible accurately says “*profiteth little*” (I Tim. 4:8). The old adage is true: “Use it or lose it!” We need to exercise our knowledge so that we may be able to “*discern both good and evil*” (Heb. 5:14). Use your growing knowledge to

teach others the Gospel plan of salvation, to teach new converts the first principles, and to instruct others how to teach. So how are you exercising?

4) THEY ARE HUNGERING AND THIRSTING FOR SPIRITUAL JUNK FOOD.

During the mountain sermon, Jesus uttered, “*Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled*” (Matt. 5:6). Timothy was told to be “*nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine*” (I Tim. 4:6). Unfortunately for a certain population of the Lord’s people, they are feasting on spiritual junk food, and thereby are not perfected. These folks have failed to heed Paul’s warning, “*Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ*” (Col. 2:8).

May we each be determined to stand perfect and complete in God and His Divine Word!

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MEETING TIMES (EST)

SUNDAY

Bible Study – 10:00 am

Worship – 11:00 am & 3:00 pm

WEDNESDAY

Bible Study – 7:00 pm