

Everything Happens for a Reason? It's God's Will and He is in Control?



I would like to discuss the first part of the title where we commonly hear that if something tragic happens or things are not going just right, that it all “happens for a reason.”

There may be some of you who disagree, but I find it an unfortunate choice of words when people try to console themselves when something

disastrous happens in their lives by saying, “Everything happens for a reason.” In your heart of hearts, do you really believe this?

People think everything that happens in their life, down to the minutest details, is all in God's will. They are taught such phrases as "It's God's will," or "Everything happens for a reason," or "God is in control." Such phrases are used as a pain killer, a narcotic, if you will, in order to try and ease the pain of human suffering.

There was an actor whose son was shot and killed and people tried to console him concerning the death of his son. He said, “Some have come to me and said it was God's will. My answer to them is that I choose not to consider God carrying out his will with a bullet to my son's head.”

Seriously think about it. If someone were to harm your child or any of your loved ones, could you honestly say it was “God's will” and that “everything happens for a reason?” And please tell me, what kind of reason would God have? Just about everyone knows there is a reason, but no one can tell what that reason is! It's always a mystery. In the

mean time there are many who go through years of struggle and guilt. They struggle because they just can't comprehend why God would allow such a thing to happen in their life, and have guilt because over a period time they have become angry with God. This has affected many people so extremely that they have walked away from God angry and confused.

The meaning behind "everything happens for a reason," is that God "intends for everything to happen that happens."

Is that really true? If God intends for everything to happen that happens, then why do we see the God of the Bible intervening in people's lives if everything was planned out to the minutest detail? What would be the purpose for the times He has changed His mind?

Furthermore, if God intends for everything to happen that happens, then there is no escaping the fact that this is accusing God of being behind all the evil that takes place in this world.

What we have been taught to believe is Reformed Theology (Calvinism) and not Bible truth. I will give you a few quotes from Reformed Theology:

"God is seen as the great and mighty King who has appointed the course of nature and who directs the course of history even down to its minutest details."

"He also perfectly controls all the depraved and impious affections of the wicked, and turns them as He pleases."

"When we get the larger view we see that even the sinful acts of men have their place in the divine plan."

So when you say, "Everything happens for a reason," or "It's God's will," you are only repeating Reformed Theology and not Bible truth.

You see, there is one element left out. Now we know God created systems that governs the laws of nature and can intervene at any time

(ex. Ex. 14:21-22; Joshua 10:13; Haggai 1:11). When it comes to human beings, the element left out is that God gave us a free will. We can choose good or evil. God does not decide that for us. But those who hold to Reformed Theology, you are holding to a god that is sadistic.

Everything happens for a reason? Then we should not complain when someone does something vicious to us. We should not be upset when we see cruel and vile crimes committed such as abortions, rape of children, murderers murdering people, women forced at gunpoint and repeatedly and brutally raped and other such vile crimes, because according to Reformed Theology (Calvinism), the criminals had no choice! Why? Because the god of Reformed Theology “controls all the depraved and impious affections of the wicked, and turns them as He pleases.” “Everything happens for a reason,” and all is in “God’s will.”

Are you beginning to see the implications of this repeated rhetoric? God does not choose evil to befall you, that is man’s choice.

God is not capable of perpetrating evil. God did not create evil. I know some will immediately point out Isa. 45:7 in the KJB, but look and compare context carefully because it has nothing to do with “moral” evil or sin. but rather with “calamity” or “disaster”.

There is good news! Though people will make wrong or evil choices that affect our lives, we are told,

“And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.” Rom. 8:28 This tells me that God can use circumstances for our own good if we allow him. God can heal physical, emotional, and relational wounds. A classic example of this is seen in the story of Joseph who was sold into slavery by his brothers. (Gen. 37) At the end of that story, God brought healing and reconciliation and much more. What the brothers conceived and imagined to harm Joseph, God was able to use the circumstances in Joseph's life for good. Joseph did not moan, "Oh, well,

this is God's will and everything happens for a reason." What Joseph did see was that God was powerful and loving enough to use his circumstance to bring about good. (Gen. 50:20)

Is God really in Control?

The second point of Reformed Theology (Calvinism) claims that God is in control of everything that goes on in this world. It is really no different from "everything happens for a reason" or "it's God's will." However, this is not the Biblical view.

That 'God is in control,' does not exist anywhere in the scriptures. Throughout scriptures we can observe where God intervenes in the world. (If God were in control, then He would not have to intervene.) The Bible shows that God is selectively involved in the affairs of the world.

I would say that God is in control, but with the clarification that there is nothing beyond His ability to intervene. God has all authority and power and can do whatever He pleases. But it is wrong to say "God is in control" if a person means by that statement that God is controlling every little detail in this world. In that sense, God is not in control. To cause less confusion, we can say, "God is in charge."

If God were in control, Jesus' prayer would be meaningless. Jesus taught the prayer, "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven..." Can we honestly say that God's will is being done today? God's will is that "none should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9), but has everyone come to repentance so they will not perish? There are things happening this very moment that grieves God's heart. Why would God want to control to a point that it grieves His own heart? If God is in control of everything then we cannot be blamed for His sorrows. If He controls everything, we are simply victims, and without reservations, can blame God for making His

life and ours miserable. Full responsibility is placed on God alone, and why not, since we are told God is in control?

Have you ever heard the question, ‘If God is in control, why is there so much suffering in the world?’ The world scoffs at the answers given by those who hold to Reformed Theology (Calvinism), because they have the sense to know it is nonsense. Their answers tend to turn people away from God, not closer to Him. No matter what the answer, there is still human suffering and it shows that God favors one over the other if God were in total control. It also leaves them with only two options:

1. Either God is in control
2. Or He is completely uninvolved

Since it is hard to accept the first option because of all the suffering at the hand of God, they will apt for the second.

If one leans to the first option, he must conclude that God is responsible for all the pain, all the rapes, all the murders, the cause of wars, the cause of all diseases, and so on. This makes God fully responsible because He is said to be “in control.” There is no way around this no matter how one tries to squirm out of the issue. It’s not enough to say, “God knows what is best for us and we must accept it by faith.” This same person will find himself asking the same question when it strikes home.

Since the first option does not satisfy, one must choose the second, which most people have concluded.

Is there a third Option?

Yes. The Biblical view - That God is not in control. Why? Because man has a free will. And that is one of the reasons why there is so much pain and suffering in this world.

If one were to read the Bible carefully, he will find that from the time of Adam, and throughout the whole scriptures, of things that happened that God did not intend to happen, but yet they happened because God has given us a free will. He gives us the ability to make choices which can have a positive or adverse effects on ourselves and our fellow human beings.

God does not have total control, not because He doesn't have the ability or power, but because He chooses not to exert that power in all situations. God can intervene and does influence this world through responses to our prayers, our relationships, and spiritual laws.

Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, among other Biblical characters, understood God was not in control, but they did know God was “in charge” and therefore had no problems approaching God with prayers, tears, requests, and praise.

Living for God and following Christ's example by living righteously will not come easy in this world filled with wickedness. As long as we stay strong through the many trials that life brings us, we can join Paul who said,

"For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Rom. 8:38-39