

Where Is God?

So, how is 2020 going for you so far? Most of us would have to say it has been a pretty tough year with the pandemic and the call to self-quarantine. Beyond the national and world wide problems there are usually personal problems we have to deal with. I don't know about you but we have had our share of those to with four funerals this year. It is a worthy question and let's seek for an answer.

Ironically the question is usually asked with the wrong motives. Instead of seeking God people ask it to either deny His existence or blame Him for current events. If God exist then He would not of allow this to happen or He is not good. Therefore, I either deny His existence or refuse to serve Him. In essence, they are holding God hostage. Either give me what I want or else!

God's existence does not depend on whether we believe in Him or not! Pharaoh refused to acknowledge the God of heaven. "And Pharaoh said, "Who is the LORD, that I should obey His voice to let Israel go? I do not know the LORD, nor will I let Israel go." (Exodus 5:2) Pharaoh's denial of God and unwillingness did not make God disappear. Pharaoh found out who God was in the ten plagues. God could turn water into blood, send locust to consume the crops, over run the land with frogs, turn off the lights as the land was engulfed with darkness, and kill the first born in Egypt. People denying the existence of God does not make it so.

Where is God? Is a good question but let me ask you a question? Where is God in your life? Many today are like the people of Judah during the days of Jeremiah. They knew who God was but they were disobedient, rebellious, idolatrous, immoral, and yet considered themselves worthy of His blessings. Numerous times God convicted Judah of their sins and their hypocrisy. "As the thief is ashamed when he is found out, So is the house of Israel ashamed; They and their kings and

their princes, and their priests and their prophets, Saying to a tree, 'You are my father,' And to a stone, 'You gave birth to me.' For they have turned their back to Me, and not their face. But in the time of their trouble They will say, 'Arise and save us.'" (Jeremiah 2:26-27) They praised their false gods but when in trouble they expected Jehovah to save them. Is that not true today? Our nation has been blessed in so many ways but ran away from Him. Our leaders ridicule His book, our people use His name in vain and are immoral in their conduct. Yet in times of trials they expect and even demand God "arise and save us."

When is the last time you inspected your spare tire? How often do you think about that spare tire? If you are like me, not often. But let us get a flat tire and then we seek to pull it out of the trunk. Folks, God is not a spare tire. We cannot put Him far away from us and then pull Him out of the Bible or church building and think He will do what we want. Jeremiah 2:32 ask, "Can a virgin forget her ornament, Or a bride her attire? Yet My people have forgotten Me days without number."

Where is God when you make your decisions? Do you consult His word and seek to please Him? Many problems people face is of their own making. They do what the Bible condemns and then expect God to make everything alright.

Where is God? He is in heaven! "The LORD has established His throne in heaven, And His kingdom rules over all." (Psalms 103:19) The atheist ridicules the Christian who believes in an unseen God, while he is afraid of an unseen virus. God has provided us with evidence of His existence in the world around us. "Nevertheless, He did not leave Himself without witness, in that He did good, gave us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness." (Acts 14:17)

God is near us. "Draw near to God and He will draw near to you." (James 4:8a). In Acts 17 Paul says God is not far away. The last part of James

4.8 says, "Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded." God will not draw near to us in the beer joint, or brothel, or while we disobey Him. God is as close to us as we allow Him to be.

The question we have to ask ourselves is, "Where am I?" People tend to fall into three places. Some run towards God in times of trials. "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 "Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 "For My yoke is easy and My burden is light." (Matthew 11:28-30). This is a big comfort if you are starving, or sick, or oppressed, or going through some other trials. But only if we remain faithful to Him. Some will run away from God. They blame Him for not giving them what they want and refuse to seek His will. Then some will remain where they are at. The atheist will use human suffering to prove God does not exist. The Christian will still serve God as they realize we, are here to serve God and not He us. Which one describes you?

We can all learn a lesson from the Apostle Paul in 2 Corinthians 12. Verse 7 Paul had received a "thorn in the flesh". It was given to keep him humble. Verse 8 Paul prayed for its removal, 3 times. Verse 9 the answer to Paul's pray was a resounding NO! Paul's thorn in the flesh was given for a purpose, to prove his power was in Christ and not himself. Verse 10 Not only did Paul accept this "thorn in the flesh" but he gladly accepted all other trials for then he was made stronger. Are we any different than Paul? We pray for God to remove our pain, our burdens, our trials in life. But sometimes the answer is a resounding NO. But we are made better in the long run. In our trials we rely on God's strength and become stronger through Him. – Dennis Tucker