

Midweek Message

The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the things that are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law.

(Deuteronomy 29:29 ESV)

“Why?” That’s the question that seems to be on a lot of people’s minds today as we continue our journey through the pandemic. I remember how that was a phase through which my children, and perhaps yours as well, when through as they were growing up. It would seem that no matter what you said they always replied with “Why?” There’s a story about a father who was working on one of the family vehicles and had crawled underneath to make the repair that was necessary to get it operational again. One of his children walked up to the car and asked, “Daddy, why are you under the car?” “I’m trying to fix it.” “Why?” “Because it’s broken.” “Why?” “Because things just break and need to be fixed.” “Why?” “I think your mother is calling you!” Of course, our children do eventually grow out of this phase and then our grandchildren come along, and we get to pass through it once again. However, I’ve noticed that even as adults we still have those times when “why” is the question most prominent in our minds.

In many articles I’ve read throughout this pandemic, from both believers and non-believers, there seems to be that unanswered question regarding why has this pandemic happened? Why are we having to face such a difficult time that seriously harms us, both in health and in wealth? There are numerous answers given, from both secular leaders and church leaders as to the reasons for this coming upon us. The secular professionals point to the facts surrounding how this happened and are also attempting to calm our fears through the mitigation efforts and the hope of an ending to this crisis, whether through a vaccine or what they call herd immunity. Their hope is that through science we’ll eventually be led out of our forced isolation and fear of contracting this disease. Perhaps God will work in that way, but He might not either. Some church leaders on the other hand have attempted to answer the why question by pointing to specific sins and immoral practices as being the reason why God has poured out His judgment upon our world. Although God certainly does bring judgment for our sinfulness, I’m not certain that a specific sin is the reason why this virus has been unleashed. This world is under a curse and as human beings we’re constantly threatened with disease and death as a result of sin coming into the world.

The Scripture above from Deuteronomy tells us *“The secret things belong to the Lord our God”* and I believe we need to realize just what that means. You see, God alone knows the answer to the why question as well as what He’s up to, the purpose He is bringing about through the pandemic. God, through the Prophet Isaiah, asks us to consider this question in chapter 40 and beginning in verse 13:

“Who has directed the Spirit of the Lord, or what man shows him his counsel? Whom did he consult, and who made him understand? Who taught him the path of justice, and taught him knowledge, and showed him the way of understanding?”

The answer to the question is obviously no one. The point is that God alone knows the reason and the purpose He has in mind. He, who is wisdom, certainly knows what must be done in every situation in order to bring about all He desires. He’s not bound by anything we might think regarding how to go about accomplishing His purpose. He is God, the creator of heaven and earth and the truth is, who are we to tell Him how He should go about bring His plan to fruition. Once again, looking to God’s Word as written in Isaiah, chapter 55, verses 8 and 9 ... we’re told:

“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,” declares the Lord. “As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.”

So, since God’s mind is known only to God alone is there any answer to the why question for us today and can we understand anything of what God is up to in this world? Well, up to a certain extent the passage from Deuteronomy does help us in that regard.

You see, even though we cannot specifically answer the why question we can grasp something of God’s actions as they are revealed in His Word. The Scripture above from Deuteronomy tells us *“but the things that are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law.”* In other words, God hasn’t left us without any answer but has given us all we need to know about what He’s up to as He continually is at work in our world and in our lives. I believe the Apostle Peter summarizes it very well (of course he does, it’s Holy Spirit inspired) in his second letter, chapter 1, beginning in verse 3 where he writes:

“His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire. For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love. For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. For whoever lacks these qualities is so nearsighted that he is blind, having forgotten that he was cleansed from his former sins. Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to confirm your calling and election, for if you practice these qualities you will never fall. For in this way there will be richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”

I realize that’s rather long and there’s a lot of wonderful truth stuffed into that paragraph which we won’t have time to unpack in this message. However, we should be able to see the thrust of what God is telling us in this passage. God is always up to good and specifically that good resulting in the salvation of his people and the transformation of their lives. Everything throughout Scripture points us in that direction. God reveals Himself in His Word so that we might know who He is because our sinfulness blinds us to the truth. He then presents His plan of redemption, beginning in Genesis 3:15 and unfolds that plan throughout the Scriptures which culminates in the birth, life, death, resurrection, ascension, and one day the return of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Everything God does is for His glory and the good of His people.

Listen, even though we may not be able to see the specific reason for this pandemic in this day or even some of the results God is bringing through it, we can still rejoice in knowing that our Lord is continuing, through our crisis, His great plan of redemption. In the meantime, we must continue to trust the Lord as we take Him at His Word and live our lives accordingly knowing that all His promises are true and He is faithful to all He has given us in His Word.

Pastor Mark