

When There Isn't an Answer

Life sure has a way of throwing us curve balls, doesn't it? I recently heard someone point out a significant dichotomy that exists in our world that I found interesting. At any given moment throughout the world, this person said, and even in our own lives, we see and experience incredible beauty and extraordinary evil all at the same time. Herein lies the tension of life.

In one moment of time, we can hear the joy of a baby's laughter while reading of horrible atrocities committed against children around the world. We can relish a beautiful moment with our family only to be interrupted and left stunned by the latest tragedy seen on the nightly news. We can take time to soak in the beauty of God's creation only to receive word that an unexpected tragedy happened that will effectively change the course of our lives forever upon our return home.

There is joy, beauty, love, grace and mercy to be found everywhere we look. But there is also darkness, destruction, tragedy, loss and evil to be found as well.

What are we to do with this irreconcilable tension?

We can give trite Christian responses in an effort to address the complexities of these issues, or we can simply live in complete and total dependence on God and His Word to hang in the balance. I realize that statement is super vague, but I wonder if we can simply trust God to lead us into an understanding that only He can give. I cannot tell you all the reasons why God allows bad things to happen, but I can tell you that God is worthy of our trust. I can say, with complete assurance, that God is in control of all things, even in the face of great evil. And I also can tell you that we, as the church, are called to be part of His magnificent plan to push back the darkness to His glory and our joy (but that's another

topic altogether!).

I wonder what would happen in this world if you and I renewed our relationship with Jesus every morning. What if we chose to live our lives with an abiding trust in Him, to completely entrust ourselves to Him? Quite frankly, what we need more than answers is a mind shift, a paradigm shift. We need a shift that takes all things to the throne of God, asking Him to help us sift through the chaff and the grain. The chaff is all the myths and lies we believe. The grain is God's truth found in Scripture. It's time we stop allowing our preconceived thoughts and emotions to be the measure by which we assess truth or the lens by which we see this world and our circumstances, and instead, allow the Word of God to be the measure by which we weigh our lives and all of creation.

I just love Romans 12:2. It says, "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God."

Yes, life throws curve balls and will continue to do so, but if we're not intentional about applying God's truth to every part of our lives, we'll quickly find ourselves disillusioned and discouraged. We'll look at the world in all its beauty and darkness through a lens not cleansed by the Truth but marred by mud. In John 16:33, Jesus said, "In the world you will have tribulation." It's a certainty. A guarantee. So what do we do with that? How do we face trials victoriously? Are we called to simply endure? Or is it possible to thrive in the midst of life's storms? To answer these questions, let's get to the second part of that verse because Jesus didn't stop there. John 16:33 says, "In the world you will have tribulation. But be of good cheer. I have overcome the world."

It is absolutely possible to thrive in the midst of trials. Jesus is our victory. But in order to see Him as such, we must

allow Him to wash our minds and our hearts with His Word. Let's lay down our opinions, our thoughts, and our emotions today in exchange for Truth.

*In 2010, **Laurie Coombs** was called to forgive the man who murdered her father. What happened as a result of that journey is chronicled in her book, Letters from My Father's Murderer (Kregel, 2015). She blogs at [and](#) is a regular writer for [and](#) . Coombs and her husband, Travis, make their home in Nevada along with their two daughters and are in the process of adopting from Ethiopia.*

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