

Where Is God in This Pandemic?

Reading an article recently published in *The New York Times* nearly brought me to tears—not in sadness, but in pure amazement. I can't say I know just how long it's been since His name has been in a good light in this sizable piece of secular media, but it was a definite tear-jerker for me.

Romans 8:28 tells us, "We know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose." I don't believe God causes bad things to happen, so it struck me when I heard a pastor of mine say these words:

"I know without a doubt God uses bad things in such a way for good that it almost looks as if He caused them."

The *New York Times* article begins by asking the question, "Why suffering?" This is an age-old question that many before us have grappled with, and I won't pretend to have a concise two-sentence answer for you, and neither did the author in *The New York Times*.

But I get the question, "If God is all-loving and all-powerful, what gives?"

The article concedes that "if the mystery of suffering is unanswerable, where can the believer go in times like this? For the Christian and perhaps even for others the answer is Jesus."

The article goes on to say, "In His public ministry, Jesus continually sought out those who were sick. Most of his miracles were healings from illnesses and disabilities: debilitating skin conditions (under the rubric of "leprosy"), epilepsy, a woman's "flow of blood," a withered hand,

“dropsy,” blindness, deafness, paralysis. In these frightening times, Christians may find comfort in knowing that when they pray to Jesus, they are praying to someone who understands them not only because He is divine and knows all things, but because He is human and experienced all things.”

What the article doesn't necessarily say is what Jesus tells us in John 14:12, “Truly, truly I say to you, he who believes in Me will do the works that I do also. And he will do greater works than these, because I am going to My Father.”

I don't know about you, but I believe that includes healing the sick.

We tend to spend a lot of time arguing about it, but what do we have to lose? We as the body of Christ could continue our autoimmune disease of fighting against one another and throwing Scripture back and forth, or we could just go “be the church,” which includes, according to Scripture, Matthew 10:8: “Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, and cast out demons. Freely you have received, freely give.”

I was healed of an incurable blood disease. I was tested positive and had very painful symptoms, but I heard stories of others being healed miraculously of this same disease, which fueled my faith. I got a lot of prayer, and two years later, when I was tested again, the results came back negative. Why? I have no idea other than God, who I do not always understand, holds me in the midst of it all.

Now I have not been healed of everything that afflicts me, so I still seek prayer and medical attention when necessary, because I believe in both! But in a time where it is said that medical personnel are overwhelmed, why not try? Why not believe in the Jesus who hung on a cross for our lives and do what He did?

What if you had an itchy throat, just small symptoms, and we told them to go in Jesus' name? What if we tried it? If you

need to go to the doctor/hospital, go; I would too. But what if we coupled that with prayer?

That same pastor of mine also told me, "I prayed for a lot of people before I saw any healed. But now I see a lot healed."

It's not a science. He is a living God who loves us and wants to be in relationship with us.

When something doesn't work, what if we went back and asked Him more questions? Not putting Him on trial, not blaming Him, but rather going away with Him as Jesus did when He was on earth, and asking Him, "What happened there?"

Like anything in life, if we fail, we try again. So why wouldn't we do that with faith? With healing? We don't have to beg Him. Everywhere in Scripture where someone went to Jesus for healing, He healed them. Why doesn't that happen on earth? I am not sure, but we could sit around arguing about it, or we could put our faith to the test and do "those greater things" Jesus talked about.

We have a chance to show people where God is in this pandemic. He is in us, and He is wanting to love people through us.
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