

For example, physical deformities and physical death, as natural consequences of original sin, continue until physical resurrection or transformation at Christ's Return.

8. Since every human being (including any who are saved) deserves all of the terrible consequences of sin; and since not all of these consequences are removed immediately; and since any prevention of these consequences which are as yet unremoved is a matter of pure grace; therefore it does not behoove a believer who suffers some natural consequence of sin to ask why God would allow it, but rather to ask why God should prevent it.

Why should God prevent the consequences of my sin from falling upon me? Am I somehow better than other sinners, more worthy of God's intervention? Am I less deserving of the consequences of my sin than are other sinners? Do I merit special treatment from God because of my good works, or my godly life, or my faithful service? Or am I, in spite of any thing I may do for God or be for God, still a sinner, saved by unmerited and unearned and undeserved GRACE?

This, then, is the attitude which every Christian who experiences calamity, loss, or disaster, or who faces suffering or terminal illness or death, should have. Not "Why is God allowing this?" but rather "Why should God prevent it?"

That simple change of question shifts the question of responsibility dramatically. Instead of blaming God for the suffering, it fixes responsibility for the effects of sin where it belongs – upon the sinner! And instead of blaming God for not preventing the suffering (thus making God come up with a reason for not preventing it), it properly raises the question as to why man should not receive what he fully deserves (thus making man come up with a reason why God should prevent the natural consequences of man's own sin). Not "Why is God permitting this to happen to me?" or "Why is God doing this to me?" but "Why should God prevent this from happening to me?"

This appears to be an appropriate (i.e., biblical) attitude concerning responsibility for human suffering. C. S. Lewis, in The Problem of Pain, said: "The real problem is not why some pious, humble, believing people suffer, but why some do not."

Let us briefly summarize these eight statements of attitude:

- (1) God, as sovereign Creator, has the absolute right to take away life, as He pleases.
- (2) Man, not God, is the initiator and sustainer of sin in mankind.
- (3) Man, not God, is responsible for the terrible results of sin in the world.
- (4) God, as righteous Judge, has the judicial right to permit the results of sin to take effect at any time.
- (5) It is totally wrong to blame God for the results of sin; man is to blame.