

Call to Obedience #373
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His Ways Are Perfect —Deuteronomy 32:4

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The English evangelist Leonard Ravenhill was invited to hold revival meetings for A.W. Tozer in Chicago. A fire broke out in the hotel where Ravenhill and his associate stayed. They both had to jump from a third story window. In landing, Ravenhill suffered many broken bones. It took half an hour before an ambulance showed up.

Tozer's congregation had many questions: Why did this happen? Was this the work of God or of the devil? Had they prayed enough for the revival meetings? Could God not heal him at once and put him back into the pulpit? What good would come out of this? None of the parishioners could find the right words to comfort the injured evangelist. Finally, Tozer arrived with a Chinese man who had gone through much persecution. He said, "The Lord sanctify to thee thy deepest affliction." Those few words helped the evangelist more than all the words of all who came to see him: "The Lord sanctify to thee thy deepest affliction."

My friend, I can assure you that whatever pain you are in, whatever loss you have experienced, whatever you have suffered, whatever opportunities you have missed, whatever grief you may carry, whatever rejection you have experienced, it is for a greater work of sanctification, to make you more like your Master. All of *God's ways are perfect*, according to His love and justice. They are perfect with the worst of sinner as they are with the finest of saint. God never does anything but what is perfect. **Nobody can ever complain on Judgment Day that God didn't do the right thing with any one soul.** As everything in nature is perfect, from the orbit of the electron in the atom to the journeys of the galaxies above, so His ways with men are perfect.

Whatever you have gotten yourself into, God's ways are perfect in their workings towards you. God does not make mistakes. He never has to say in hindsight, "I could've done a better job," or, "I

was neglectful in working with this or that person," or, "I should have done more for this suffering saint." **God will not get you out of what you are in until His divine purposes are fulfilled in you.** Then He will come in as a mighty miracle worker. His ultimate goal is that He does not want you to miss what He has intended for you. All His ways with you are directed towards that design. My friend, God is trying to refine you to make you as the purest of gold. *And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose* (Rom. 8:28).

Rev. Helm said, "It is a natural thing to want to know 'why.' But God can work through us only as we will surrender ourselves to become the answer". That answer is *Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding* (Pro. 3:5). To be able to do this our old man has to be slain. Only the spiritual man surrenders all his questions and just trusts and follows God who never fails. Again, *the just shall live by faith* (Heb. 10:38) and not by understanding. How hard is it for us to get this? If we don't get this we miss the purpose for which we are on the earth: our eternal destiny. **You cannot be yoked together with Jesus as a "why and how" Christian.** You are either a figurer or a follower. For us to understand God's way is more absurd than for a gnat to understand the workings of computers.

O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out. For of him, and through him and to him, are all things: to whom be glory forever. Amen (Rom. 11:33, 36).

Unfortunately, many seminaries and Bible schools are in a constant pursuit of the "why." They graduate doubters instead of followers. When Jesus called, Matthew got up immediately to follow. Had he wanted to know the "why" and "how," Jesus would have left him behind. He will leave you behind if you don't believe His ways are perfect. Had Adam and Eve trusted instead of wanting to know "why" perhaps we all could still be in Eden.

God's ways with you are perfect. Why ask any more questions? Why not accept it, be happy with it, letting God do the work of sanc-

tification in your distress. Don't be like Job's friends or like Job himself: do not insult His Majesty by thinking He does not know what He is doing. God does not miss a breath that you take. He even knows when you swallow your spittle (Job 7:19). His eyes are constantly upon you. That Godhead bows to protect His children, so that they will not suffer one iota more than is needed. *He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: he that keepeth thee will not slumber* (Ps. 121:3). You make mistakes and you misjudge, but know that God's ways are perfect. **He prepares you for battles, responsibilities and opportunities you know not of.**

We don't know why Ravenhill was taken out of the pulpit to be laid in a hospital bed. We don't know why God put you into the world for such a time as this. We don't know why Abraham had to wait twenty years to get his son of faith. We don't know why Saint Paul had such a terrible sea journey from Caesarea to Rome to the extent that the ship sank and they had to swim to shore. We don't know why a mother loses her firstborn son, or why a man suddenly loses his business in a fire. We don't have to know. What we need to know is that *God's ways are perfect*. Hallelujah! What rest this gives us.

So my dear brother and sister, stop asking why, stop whining, stop drawing virtue out of others, stop advertising your troubles, stop seeking sympathy or pity from others because of them. The Holy Spirit told Paul from the very beginning that he would have to suffer many things in the process of winning souls. Then as he went from city to city the Holy Spirit confirmed to him over and over again that imprisonments and afflictions would await him. Paul's response: *But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God* (Acts 20:24). Don't let afflictions sidetrack you.

Certain hardwoods, when placed in a fire, begin to sing; the hotter the fire, the better the song. If you lie on a bed of self-pity, you will have no song. Again, don't advertise your afflictions, just sing and sing. That is what Paul and Silas did when their backs were bleeding and they were tied hand and foot to the stocks in prison.

They sang and, because of it, they and everyone around them were delivered. Oh what a difference between those who dwell in the city of self-pity, and those who sing praises in the night. Don't let your life revolve around your afflictions, don't let them get all your prayers, there are so many other things to pray for than yourself. Paul prayed for deliverance from his thorn in the flesh three times. Don't waste your time by overpraying for deliverance. **Don't pray to get off the cross.** God said, "These afflictions are good for you." Paul accepted that and he started glorying in his afflictions. Accept the thorn in your flesh that is yours to endure. When God does not give healing grace, he gives sustaining grace. Get busy with the Lord's work as Paul did. *His ways with you are perfect*, "as is." Be happy with it. Let Him satisfy you in your greatest distress, and make you one of His choicest jewels.

The more the Lord loves you, the more He will prune you so that you may bear more fruit. Had Jesus not gone to His cross, Christianity would have no song. Jesus came to suffer and to die. But if we suffer with Him, we shall also be glorified with Him. That is also your calling, for the servant is not greater than his Master (John 15:20). The same angel who strengthened Jesus in His greatest distress is still there for you (Matt. 4:11). Let us take up this challenge:

Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us...(Heb. 12:2, 1).

Oh, my friend, Jesus endured; you need to endure and you will get the joy. There are several kinds of joys: there is the joy of conversion, the joy of obedience, the joy of Christian fellowship, the joy of anticipation, etc. But the greatest joy is still set before us: it is the joy of the throne of God for those who endure as our Lord did. Don't miss it! Take up your cross and follow Him - it will be worth it all. **God's ways are perfect.**