

Appendix 1 [sermon 22/9/2019]

Answers to tough questions on sermon:

Several members of the congregation expressed concern over the idea that God plans for everything to happen including tragedy. Some also cited the belief that if this is true there is no such thing as freewill. Obviously I acknowledge that people have differences of opinion about what freewill is; but I have given my answer below which is based on my own faith journey, research and observation.

I felt it wise to add this answer to this question into my notes [in case I forgot how I answered the question] for future reference.

My Answer

...every part of me wants to agree with you. It doesn't sound fair in my human opinion for God to bring about disappointment and disaster.

But unfortunately I have to hold to the word of God and what it says about God, not simply what I would like him to be like. People certainly have free will and God holds people responsible for their choices / but the mystery is that this works within his greater purposes that govern everything that happens.

If you think about your choices, they are actually always affected by things other than your freewill.

Many preachers give too much power to freewill (which is not discussed much in the Bible) and underemphasise Gods sovereignty (which is on nearly every page of the bible). In my research I have found no solid arguments against the idea that God plans everything to happen- most are just based on us not wanting it to be true. Mere desire cannot be used as an argument against the Word.

Please understand in some ways I don't want it to be true either, but I would rather say that God has my whole life in his hands and perfect plan rather than just the good parts of it.

I can refer you to Isaiah 45:5-7 to show what the Bible says.

Bless you in your thoughts and Meditating
James