

“Oh, Lord why me?” – Is a most piteous cry. How do people deal with this?

There was Cain on hearing God’s judgment of his killing Able:

Gen 4:13 “And Cain said unto the LORD, My punishment is greater than I can bear.”

Then there was Job on hearing of loss of all his possessions and children:

Job 1:20-21 “Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped, And said, Naked came I out of my mother’s womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD”

What cry do we raise to God? It can be an indicator of our heart

Cain – what would happen

Job – what had happened

What had Job lost? Only what God had given him.

Did he suffer – Did he grieve? YES

Where did he find solace? In faith in God’s goodness

In this lesson certain assumptions – a priori:

* **You all can hear – else I’d write**

* **You all understand English, also:**

* **Bible we have is God’s word – in errant -**

2 Tim 3:16,17 “All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: ¹⁷That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.”

* **God Is Good –**

James 1:17 “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights”

* **God loves us –**

Rom 5:8 “But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”

* **He’s merciful – He wants us to be with him**

2 Peter 3:9 “but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.”

When events happen what should we think? –

Remember, God’s ways above our ways.

Isaiah 55:8,9 “For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.”

If we don't understand, what must change? Our understanding!
Our understanding is imperfect, we don't see as God sees, but we can sure of 1 thing:

Rom 8:28 – “And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God”

Do we understand and believe this?
Yes, we might pitifully cry “Oh Lord! Why me!”

But what if on judgment day we see those whose names are written in Book of life, standing on the Right hand of God – the good side
And we are standing on the LEFT of God? The bad side
Our cry then will be ... “Lord! Why **NOT** me?”
How could this happen? Let's see.

I said one assumption was: “God Loves us”
Who is us? Are you one of them?
Rom 8:28 “We know all things work together for good”

Do we stop there? Does God? How does that verse end:
“... to them that love God”.
Yes, God loves us, but do we love God?
What if we don't love God? – All bets are off
Could this happen?
Are there those God does not love?
Those whom God has given up on ?
Those that might cry , “Oh Lord! Why not me?”
By the very qualification – “To them that love God”
There must then be those that “don't love God”.
And for them, all things **DON'T** work together for good.
But remember, God is merciful, long suffering not willing that any perish (2 Pet 3:9)
He will give us every chance and opportunity, all we need, to be with him.

At the conclusion of Rev 3, when talking to the 7 churches in Asia:

Rev 3:19 – “As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.”

There is a purpose to the Lord's rebuke – to make us repent, to come back to him.
So, when we cry out, “Lord, why me?” it should be a cry of REJOICING! For God love us, he cares for us and wants us with him. The Apostles knew this, when beaten by the Jews:

Acts 5:41 “ ... rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name.”

Be careful brethren, when something happens if you find yourself saying “Thank God it's not me”

If it's not you down here – it may not be you up there!

Yes, thank God for he's merciful to all, he loves all, but will that SAVE you?
How much does he Love you? Consider this scripture:

Matt 5:45 – “That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.”

Will the unjust enter heaven?

Will the evil be received by God? NO!

Yet, he loves them, he sends his rain on them – the context of the passage.

He loves enough to provide some mercy, even to those who are lost.

1 Cor 15:19 – “If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable”

Paul knew the far better things that God has called us to.

But there are those whose only reward will be this life!

God is merciful to them and gives them a little comfort – for the moment.

So, if you see yourself blessed with earthly gain,

Do you take comfort in this? That God “Loves” you? Watch out!

How do we know how **much** God loves us?

Does he love us as a Father?

Are we his children? – this is the context of Matt 5:45

That we may BE the children of our Father.

But how do we know we are His children?

Heb 12:5-7 “And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?”

Why us? We are his children.

Why not us? We are not his children

This says about chastening, that it is:

Something we may despise – do not want

Something we may faint under – it is hard

Something we must endure – it has duration

But what is it that carries us through? The knowledge we have and faith that God is Good – that he truly Loves us, as God can love. This is what carried Job through.

What else might have us say “Lord, why not me?” – no faith!

James 1:2-3 “My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing *this*, that the trying of your faith worketh patience”

Why us? - We have faith

Why not us? - We don't have faith

The Lord tells us whether we have faith or not and can endure, and faith is essential:

Hebrews 11:1,6 – “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. For by it the elders obtained a good report....But without faith *it is* impossible to please *him*: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and *that* he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.”

Why not me? Maybe we have no strength

Rev 3:5 “He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels”

To overcome – there must be something **TO** overcome.
 What if Lord doesn't put this in our way?
 Or, more likely, what if go out of our way to avoid it?
 If we don't overcome – our names will be blotted out.

You might say, “I have no need”
 God tested Abraham and Job
 Are you better than they?
 Church in Philadelphia – did not avoid the obstacles

Rev 3:8-10 – “I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name. Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee. Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.”

God sees: V8 – I know thy works
 And responds to our efforts: V10 – I will keep thee

Rev 3:12 “Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, *which is* new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and *I will write upon him* my new name.”

Him that overcometh I will make a pillar

What are pillars used for? – Hold things up
 What would you look for in a pillar? – Strength
 Why does God test us do you think?
 Cracked pillar no good, will give way under load.
 Test to find those parts that are weak so as to fix and make them suitable for the work ahead.

1 Cor 13:10 There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God *is* faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear *it*.

INVITATION:

When we say, "Why not me?" it might be because maybe:

We're not his children
 We have no faith to be tried
 We have no strength to be tested

But wait! That's not all! ...

Let me leave you with one final reason why you don't want to say, "Why not me?"

1 Pet 2:21 "For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps:"

Are you following in His steps? What's stopping you?

Heb 12:1-3 "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, ²Looking 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. ³For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds."

Why did Jesus come to this earth?

To show us the good example – the pattern we must fit

But if we don't suffer – what's to consider?

Why should we look to Christ?

And if we don't look to Him, where are we?

Among those crying "Lord, why NOT me?"

1 Peter 2:22-24 "Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: ²³Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed *himself* to him that judgeth righteously: ²⁴Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed."

When you cry "Lord, why me?" – God is saying, because ...

- 1) You are my child, and I love you and want you to grow in love for me.
- 2) You have faith, and I want to try it so it may grow in you.
- 3) You have strength, and I want to test it so you'll know you have it and make it stronger.
- 4) You are following in the footsteps of my Son, and I am well pleased in you.

Do you love God? Is He your father? Then **show** him, as wants us to, by **obeying** His Son – Jesus. Let God know by Calling on him!

Romans 10:13 "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."

And God has showed us how we must do that:

Acts 22:16 "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."

-Ed Kelleher at West Columbia church of Christ, May 1, 2011

- All scriptures projected on screen and read