

Just Checking In #111 God's Blueprint...Satan's Fingerprints

July 1, 2011

Psalm 39:12 "Hear my prayer, O Lord... for I am a 'pilgrim' with You..."

God's Blueprint... Satan's Fingerprint God's sovereignty prevails

I memorized Romans chapter 8 (NIV) this Spring, and quoting it on my way to work each day I have been drawn again and again to this thought....

"God's blueprint is settled and secure, and in all things God is working out His design, yet we often see the Devil's fingerprints on the process".

I believe this is exactly what Paul is driving at in his statements... "for Your sake we face death all day long... we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered... in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loves us..."

It is not that God prevents all evil, but rather than He has chosen to include the evil intentions and actions of men and devils to carry out His sovereign plan, bringing greater good out of greater evil and thereby bringing greater glory to Himself. Evil is still evil. Sin is still sin. God is still God. And His sovereignty is unassailed and always prevails. This brings a fountain of comfort to the heart that is crushed, the mind that is confused, and the soul that is anguished in seeing Satan's fingerprints all over the events of life.

Let me share three evident examples of this bedrock, soul strengthening truth.

#1 Joseph Genesis 50:19-20

Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid, for am I in the place of God? But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive."

God's blueprint: Prepare the way for the preservation of the seed of Jacob in view of impending famine to ensure the seed from which Messiah will come, and to demonstrate the glory of the God of Israel so that all nations may fear Him.

Satan's fingerprints: Jealousy and hatred of his brothers; selling Joseph to Midonites; brothers lie to Jacob; Joseph enslaved; Potipher's wife seducing Joseph.. then slandering him; Joseph imprisoned; rescued Egyptian failing to keep his promise to remember Joseph.... It seems that every step forward results in two steps backward.

How could Joseph maintain his integrity, humility, loyalty, compassion, and forgiveness after 13 years enslaved and imprisoned and nearly 30 years separated from his family? One thing is certain, Joseph was completely confident in God's absolute sovereignty, unchanging holiness, and eternal blueprint that was being carried out even by deeds of evil against him. His response to his brothers... "You meant evil against me, but God meant it for good..." was so ingrained in Joseph's soul and purified by decades of suffering, that when the pressure was on, this truth came out. Evil is not excused, but it is contained. Evil is not tamed, but it is chained. Evil may surprise us, but it never surprises God. God never says... "Oh!"

#2 Job - Job 1:7-12

And the LORD said to Satan, "From where do you come?" So Satan answered the LORD and said, "From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking back and forth on it. Then the LORD said to Satan, "Have you considered My servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil?" So Satan answered the LORD and said, "Does Job fear God for nothing? Have You not made a hedge around him, around his household, and around all that he has on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. But now, stretch out Your hand and touch all that he has, and he will surely curse You to Your face!" And the LORD said to Satan, "Behold, all that he has is in your power; only do not lay a hand on his person."

God's blueprint: Demonstrate His own worthiness for worship; to show that God is worthy of worship when all the blessings are removed, and the only desire left in man is for death; to demonstrate that worship, true worship, is really God centered and genuine; to demonstrate that sincere, genuine worship is not bought by goodies or motivated by fear of loss.

Satan's fingerprints: The slanderous accusations of Satan in heaven; the wicked cruelty of thieves and robbers; the slander of friends who ran out of answers and invented evil accusations of which Job was innocent.

Like Joseph, Job could not see the blueprint of God, only the fingerprints of evil everywhere he looked. When God finally spoke to Job out of the storm, it was not with tender words of explanation, but strong words of inquisition to cause Job to see God's mystery and majesty. It worked! The result was a satisfied heart... not satisfied because his questions were answered, but because he was completely convinced that God's blueprint, whatever it contained, was totally intact and on schedule, including all the misery and mystery of his suffering.

#3 Jesus – Acts 2:22-24

"Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know... Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of

God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death; whom God raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be held by it."

God's blueprint: That Christ, according to God's eternal decree, should die for our sins to make atonement.

Satan's fingerprints: Possessing Judas to betray; tempting Peter to deny; jealousy of the elders; lies of the false witnesses; Pilate's capitulating to satisfy the crowd.

In the greatest demonstration of all, God accomplished His eternal decree to give His Son as our sacrifice for sin, by using the sinful intentions and actions of men and devils in the doing of it. God brought the greatest good to pass according to His blueprint, out of the greatest evil ever seen or made possible by the wicked fingerprints of men and Satan. God is sovereign. God is wise. God is holy. God is good. Our trust is anchored in God's character, promise, and purpose. Nothing changes that. Nothing! Not now! Not later! Not ever!

Self Check:

1. **Is the truth of God's absolute sovereignty the bedrock of my trust and comfort in the most difficult circumstances of life?**
2. **Is fear, anxiety or worry a common experience in my soul? Is this evidence of a lack of reliance on God's sovereignty?**
3. **Do I often think that things are "out of control" and that there is no rhyme or reason to the events of life? What does this reveal about my concept of God's nature and character?**

For Further Study:

Choose a Bible character and trace God's blueprint and Satan's fingerprints in their life. Some suggestions would include... Abraham, Joseph, Moses, David, Peter, or Paul. (for example: Paul – Phil 1:12 – 13 But I want you to know, brethren, that the things which happened to me have actually turned out for the furtherance of the gospel, so that it has become evident to the whole palace guard, and to all the rest, that my chains are in Christ...)

"O God, You are sovereign, good, wise and holy. There is no darkness in Thee. There is no limit in Thee. You are infinite in power, knowledge, and wisdom. You know the end from the beginning for You know Thyself. I know that Thine enemy and mine, the Deceiver, is at work among the sons of disobedience. I know that evil is evil and is an offense to Thee. I know that You will render to each one according to His deeds. I know that in Your mercy You suffer long with men. If it were not so, I could not have been saved. When I am tempted to fear, to question Your ways, and to stop trusting You, forgive me and renew in my heart the vision of Christ crucified, the clearest proof that Your blueprint is certain, even if the enemy's blood stained fingerprints seek to obscure the facts. O Sovereign King of Heaven, O Sovereign Son of God, O Sovereign Spirit, I worship You, and You alone, now and forever, world without end. Amen."

Remember, you are very special to us and we pray for you.

Living with leaving in view.... Jn 9:4 Ron & Val

Seeing The Invisible, embracing The Unapproachable, declaring The Unexplainable, changed by The Immutable,
running after The Irresistible with inexhaustible joy in our inexpressible sorrows,
spending our time on eternity, owning nothing yet possessing everything that matters and lasts.

We are Pilgrims in Paradox. Welcome to THE JOURNEY.