

Fully God – 1/07/2018

“I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, “who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.”

Revelation 1:8

Beloved in the Lord,

God is fully God, in every sense. He is the Alpha and Omega. Alpha is the first letter of the Greek alphabet and Omega is the last. God is the beginning and the end and everything in between. We read in John’s gospel:

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God. ³ All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. “ John 1:1-3

From time to time people ask me what is so special about Jesus? This passage gives us the answer – ***“All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being.”***

Whether you believe in Jesus or not, He created you, and you are totally and completely dependent upon Him. Apart from Him you simply would not exist. When we come to understand this, when we believe this truth, then we are truly free and are able to reach our God given potential and be the best versions of ourselves possible. True freedom in life comes to you when you understand that Jesus Christ is the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. He is the God who is, who was and who is to come, The Almighty.

At times it may seem that this world is like a plane with a disabled pilot that is rapidly spiralling to the ground. But that is not the case at all. God is still fully in control as He always has been and as He always will be. God is as much at the controls as He ever has been.

At times it may seem to us that He is not, but that is because we experience many things in life that are hard to comprehend, hard to accept. We think many things are simply not right and not fair,

There was a time in the life of the Disciples of Jesus, when they must have really doubted what Jesus was doing, and the situation only became clear afterwards, Even though it didn’t seem like it at the time, Jesus was very much in control of the whole situation.

There was a family that was very dear to Jesus, they were close friends. Two sisters Mary and Martha and their brother Lazarus. Lazarus became very ill, and the sisters sent news to Jesus, that he was gravely ill and they expected Jesus to come and to heal him.

We read:

“Now a certain man was sick, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. ² It was the Mary who anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped His feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick. ³ So the sisters sent word to Him, saying, “Lord,

behold, he whom You love is sick.”⁴ But when Jesus heard this, He said, “This sickness is not to end in death, but for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified by it.”⁵ Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus.⁶ So when He heard that he was sick, He then stayed two days longer in the place where He was.⁷ Then after this He *said to the disciples, “Let us go to Judea again.” John 11:1-7

Jesus has received the news that his friend Lazarus is gravely ill. Jesus had the power to heal him. Martha and Mary knew that, and also His disciples knew that. They were witnesses to many miracles of healing that Jesus had performed. But Jesus was in no hurry to go to see Lazarus. He didn't go immediately. The disciples must have wondered why. Certainly Martha and Mary were wondering where He was, why wasn't He coming. They were watching Lazarus slowly dying and they were wondering where is Jesus? Doesn't He know how dire the situation is?

Have you ever been there? You really need something from God, but it seems that He is not listening. He doesn't appear to be answering your prayer. You believe and know that He can help you, but why doesn't He?

God Himself answers us through Isaiah:

***“For My thoughts are not your thoughts,
Nor are your ways My ways,” declares the Lord.***

***⁹ “For as the heavens are higher than the earth,
So are My ways higher than your ways
And My thoughts than your thoughts.***

***¹⁰ “For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven,
And do not return there without watering the earth
And making it bear and sprout,
And furnishing seed to the sower and bread to the eater;***

***¹¹ So will My word be which goes forth from My mouth;
It will not return to Me empty,
Without accomplishing what I desire,
And without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it.” Is.55:8-11***

The longer I live, the closer I walk with Jesus, the clearer I see that God's ways are indeed far higher than mine, and I am grateful for that. How many opportunities to learn and to grow would I have missed out on if God had simply sheltered me from all of life's storms? How many opportunities to see His Amazing Grace, His healing hand, His compassionate heart, His gift of peace that transcends all understanding, would I have missed had His will not sent me into the valleys. Had all gone according to my programme, I doubt I would know Him so well as I do.

As I look back, I must at times fall on my knees in gratitude and say “Thank you Father that you said no to my plans, my thoughts, my ways.” I don't even want to begin to imagine what my life would be like.

God's ways, His thoughts, are always superior to ours. His ways are always the best and always right because He is God. He knows what has been, what is, and what is yet to come.

Sure, Jesus could have gone straight to Lazarus, laid hands upon Him and healed him, but He didn't because He was being led by The Holy Spirit. He knew that this illness was not going to keep Lazarus in the grave, no, this illness was to glorify God the Father.

Also when He received the news that Lazarus had died, He seemed to be in no hurry:
“This He said, and after that He *said to them, “Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep; but I go, so that I may awaken him out of sleep.”¹² The disciples then said to Him, “Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will recover.”¹³ Now Jesus had spoken of his death, but they thought that He was speaking of literal sleep.¹⁴ So Jesus then said to them plainly, “Lazarus is dead,¹⁵ and I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, so that you may believe; but let us go to him.” John 11:11-15

If the disciples were confused earlier, then even more so now. Jesus has just told them that their friend Lazarus has died, and that He (Jesus) is glad for their sakes that He wasn't there to prevent his death. Has Jesus lost His mind? How can that be?

What was a mystery to them at that time, became very clear a few days later, when Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead. Later, looking back they saw how this was all God's plan. Lazarus had to become ill and die and be laid in the grave for 4 days, so that God could demonstrate His absolute power over death and the grave.

There was another instance in the ministry of Jesus where we see how God orchestrates a situation for His glory. The case of the man who was born blind.

As He passed by, He saw a man blind from birth.² And His disciples asked Him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he would be born blind?”³ Jesus answered, “It was neither that this man sinned, nor his parents; but it was so that the works of God might be displayed in him.” John 9:1-3

Jesus then laid hands upon him and he was healed of his blindness. This case along with Lazarus, demonstrates to us God's sovereignty. Everything happens with His knowledge and He has a purpose for all things.

What this means for us, is that we should strive to always be at the very centre of God's will. We need to fully trust in Him. Surrender all to Him in faith and to be clinging on to Him at all times.

When things happen in our life that we simply cannot understand then we should not ask “Why me?” We should not think that God is punishing us, or that He has abandoned us. No. We are to cling ever tighter to Him and to proclaim along with Paul:
“And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.” Rom.8:28

It is not always easy to do this, but it is always the right thing and it brings blessing. At the end of the race, when by God's grace we enter Heaven, we will look back at this life and confess that truly God did all things well.

May God help us to see that here and now, and give us the faith to trust in Him fully, and to know that Jesus is ***“the Alpha and the Omega, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.”***

Amen.

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