

Lifelines

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Topic: Hope

Why Choose God?

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I grew up in a culture which was not saturated by Christianity. Or was it? I think maybe 20% of my elementary school classmates attended church regularly; in high school, maybe 8%. In college only a couple people in any particular class admitted to being a Christian.

But even with this low level of churchiness, there was a level of “Christian” influence in those towns, because much of American values at the time still believed in telling the truth, acting ethically, and treating others as people of worth. Today, there is very little morality that is attached to Christian or biblical standards in our culture.

Hence we see the rampant violence around us such as: pushing people off the subway platform, or cold-cocking others on the street with a pipe or a fist, and even shooting incidents at schools and gatherings. Yesterday I saw a security video of a man pushing a 68-year-old woman down the stairs of her own church, just so he could steal her phone and car keys.

The moral deadness in our culture is destroying us. Why do people choose to brutally hurt others? Why do people think that such a thing is fun? Where is the respect and compassion for others or the value for life? Where is the rule of law? Where are leaders who set a godly example to follow, and who work to make society better rather than to tear it apart?

Where is God in our lives? Is He even in our lives at all? Is He the formulator of our values, or do our values come only from social media, including television? Where is the love that once thrived in the lives of people? By the way, the evil that is abounding today and driving out love and respect is happening worldwide, not just in America.

The bottom line is that you and I become what we choose to become. If we choose hate, we reject love. If we choose to be destroyers, there is no will within us to build up others. If we choose to be godless, then what hope is there? All good ultimately comes from God. The more we purposely cancel God in our lives and culture, the more evil our cultures become.

Why should we choose God? In Psalm 36:1-4, we see what spawns evil: vs. 1 transgressions (breaking the law, and rejecting God), vs. 2 being in love only with oneself, crookedness and hatred; vs. 3-4 planning and doing wicked things and ways to deceive others. If we reject God, and expunge God from our mind, values and lifestyle, we end up godless and wicked.

What is the life like of the one who chooses to invite Christ into their life and let God shape one's values? Well, they don't become perfect human beings; no human is perfect. But in verses 5-8 the poet lists some of the benefits that come with choosing God to be the major force in our lives: 1) vs. 4 we experience God's lovingkindness, a love and kindness that preserves our lives. 2) The phrase “As the Lord preserve mans and beast. (vs. 5)” means God preserves the quality of our lives, and preserves the community we live within. 3) Vs. 7 says we experience God's devotion to us (loving kindness). When the world is flying apart, God keeps our lives cohesive and together. 4) Vs. 7 God becomes our shelter and protector. 5) Vs. 8 God blesses us with the abundance of living in God's house, presence. The abundant and fulfilling life that God created us to have and enjoy. 6). Vs. 8. Living water, drinking from the river of Your delights. Enjoy continual refreshing of our soul, our

mind, our body and strength. 7) Drinking from the river of God's delights ... joy, satisfaction, fulfillment and purpose and beauty. Jesus came to give us an abundant life (one that just keeps growing and growing better and better in every direction), see John 10:10.

Life flows from the choices we make. The most life-changing choice anyone can ever make is to turn away from a destructive, self-absorbed life of closing God out of their life, and choosing instead to receive Jesus and all the benefits that come from living a life with Him.

Why choose God? Why not choose God?

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