

## “Everything Happens For A Reason”

We often hear people use the expression “Everything happens for a reason.” This saying is the modern New Age version of the old religious saying “It’s God’s will.” Is this true? Is there a reason for everything? Does God’s will regulate everything?

First, some events happen because the Lord has placed certain “natural” laws in place that cannot be violated without predictable results. For example: a man broke his leg. Why? What was the reason? He stepped off of a ladder and the “law of gravity” prevailed. In this sense, we can understand and acknowledge that this “happened for a reason,” though we doubt that this is what the New Age crowd means when they use that expression.

But we must protest the claim that God has predestined our lives, or that His “will” controls every aspect of our existence. The Bible says God gives man choice. Joshua’s famous statement makes this abundantly clear (Joshua 24:15). The invitation for salvation is open to all, but each one must decide: *“The Spirit and the bride say, Come ... and whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely”* (Revelation 22:17). So obviously, God has not predestined everything, or else these statements about our freedom to choose would be senseless.

Further, we know that some events do happen as a consequence of the choices God allows us to make. Good choices typically bring good outcomes, and bad choices produce bad ones. Many are suffering the ill effects of actions they chose to do or not do, while others are enjoying the benefits of wise selections. Moses advised the Israelites, *“I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live”* (Deuteronomy 30:19). To put it simply, choices have consequences. And while this is a definite rule of God, the specifics are determined by us and our free will, not His.

Finally, we must note that there is not always a clear, one-to-one corollary to be seen in every event in our lives. Sometimes bad events happen to good people, and vice versa. Why? Frequently we can “see” it, but often we cannot answer, other than to lay it to the reality of living in this present world with its physical suffering and death (Ecclesiastes 9:11). We may not be able to explain them, but we can use even the “bad events” to provoke us to do what is right and just — as we seek for a world where such will never happen again (2 Peter 3:13).

Adapted From Greg Gwin