



# TRUTH MATTERS

A Newsletter Discussing Matters Related To Truth Because Truth Matters

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September 4, 2005

## **On Praying About the Weather – *A Meditation on Hurricane Dennis***

By Dr. Albert Mohler<sup>1</sup>

My family and I stood on a dark beach in South Florida tonight, watching a great storm build on the horizon. The eye of Hurricane Dennis is still several hundred miles away, but the crushing surf and the gusting winds announce the coming storm. Already, the waves are a spectacular sight and the winds leave a powerful impression. We watched the beauty of the storm testify of God's power and glory.

For us, the experience of watching the storm's effects from afar was mystical. The waves and the winds produced a massive symphonic impression. We have little to fear. If the storm takes its predicted path, it will steer away from the Florida peninsula. South Florida will have hours of strong winds and heavy rain, but should not bear the brunt of this storm's power.

It is not so elsewhere. Many thousands of persons already in Dennis' path had little time for such peaceful meditations. This hurricane has brought death, devastation, and damage to some of the poorest nations of the Western hemisphere. Even now, the people of central Cuba are feeling this storm's wrath. The hurricane had reached the devastating 'category four' designation before being slowed by Cuba's mountains. Even so, its current 'category two' status means sustained winds of over 100 miles per hour.

Within hours, this storm may smash into the Florida panhandle – after an opportunity to strengthen yet again over the warm Gulf of Mexico. This region has not yet recovered from last year's devastating storms.

Is all this fair? Why does God allow hurricanes in the first place? How should Christians pray about threatening weather? These are urgent and honest questions. In answer to the first question, we must transcend the fairness issue. God created the world as the theater of His own glory. It is a world of great beauty and wonder; a world that allows crops to grow and provides everything that we physically need. Yet, it is also a world of terrible storms and natural disasters. In part, all this is the result of the devastating effects of human sin. As the Apostle Paul makes clear, the whole creation anticipates the redemption that is to come. But, as we experience the reality of weather after the Fall, we should not trace any particular weather pattern to contemporary human sins. Jesus explained that the rain falls on the just and the unjust. The weather is not fair.

Why would God allow hurricanes? The fully satisfying answer to that question is known to God alone. But we do know this much – every atom and molecule of creation testifies of God's glory, reveals His power and nature, and stands under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. God is not a divine spectator, watching planet Earth unwind and revolve. Hurricanes are a part of what He has created, along with sunsets, blizzards, waterspouts, and whirlwinds. God remains the sovereign over all His creation.

How should we pray? Well, we must not pray that the storm would avoid us, only to go elsewhere and harm others. I wonder if many Christians are listening to themselves when they pray storms upon others and claim an answer to prayer when the devastation moves elsewhere. This is unworthy of our Lord's command that we are to love others even as we love ourselves. We must certainly pray for our loved ones, but we must also pray for those we do not know and will never meet on earth.

Perhaps we should pray as Jesus taught us, praying that the Father's will would be done, that all persons would be spared harm, and that Christians would respond in the aftermath of disaster with a clear Christian witness of care, assistance, and witness. We should pray that any 'natural' disaster would be an opportunity for Christian witness to the supernatural Gospel, and for Christian reflection on the beauty of the Savior.

Remember this: Nothing can separate Christians from the love of God. Not hurricanes, not pestilence, not even death.

Let's pray for those in Hurricane Dennis' path, for lives threatened and for lives harmed. And let's pray as Christians should pray, knowing that God is in control and that He has a purpose beyond our understanding. Let's behold the power of the storm as a mere hint of the Creator's omnipotence, and let us all be reminded to trust in Christ, and in Christ alone, for our security.

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<sup>1</sup> Taken from Dr. Mohler's web log, [http://www.albertmohler.com/blog\\_read.php?id=171](http://www.albertmohler.com/blog_read.php?id=171). Dr. Mohler is the president of Southern Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky.