

The Hand of God Working in Our Life

Introduction

1. In what way and to what extent does the providence of God operate on behalf of His children today?

Ephesians 1:3

2. The Bible teaches that God rules in the affairs of men.

A. He did so in the Old Testament

1) Joseph

Genesis 39:21 But the LORD was with Joseph and showed him mercy, and He gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison.

2) Esther

Esther 4:14....Yet who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this?

3) Cyrus, King of Persia

Isaiah 44:28 Who says of Cyrus, 'He is My shepherd, And he shall perform all My pleasure...

B. He does so today

1) Pray for our civil rulers

1 Timothy 2:1-2 Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence.

- a) **If God does not rule or guide in the affairs of men, then why are we to pray for our rulers?**

3. **We do not know how God intervenes, but our inability to understand it does not nullify the fact that He does.**
 - A. **God continues to operate, caring for mankind.**
 - 1) **Some cannot accept this because they equate providence with miracles. In contrast to providence, miracles are supernatural; they are signs and wonders (Acts 2:22), which supercede natural law.**
 - 2) **Providence works within God's laws of nature. He continues to direct the world that He has created.**
4. **God provides for His children which is providence (Matt 6:33).**
 - A. **These things include food, shelter and clothing (V25).**
 - B. **Such provisions are not obtained without effort upon our part.**

2 Thessalonians 3:10If anyone will not work, neither shall he eat.

- 1) **We can be assured that God will provide for our needs if we faithfully serve Him and do our part. Therefore.....**

God Works in us

1. “The Power That Works In Us”

Ephesians 3:14-21

A. Some make this a mystical experience; Others a direct action of the Holy Spirit in the Christian’s life. **Let Context decide:**

- 1) **V14-15**> Father grants you to be strengthened.
- 2) **V16**> His Spirit works upon the inner man.
- 3) **V17**> Results in Christ dwelling in our heart by faith.
- 4) **V17-19**> Benefits: Rooted in love, comprehend, know, filled unto all the fullness of God.
- 5) **V20**> The power works in us - **The power of faith** - The power of God in our lives!

1 John 5:4 For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world--**our faith**.

B. A parallel scripture to Ephesians 3 is **Colossians 1:9-11**

- 1) **God is petitioned to act (fill them); and man is active in being filled with knowledge, understanding, walking worthy and bearing fruit.**
- 2) **We cannot eliminate God or man from this equation.**

C. Man and God are at work to accomplish God’s will in man’s life!

Philippians 2:12-13 Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, **work out your own salvation** with fear and trembling; for it is **God who works in you** both to will and to do for His good pleasure.

How Does God Work in Our Life?

1. Through the gospel

Acts 2:37 Now when they heard this, **they were cut to the heart**, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?"

Acts 2:39 For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the **Lord our God will call.**"

Acts 16:13-15

- A. **V39**> God calls through the gospel - man is convicted
- B. **16:14**> God opened her heart as he does all men through the word (Rom 10:17). *(Some are receptive, some are not)*

2. Through Human Agents

Ephesians 4:11-13

- A. For perfecting us, ministry, growth. Through the work of inspired and uninspired men who deliver the truth to man.
- B. We are laborers together with God.

1 Corinthians 3:9 For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, you are God's building.

3. Through Prayer

- A. Prayer taps into the power of the universe, the love of the Father and the devotion of a trusted friend
John 14:13-14
- B. If there is a relationship with Christ and His word then God works through prayer in your life.
John 15:7

Can Men Do God's Work in Their Lives?

1. Not only can we ----- we must!

John 6:27-29 Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you, because God the Father has set His seal on Him." Then they said to Him, "What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?" Jesus answered and said to them, "This is the work of God, **that you believe in Him whom He sent.**"

A. Faith is a work that we MUST do - Trust in God that when we obey His word --- He works in us --- His will is accomplished in our life.

1) "Trust and Obey"

B. Through our obedience God's works are accomplished in our life.

Philippians 2:12-13 Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.

Conclusion

1. What should we learn concerning the hand of God working in our life today?

A. Learn to Trust in God

1) Replace anxiety and worry with trust

Matthew 6:30-32 Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' "For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For **your heavenly Father knows that you need** all these things.

2) God especially watches over His children (Matt 6:25-34)

B. Remember to pray (Matt 7:7-11)

1) If God is not active in our lives there is neither propriety or protection in prayer.

2) Prayer works because God is at work! **James 5:13-18**

2. God can only work in our life if we allow Him to. This will only occur through faith.

3. When we live by faith, God is working in us to produce His good pleasure within us.

4. The bottom line: ***We should work as if everything depends upon us, and pray as if everything depends upon God!***

