

God Is At Work In Your Life

The God Experience Series –Part 1

Connect: Can you relate a time when something happened in your life and you believe that it was not an accident, nor a coincidence, but the direct hand of God working in your situation? Why do you suppose that God showed up and acted in this particular situation?

Hook: There is an old story about a man who refused to leave his house during a terrible flood. As the water continued to rise, several rescuers stopped by to deliver him to safety. He refused the help stating that by faith, he believed that God would save him. In the fictitious story, the water overtook the man and he died. In Heaven, he stood before God and asked why God had failed him. God replied that He had sent a canoe, then a boat, and eventually, a helicopter to bring him to safety. Yet the man refused the assistance believing he was waiting on God. God tells the man, *“What else could I do?”*

In a humorous way, the old tale states that people can be very stubborn in their expectations of how God should act in their lives. Yet it also reminds us that God is at work in our lives all of the time even when we cannot see it! It is this realization that can help us to have hope, to seize an opportunity, and to consistently ask, *“God, what would you have me to do?”*

Let’s look to an Old Testament story about a contrast that God makes between Himself and the idols of Babylon. The contrast is a perpetual one. Some people carry their religion; others are carried by it. Some are burdened by man-made rules and external ritual; others yield themselves to God, to be borne by Him in old age as they were in the helplessness of childhood.

1. Bel and Nebo, the gods of Babylon, bow as they are lowered to the ground. They are being hauled away on ox carts. The poor beasts stagger under the weight.
2. Both the idols and their owners are bowed down. The gods cannot protect the people, and the people cannot protect the gods. They go off into captivity together.
3. "Listen to Me, descendants of Jacob, all you who remain in Israel. I have cared for you since you were born. Yes, I carried you before you were born.
4. I will be your God throughout your lifetime—until your hair is white with age. I made you, and I will care for you. I will carry you along and save you.
5. "To whom will you compare Me? Who is My equal?
6. Some people pour out their silver and gold and hire a craftsman to make a god from it. Then they bow down and worship it!
7. They carry it around on their shoulders, and when they set it down, it stays there. It can't even move! And when someone prays to it, there is no answer. It can't rescue anyone from trouble.
8. "Do not forget this! Keep it in mind! Remember this, you guilty ones.
9. Remember the things I have done in the past. For I alone am God! I am God, and there is none like Me.
10. Only I can tell you the future before it even happens. Everything I plan will come to pass, for I do whatever I wish.

-Isaiah 46:1-10

Read verses 1-2 and 6-7 again and make a list of why idols are always inferior to the living God:

What might we use in life today to stand in as a substitute (idol) for God?

According to this Bible passage, how long has God been at work in the history of Israel and its people? How long will He continue to work in this nation's life and history?

What did God want His people to remember?

In the first lesson of the "God Experience", Pastor Brandon pointed out that God is at work all around us and that He is doing the following things:

- God upholds all things.
- God governs all events.
- God directs everything to its appointed end.
- God does this all the time and in every circumstance.
- God does it always for His own glory.

How are the above "*God actions*" effecting your life at this moment in time?

Which one of the above 5 actions is hardest for you to embrace? Why?

Accepting that the above 5 actions are true, how and in what area of your life is God challenging you to move forward with Him?

Who do you need to share with this week the truth that God is at work in their life?