

Is God Active Today?
Proverbs 3:5-8

How we view God matters greatly in how we view life and how we understand our purpose and role in this world. Some folks choose to close their eyes and their minds to the beauty of God and see only the evil. **But God is relevant in today's world, just as he was in the 1st Century.** I want us to see that God is not only relevant, *but that He is good and actively blesses each and every day.*

In **Eph. 1:17-19** Paul expressed this prayer, and it is a prayer we all should be willing to pray, ***“that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might...”*** God wants our hearts to be open to his power. God's power towards us who believe is greater than we think!

It was Paul's prayer that the Christians *be open to seeing God at work in their lives*; he wants them to understand what all God really does for us in our daily lives.

How does God work? He is working in a variety of ways. ***First, God works in the universe.*** As a prophet of God, King David, in **Psalm 19:1** said that, ***“The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork.”*** One must only look at the beauty, order, and the wisdom of our universe to see how wise and powerful God is. The God who makes the sun shine and flower bloom, the God who regulates times and seasons has such great power and wisdom that it is truly beyond our understanding. Paul proclaimed in **Acts 14:16-17**, ***“In past generations he allowed all the nations to walk in their own ways. Yet he did not leave himself without witness, for he did good by giving you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, satisfying your hearts with food and gladness.”*** Everything we have from the sunshine to the rain, gives proof of a loving and kind God.

Jesus is not only creator; He is also the one who keeps this world together. The Bible says in **Col. 1:15-17**, ***“He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together.”*** God’s power and wisdom cause our seasons, they cause the earth to rotate every 24 hours making night and day, cause the moon to revolve around the earth every 28 days and controlling the tides of the ocean, and cause the earth to go around the sun every 365 and one fourth days determining our year and our seasons. Despite what atheists wish to believe, the truly discerning person understands that these things cannot happen on their own; God has always been in control.

The Lord Jesus taught us to pray in **Mt. 6:11**, ***“Give us this day our daily bread...”*** You see each and every day we are blessed to have food to eat, food that God provides. For every kernel of corn planted, watered and fertilized, it produces an ear of corn with 16 rows and 800 kernels. Many cornstalks will have more than one ear! God created that kernel of corn with the information and the ability to reproduce itself in that marvelous way.

God is indeed powerful and wise! The Lord Jesus said in **Mark 4:26-29**, that ***“The kingdom of God is as if a man should scatter seed on the ground. He sleeps and rises night and day, and the seed sprouts and grows; he knows not how. The earth produces by itself, first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear. But when the grain is ripe, at once he puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come.”*** God has been taking care of us in marvelous ways for a very long time.

Second, God is at work in your salvation. God sent his only Son to die on the cross; God through the Holy Spirit inspired men to write the Bible including the gospel, which has the power to save; and Christ built His church, who are the saved. From the beginning God has been working toward your salvation. Now the apostle Paul by inspiration in **Eph. 2:4-9** said, ***“But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive***

together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace, you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.”

But the salvation we enjoy through Christ was expensive. It is the gift of God, and for that we are thankful. Great gifts are never cheap, and our redemption came at a price greater than silver and gold. God sacrificed His Son Jesus, and Jesus sacrificed His body on the cross. We must never take our salvation for granted or treat it lightly as if it were trivial. People who mock the Lord, ignore the cross, and criticize the church are usually people who are unthankful for what God has done to save them. They don't realize what He sacrificed to give them eternal life. The Bible is the message of that life. And without the message of the Bible, we would all be in great peril – ‘without hope and without God in this present world.’

The Bible teaches us how to come to Christ, and how the blood of Christ cleanses us, and how we can have new life with Christ. The Bible says in Col. 2:12-13, *“In him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead. And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross.”* You may not realize it, but it is God who is “*at work*” in baptism.

In baptism God unites us with Christ, washes away our sins, takes away the old man of sin, buries us with Christ, and raises us up from spiritual death to life. In baptism God adds us to the church and makes us His children. God is very busy working on us in baptism. And for this reason, I cannot quite

understand why anyone would say baptism is unnecessary for our salvation. Just read what all scripture says about baptism. Baptism is after all, when the Bible says God works on us.

And God doesn't forget us once we are saved. Every Christian still has weaknesses and still sins. Now Christians wish they could keep from sinning; they hate it when they sin and they want to stop afterward. The good thing is that God knows our weaknesses and has made provisions for our weaknesses. In **Hebr. 7:25** we read, ***"Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them."*** You see, that is what Jesus is doing right now for us. He is interceding with the Father on our behalf, asking the Father to forgive us and to continue blessing us, even when we have sinned. I am so thankful for the Lord who loves me enough to pray for me.

Third, God is at work answering prayer. **Isaiah 65:24** has a wonderful promise to believers, ***"Before they call, I will answer; while they are yet speaking, I will hear."*** God wants to hear your prayers; He invites you to pray to Him. We read in **James 1:17**, ***"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change."*** God loves us enough to hear our prayers and to help us when we need Him. The apostle Paul reminds us in **Eph. 3:20-21**, ***"Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen."***

Fourth, God is busy shaping our lives. You see He works in us. God in **Phil 1:6** wrote, ***"And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ."*** You see God prepares His people to do His work, so we may live for an eternity in heaven with Him. *What God is doing in us now prepares us for the life to come.* The Bible says in **Phil. 2:12-13**, ***"Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but 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 work for his good pleasure."*** God is

shaping our hearts, our attitudes, our wills, and our lives to conform to His will so that we might live with Him always.

God also saved us so that we might be His servants, *doing good works and impacting the world for love and righteousness.* In **Eph. 2:10** God tells us, ***“For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.”*** So much good has been done and is being done in this world because of the love of God and His teaching in the Bible, Christians feed the hungry, take care of widows and orphans, help unwed mothers, provide help to the lonely and homeless, and point sinners to righteousness. **God is at work through His church.**

There is a book called, *“The God Problem.”* Its subtitle suggests that God never addresses the problem of evil in the Bible. I don’t know what Bible the author is talking about, because that is a main topic of the Bible. God knows about our suffering, and the cross of Christ demonstrates God’s willingness to suffer for us. **Romans 8:28** says, ***“And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.”*** Now God doesn’t stop every suffering, but He uses even suffering to work for our good. We don’t always understand what God is doing or why; but we know that God loves us and will use every circumstance in our lives, good or bad, pleasing or painful, to work for our good, in some way. **We can trust God!**

David, who was inspired of God, said in **Ps. 103:1-5**, ***“Bless the LORD, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name! Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits, who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from the pit, who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy, who satisfies you with good so that your youth is renewed like the eagle’s.”***

Know this, God has been working in our lives a very long time. He isn’t hidden or dead; and the Bible reminds us of all the good that God is doing for us and in us. Paul in **Acts 20:32** said, ***“And now I commend you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified.”*** God’s word is far from

being harmful. **It is the source of love and life and good and righteousness.** And we need the Bible every single day to help us grow spiritually and in character, and to live like God intended.

God can work in your life: If you let Him. He won't twist your arm; He won't force you to do anything. But if you, **out of love and obedience,** put your life into His hands, He can do some amazing things.

It has never been the lack of power on God's side; it has never been God's willingness to work in our lives that has been lacking. *What is lacking is our willingness to let God into our hearts.*

Prov. 3:5-6 says, "***Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.***" You have to trust Him and let Him work in you. God desires that we believe in Jesus Christ enough to obey Him and trust His promises.

That starts by trusting Him enough to repent of your sins and confess the name of Christ before others. Christ doesn't want secret disciples. **He wants you to confess with your mouth that He is your Lord** and that you believe He is the Christ, the Son of the living God. And after you have *repented and made confession,* He *wants you to be baptized into Christ,* where God will cleanse you with the blood of Jesus and makes you into one of His own children. **Will you let God work in your life?** Then won't you come as we stand and sing?