

WHY THIS SERIES

- My history and the history of this church
- Why this is important right now - people are being drawn into the purposes of others - messaging - voices
- We can get focused on what we think God isn't doing - rather than see what He is

THE SEVEN REALITIES OF EXPERIENCING GOD - How we are using this in our church

1. God is always working
2. He invites us into a relationship with Him
3. He invites us into His Work
4. God speaks - how?
5. His invitation leads us into a crisis of belief
6. We must adjust our life to join Him
7. When we obey God, we experience Him

THE FIRST REALITY:

God is always at work around you - Experiencing God gives us the pattern God uses in scripture as a framework for us today

PREMISE 1:

- A. God is and has always been and is even now working at the macro level

Job 12:22-25 (NIV) - He reveals the deep things of darkness and brings utter darkness into the light. He makes nations great, and destroys them; he enlarges nations, and disperses them. He deprives the leaders of the earth of their reason; he makes them wander in a trackless waste. They grope in darkness with no light; he makes them stagger like drunkards.

Isaiah 46:9-11 (NIV) - Remember the former things, those of long ago; I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me. I make known the end from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come. I say, 'My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please.' From the east I summon a bird of prey; from a far-off land, a man to fulfill my purpose. What I have said, that I will bring about; what I have planned, that I will do.

- B. God is working at the micro level

John 5:16-17 (NIV) - So, because Jesus was doing these things on the Sabbath, the Jewish leaders began to persecute him. In his defense Jesus said to them, "My Father is always at his work to this very day, and I too am working."

John 6:44 (NIV) - "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws them, and I will raise them up at the last day.

Psalms 139:1-5 (NIV) - You have searched me, Lord, and you know me. You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar. You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways. Before a word is on my tongue you, Lord, know it completely. You hem me in behind and before, and you lay your hand upon me.

PREMISE 2:

God is working around us but we often miss it

- Why? We are asking the wrong questions - the wrong focus
 1. We often ask the wrong question, "What is God's will for my life?"
 2. He is working out His will - He loves us and wants to save us. **Luke 19:10** -For the Son of Man came to see and to save the lost.
 3. He is waiting because more will repent - waiting for some to choose Him

2 Peter 3:9-10 (NIV) -The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief.....

- He wants us to join Him in doing His will
- He doesn't just want to use us - He loves us - but His being allowed to use us according to His will is the best way for us to be loved by Him
- A disciple makes disciples
- Saved for a purpose
- A plan we are included in
- Other examples - the Lord's Prayer Matthew 6:9-13

4. He wants us to encourage other believers to finish the race

Jude 20-22 (NIV) - But you, dear friends, by building yourselves up in your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in God's love as you wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to bring you to eternal life. Be merciful to those who doubt;

PREMISE 3:

Commit yourself to His Will in your individual life

- The right question - What is His will? - and choose it

Ephesians 2:8-10 (NIV) -For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

Hebrews 12:1-4 (NIV) - Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart. In your struggle against sin, you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood.

Galations 2:20 (NIV) - I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

QUESTIONS TO REFLECT AND DISCUSS:

Passages to consider: Hebrews 11:1-29, Isaiah 55:9, Colossians 1:15-18, John 16:33

Questions:

1. When was your first experience with God? Who did He work through to bring you to faith through the gospel?
2. What specific area of your life now do you struggle to believe that God is at work and has a plan?
3. Considering Hebrews 11 - What encouragement (and/or conviction) do you get personally from knowing that the God who is at work today, is the same God who worked through biblical heroes like Moses?
4. When have you been tempted to feel that God might not know or care about your situation?
5. Looking back on that time, how did you experience God and see that He was always at work around you?
6. How are you being challenged this week in regards to knowing and doing the will of God?
7. What routines could you establish to help keep you alert to God's work around you?

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