

The Hand of God

Written by Dan Henderson

While considering how to publicly express my love for my 'valentine' this morning, my thoughts wandered into the memories of our meeting some 31 years ago. As I thought over these memories, I was reminded of the many claims of "God brought us together" that I hear from time to time as others speak of such events. Dwelling on these thoughts caused me to consider how I believed regarding such an idea. Can I see God's hand at work in the series of events that brought JoBeth and I together? Yes! Do I believe our marriage was a result of God stepping into the dealings of men and women and causing them to take actions that led to our meeting? No!

Wait a minute! Don't those two answers contradict each other? Not if you understand what the Scripture teaches. Often when we look at such things we want to turn to the Old Testament and find the examples where God directly intervened in the affairs of men to bring about the execution of His Divine plan. We think of Abraham's calling or Moses at the burning bush. Or maybe Noah and the flood, or Elijah on Mt Carmel. The death of Bathseba's child by David is another example some might reference when talking about God working in our lives. There are also several examples in the Gospels that show God directly influenced men and women to take action. All of these seem to indicate that God will work directly in the lives of His Children even today.

What we forget when we use such examples to verify God's work in our life today is that we do not live in the age in which God was bringing His plan to completion. God had not yet finished His work of giving man The Way to return to His Fold during the time of the Gospels of the New Testament. Once God had completed that plan and revealed to the world The Way that leads to salvation there was no more need for Him to interfere with man in order for His plan to be completed. God no longer works directly in the affairs of men as He did in times past. With the revelation of His Good News man has everything needed to make his own choice regarding a return to God.

Now how does that connect to where I started, God's hand at work vs. God stepping into our affairs? Let me use my initial example to explain. Thirty-one years ago, I was a rebellious young man. I had allowed my worldly companions to influence me in a manner that was turning me away from the path I had been taught from my youth. I was on the edge of complete separation from God. Warnings from my parents and grandparents had caused me to pause and consider my direction, but I was still turned the wrong way. At about the same time events were unfolding that would bring my wife-to-be into my life. Her dad was moving to the area to preach. Her parents and mine were associated with one another on the Gulf Coast. He moved his daughter from college to my Grandparent's house a few weeks before they moved. My sister became acquainted with my wife-to-be and took initiative to introduce us one morning at my apartment.

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My wife-to-be got sick and was ill for several weeks. My sister made sure to get us together again after JoBeth was well. That led to 31 years together, just over 30 of it joined as husband and wife. I might add about 20 of those years have been spent preaching the Gospel.

Many might look at the above events and say God did this or God did that and thus caused us to find one another. I see it differently. I see two families who are influenced by God's Word to live by the principles found therein. I see a father, concerned for his daughter's well-being, moving her home to attend college where he could better use the resources available to him and have more influence with her. I see a godly older couple opening their home to someone in a time of opportunity. I see a sister, who probably knows more than others in the family, with constant concern for her wayward older brother. What can clearly be seen in all the above events is individuals who have chosen to serve God according to His Principles and Commands making choices in accordance with those teachings. These choices brought about a change in me, a reminder of those teachings I had heard since I was young, that brought me back from the brink of disaster. The choices each of these individuals made, even my wife-to-be choosing not to heed all the advice given by her parents regarding me, brought us together. Was God's Hand at work? Yes, through the teaching and precepts of His revealed Word, but not as a special influence in their minds or an intervention in the natural course of events. God's Word guided their choices because they decided to let Him rule in their life.

God will work in your life also. If you will listen to His Word. Don't wait for some special revelation in your heart, listen to what He has already revealed and let it sink into your heart. That is where God's Work comes into our life. Read, Study, Obey His Word. If I can help, let me know.