

Miracles

God's Work Today

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See also *Miracles: From God or Man?* by Jimmy Jividen

God's Work Today

- God is at work, but not miraculously (1 Cor. 13:8-10)
- Jesus promised he will be with his disciples always (Mt. 28:20)
- God works all things according to the counsel of his will (Eph. 1:11)
- God is still able to do infinitely more than we ask or imagine (Eph. 3:20-21)

God's Sustaining Work

- God works silently in the universe to sustain his laws through Jesus (Heb. 1:3)
- We see that God is actively at work in nature
- God did not create the world by his power and then cut off that power
- He continues to sustain the world to this present day

God's Order

- If God ceased sustaining the universe for one moment, the universe would disintegrate into the nothingness from which it was created
- In creation God made order (*kosmos* in classical Greek and the LXX)
- Order was made possible by certain laws which govern the universe

God's Design

- The planets stay in their orbits
- The sea stays within its bounds
- The seasons follow a certain order
- Vegetation produces according to its kind (Gen. 1:11-12)
- These laws of order/nature do not exist in and of themselves

God's Constant Work

- God who spoke the laws of order into existence sustains their orderliness by his constant power
- Just as a machine does not function by itself, the created universe is not a self-sustaining system
- Both a machine and the universe cannot function without an operator

God Sustains Us

- God's activity in creation cannot be separated from his work in sustaining all that he created (Col. 1:15-17)
- To suggest that God has ceased to work in the world since there is no longer divine inspiration or confirming miracles is to know only one small aspect of God's being and power

If God Is Not Working...

- If God is not working in nature, why pray for daily food?
- Why thank God for his constant care?
- If God is not still working in the world, why pray for the sick?
- We pray because God is working (Rom. 8:28)

God's Activity

- God is no less active when he works within the natural order of the universe
- It is an act of God when any sickness is cured, even though it is done according to the laws of order (non-miraculous act of God) (Jas. 1:17)
- All healing comes from God (Ex. 15:26; contrast the devil, 1 Pet. 5:8)

God's Healing Activity

- It is no less an act of God that the doctor is able to use physical therapy, drugs, diet or surgery to bring about the cure
- The doctor just brings God's laws together to benefit humans
- The doctor is not the healer but only a means through whom God heals

Prayer

- “whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do the things that are pleasing in His sight” (1 Jn. 3:22)
- God hears and answers every prayer of the faithful (1 Jn. 5:14-15)

Prayer & Desire

- God may not always answer prayer according to the desires of the one praying (e.g. Jesus, Paul)
- Fathers often do not give their children everything they ask
- What children want might not be what they need

Granting Selectively

- Children's desires might be immature wishing or unhealthy desires
- Just as a father is selective in fulfilling his children's requests, the heavenly Father is selective in granting the requests of his children's prayers (Mt. 7:7-11)

Seeking & Yielding

- Prayer is not only seeking to get God to yield to our petitions, it is just as much a yielding of our will to his
- Jesus and James taught and practiced that the overriding desire of prayer is for God's will to be done (Mt. 26:39, 42, 44; Jas. 4:13-15)

Prayer & Planning

- When we leave God out of our plans, no matter how “successful” we may become, we will fail (Mt. 7:24-27)
- When we fit into God's plan, God will help us plan our lives
- Make God our Architectural Planner from the beginning (Ps. 127:1; Eccles. 12; 1 Cor. 3:11)

Prayer & Planning

- A future in which God has no part in planning is a future without hope
- We do not know all that is best for ourselves; God knows and we must cast our cares on him (1 Pet. 5:7)
- Prayer enables us to plan with God

The Impact of Prayer

- Prayer changes things
- God can and does “manipulate” natural law, wielding it according to his will
- While God manipulates natural law, as is the case with prayer (Jas. 5:16), he no longer violates natural law with miracles (Mk. 16:20; 1 Cor. 13:8-10)