

What in the World is God Doing? (Part 2)

Five Things God is “Up to” in the Lives of Biblical Christians

“There are no political solutions for spiritual problems.” I have been using that expression for years now. Never, in our nation’s history, has it been more true or more on display. It would appear there are more millions who support an anti-Christian, anti-biblical agenda than those who oppose it, which is in itself a sad testimony to the state of our “one nation under gods.”

That may be perceived as political commentary, but I assure you it is a spiritual one. Those who read the Bible know honesty and integrity are high among Judeo-Christian values as they are in most other world religions. You need only look back to Germany, less than one hundred years ago, to see what results when dishonest, even demonic, people infiltrated the church and governments. (Read 1 John for his incredibly strong words on antichrists in the church of his day. I did a five-week series on his epistle and strongly suggest you watch those videos or listen to the podcasts.)

I am convinced—otherwise I would not write this— that the Holy Spirit is on a mission to use this demonically inspired chaos to stir up and call to arms (spiritual weapons) those who are real ***born-again Christians***, part of the corporate body of Christ. No doubt the virus has taken a toll on many churches in terms of ability to meet and worship, financial repercussions, and overall spiritual health of some churches. Many questions surface in times like these even among Christians who believe in the sovereignty of God. One such question is:

“What in the World is God Doing?”

Here are five clear areas in which the Holy Spirit is working on and for Christians. The first three are painful but necessary as you will see if you have not previously experienced them. The last two are great encouragements to us—reasons that ours is an eternal hope.

Pruning. The Last Supper meal is over. Jesus had washed the disciples' feet as a sign of how we are to love and serve one another. This would be the last time they would be together alone. So He taught them much during these hours. Two discourses on the Holy Spirit bookend chapter 15 from which we read His powerful words on pruning.

"I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. "Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit, He prunes it so that it may bear more fruit. "You are already clean (pruned) because of the word which I have spoken to you. "Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me. "I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing. "If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away as a branch and dries up; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire and they are burned." John 15: 1-6

- If we are truly born-again in Christ, we have been grafted into Him (the Vine).
- God our Father is the Vinedresser Who works thru the Holy Spirit to produce His desired fruit. (See Galatians 5: 22-23)
- A branch cannot produce fruit unless it is healthily affixed to the vine. Neither do we.
- Apart from Jesus, we you can do NOTHING. Works of the flesh are futile and have no eternally sustainable value.
- Scary verse 6. Ought to scare the Hell out of you.

Purging. *"You must purge the evil from you."* (See Deuteronomy 13: 5)

God said this to Moses more than a dozen times in the Books of Law. I was amazed to find the number of times that phrase or one like it appears throughout the Bible in various translations—more than twenty. In nearly every context, it means the same thing:

God hates evil.

He hates what it does to His people—everything from idolatry to adultery. Evil has great power in and over our world today—including our nation. Evil distracts our minds from what we should be focusing on. Evil discourages, even depresses, even the strongest believers at some point. Evil destroys some people completely.

Jesus took it (and its source, Satan) very seriously. He taught us to do the same. He warned us of the coming destruction of evil and all who chose it over Him. John the Baptist, the forerunner of Jesus, taught the same message.

"The axe is already laid at the root of the trees; therefore every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. "As for me, I baptize you with water for repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, and I am not fit to remove His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. "His winnowing fork is in His hand, and He will thoroughly (purge) clear His threshing floor; and He will gather His wheat into the barn, but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." Matthew 3: 10-12

Jesus cleared (purged) the temple twice. The second time was on Palm Sunday as He entered the temple for the last time before He was crucified

"And Jesus entered the temple and drove out all those who

were buying and selling in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who were selling doves. And He said to them, "It is written, 'MY HOUSE SHALL BE CALLED A HOUSE OF PRAYER'; but you are making it a ROBBERS' DEN.'" Matthew 21: 12-13

"Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own?" 1 Corinthians 6: 19

The Holy Spirit coupled these verses today to remind us that Jesus cleared the temple of God from evil and things considered unclean or outside the purpose of what God intended. The Apostle Paul reminded us that our bodies are considered by God as His property and temples of a sort to be holy and used for His purposes not ours.

Answering these questions will help you understand if you are allowing the Holy Spirit to ***purge your temple?***

- Is our temple (mind and body) used to glorify God, self, or man?
- Is it a house of prayer (time spent with God) of a "den of thieves" (stealing His time and money) ?
- Is it so contaminated with the things of this world, our "branches" are shriveling—being starved of the essential food from the Vine (Jesus)?

Purifying. Because I come from a background in metallurgy and metals fabrication and processing, dross and slagging always come to mind when I think of the purifying process. The Bible even uses the word Dross are the impurities that rise to the surface during the melting process to refine precious metals like gold and silver. Slagging is the process of removing them from the top. **The purpose is to leave as pure a metal as possible** once these impurities are removed. What a great analogy for the working of the Holy Spirit in our lives! These Old Testament verses teach us about the process. God is

the Refiner.

"Then I will purify the lips of the peoples, that all of them may call on the name of the LORD and serve him shoulder to shoulder." Zephaniah 3: 9

"And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the LORD an offering in righteousness." Malachi 3:3

David, in the depths of despair over his sins related to the affair with Bathsheba, cried out to God knowing he needed to be purified.

"Purify me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." Psalm 51: 7

Hyssop is a bush the branches of which were used for cleansing purposes, especially during the early days of Israel. It was used as the paintbrush to spread the blood on the doorposts before the Angel of Death passed over His people. David knew the connection and used it in his great psalm of repentance. A hyssop branch was used to carry the sponge of sour wine to the mouth of Jesus on the Cross in His final act before He died.

The Apostle Paul, himself a converted Jew, brought purifying from the Old to the New Testament. He taught us very clearly what God wants.

*"looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus, who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and **to purify for Himself a people** for His own possession, zealous for good deeds." Titus 2: 13-14*

Now comes our part.

*"Therefore, since we have these promises, dear friends, **let***

us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God.”
2 Corinthians 7: 1

How we purify ourselves:

- Prayer
- Immersion in His Word
- Allowing the Holy Spirit to examine all areas of our lives that need purification.

Protection

- First from Satan and demonic enemies.

“But the Lord is faithful, and He will strengthen and protect you from the evil one.” 1 Thessalonians 3: 3

- Protects our salvation – keeps us secure.

*“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are **protected by the power of God through faith** for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.”* 1 Peter 3: 5

Preserving.

- Our salvation is preserved. You cannot lose your salvation.

“The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, thou shalt preserve them from this generation forever.” (Psalm 12:6-7, KJV)

Jude, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to those who are called, sanctified by God the Father,

and preserved in Jesus Christ: Jude 1: 1

This message was written to believers—those who are born again in Christ. For those who have questioned God or simply rejected Him and the claims of Christ—that He is God and the Risen Messiah, I beg you to reconsider. For Jesus Himself said this:

“Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.” John 14: 6

The path to salvation goes through the Cross of Christ. To receive His gift of salvation all you need do is this. You know in your heart you have sinned – we all have – no one is perfect. You also know you need God in and over your life. The Apostle John, who was closest of all Jesus’ disciples wrote this.

“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” 1 John 1: 9

So my weary friend, just stop and confess your sins to the Lord Who is quick to hear and forgive them and remove any guilt from your life because the blood of Christ cleanses all who seek and receive Him as Savior. I have prayed for you even before you read these words.

Once you receive Christ as your Savior seek out the fellowship of a Bible-teaching church full of believers who will love you, help you grow in Him, and walk with you all the way Home.

For Christ’s sake,

Walter

