

“When God Is Inattentive”

When God..., Part 1

November 8th & 11th, 2018

One of the most frustrating things about believing in God is when God seems either **inattentive**, **uncooperative**, or **late**

Often when this happens, we feel it’s only happening to **me**

To make matters worse preachers and well-meaning friends make the Christian life seem so **easy**, so if things aren’t working out for you, it’s probably your **fault**

Then you see life working out for others who don’t even try to **follow God**

Our faith takes a hit, and we are tempted to believe, “If God is **silent**, He must be **absent**”

So there goes our **faith**, there goes our **confidence**, & there goes our **hope**

Matthew 3:1-2 (NIV) “In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea and saying, ‘Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near.’”

Mark 6:17-20 (NIV) “¹⁷ For Herod himself had given orders to have John arrested, and he had him bound and put in prison. He did this because of Herodias, his brother Philip’s wife, whom he had married. ¹⁸ For John had been saying to Herod, ‘It is not lawful for you to have your brother’s wife.’ ¹⁹ So Herodias nursed a grudge against John and wanted to kill him. But she was not able to, ²⁰ because Herod feared John and protected him, knowing him to be a righteous and holy man. When Herod heard John, he was greatly puzzled; yet he liked to listen to him.”

John 1:29 (NIV) “The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, ‘Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!’”

John 1:19-20 (NIV) “...the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem sent priests and Levites to ask him [John] who he was. ²⁰ He did not fail to confess, but confessed freely, ‘I am not the Messiah.’”

John was in prison for doing the **right** thing

Matthew 11:2-3 (NIV) “When John, who was in prison, heard about the deeds of the Messiah, he sent his disciples ³ to ask Him, ‘Are you the one who is to come, or should we expect someone else?’”

It’s interesting that when our circumstances take a sudden change, it impacts our **confidence** in God

There is something very selfish and self-centered about our **loss** of faith (confidence) in God

When disasters hit around the world, we pray and give, but it doesn’t **shatter** our faith in God

I lose faith when God is inattentive to my **happiness** – not yours

There are seasons of pain & turmoil where our lives and worldviews **shrink** to the size of **me**

Matthew 11:4-5 (NIV) “⁴ Jesus replied, ‘Go back and report to John what you hear and see: ⁵ The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is proclaimed to the poor.’”

It is easy to let your faith get swallowed up in your **immediate surroundings**

Matthew 11:6 (NIV) “⁶ Blessed is anyone who does not stumble on account of Me.”

God may allow or do stuff that makes it hard to **continue** believing

Matthew 11:11 (NLT) “I tell you the truth, of all who have ever lived, none is greater than John the Baptist.”

Your personal circumstances do not necessarily **coincide** with how God **feels** about you
Proof of how God feels about you is seen by what happened on the **cross**
God's seeming inactivity in your life is not a **reflection** of His activity in the world
Don't make the mistake of hanging & letting your faith hinge on what God has done for you **lately**
When God seems inattentive in your life, look back and **remember**, look outside your circumstances and **reflect**
What is happening to you **now** doesn't discount the reality of **past** answered prayer
God was real **then**, He's real **now** – He's just not expressing His reality the way that you **want** Him to now
Look outside of your own life and see the activity of God **around you** in the world
When God seems inattentive: Look **back**; Look **out**; Look **ahead**
When God seems inactive, uninvolved, far away, not paying attention, late, God hasn't moved one inch off the center of His throne – God is right where God **wanted to be**
Luke 22:42 (NIV) "[Jesus prayed] Father, if You are willing, take this cup from Me; yet not My will, but Yours be done."
Matthew 11:6 (NIV) "Blessed is anyone who does not stumble on account of Me."
God is paying **attention**; He knows your **name**; He knows your **circumstances**
There is a **promise** at the end of your faithfulness – in spite of what Jesus hasn't done for you lately, in spite of what God hasn't done for you lately, in spite of the fact nothing is changing for you
You never, ever have to **doubt** God's love for you, His will for you, His plan for you; and His ability to take what seems like wasted time and blend it into something far greater than you ever imagined

My Next Step Today Is...

- I am in a time in my life where I feel God is being inattentive to me. I will continue to trust God.
- I will spend some time looking back at my life & my relationship with Christ, looking out in the world to see what God is doing, and looking ahead to what lies beyond this life on earth & God's promises for the future
- I/we plan to attend Dave Ramsey's (3 hour) "Smart Money" live stream event, this Thurs, Nov 15th at beginning 4:45 pm

Next Week: **"When God...doesn't cooperate."** Invite a friend!!!