

FEARLESS FAITH
EXPERIENCING GOD EVERY DAY!

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God is Working!

John 5:17-20

Men's Breakfast

Sermon given on September 15, 2018



Pastor Rick Lancaster

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Opening Comments

- Today we continue a series that comes from the theme from the retreat: **FEARLESS FAITH – Experiencing God every day!!**
- The Men's Life Groups are going through the book Experiencing God by Henry Blackaby – Knowing and doing the will of God
- We come to know God's will by getting to know God better
- We can also come to know God's will by studying how Jesus reacted to the will of God the Father
- Our goal through this series of messages is to help you to know God better so that you can do His will, and do it fearlessly
- Let's pray and ask the Holy Spirit to do something radical in our hearts
- **Pray**

Teaching

- Turn to **John 5**
- The title of this morning's message is **God is Working!**
- In chapter six of the book Experiencing God says that one of the ways to do God's will is to look for where God is working and go there
- The author uses Jesus as our example – that is always a good way to make a point
- In the beginning of John 5 Jesus is at the Pool of Bethesda
- While there He performs a miracle and heals a man who had been a cripple for 38 years
- Sounds awesome, right? Just one little problem
- **John 5:16**
- Sabbath = Saturday – Jews holy day of rest – no regular work
- **John 5:17**
- Jesus says God is always working, so I keep working
- The Jews detect something else in what Jesus says here
- **John 5:18**

- Jesus is claiming to have the same will as God the Father – to be equal with God the Father
- To the Jews, that was blasphemy – no human is equal with God
- Question: Is Jesus equal with God the Father? Yes!
- But then Jesus says something that confuses some people
- **John 5:19a**
- ‘the Son can do nothing of Himself’
- Turn to **Philippians 2**
- Jesus = God, but can do nothing of Himself – seems contradictory
- Jesus was, is, will always be God (100%) = with the Father
- John tells us that God took on human flesh – Jesus = man (100%)
- This is such an important thing to understand
- You cannot understand how to do God’s will if you don’t understand how Jesus did it
- **Philippians 2:5-6**
- Jesus was not stealing anything from God by claiming to be equal with The Father
- Example: I am not taking anything from Kelly saying she is my wife
- How about if I say I am her master and she is my slave?
- Paul continues
- **Philippians 2:7**
- ‘made Himself of no reputation’ – ‘emptied Himself of His privileges’
- As God, Jesus had all the privileges of God – omniscience, omnipotence, omnipresence
- He chose to lay all those privileges aside – beyond His reach
- Example – car keys in desk – cannot reach while here
- **Philippians 2:8**
- Even though Jesus never stopped being God, He chose to set aside all His privileges as God while He walked as a man on this earth
- Turn back to **John 5**
- When Jesus said, ‘the Son can do nothing of Himself’ He meant He didn’t have access to the privileges of God, chose to have no access

- Instead He made Himself utterly dependent upon God the Father for the direction of His daily walk
- If you want to experience God and walk fearlessly in His presence, it will depend upon you learning to depend upon Him
- As men, we have usually learned to depend upon ourselves
- Even when we cannot do something, we often believe we can solve our problem ourselves
- Jesus is saying He was unwilling to try to do anything according to His own will
- The first characteristic of a man able to join God where he is working is **Dependent**
- As men we need to unlearn our ungodly trait of independence from God
- My upbringing and early adult life taught me that if I wanted anything I was going to have to work for it, fight for it, or make it happen myself
- Now I am trying to be like Paul **1 Corinthians 2:2**
For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.
- I am learning that it doesn't matter what I want unless I want what God wants for me
- Jesus lived His life wanting only what God wanted for Him
- Because Jesus chose to depend upon God completely He was incapable of anything of Himself
- We see the second characteristic as we continue to read verse 19
- **John 5:19b**
- 'but what He sees the Father do'
- Jesus was always looking to see where the Father was working and then choosing to join Him
- The second characteristic of a man who is able to join God where he is working is **Observant**
- Turn to **Acts 3**
- Jesus was looking for God all around Him
- Last Sunday's message, Jesus is taking the disciples away to rest
- The multitudes follow – Jesus saw God working in this crowd – taught them, healed them, and fed them

- What appears, from our perspective, as an interruption to Jesus' plan, was God at work – Jesus chose to join God in what He was doing in the multitude
 - God's will, will almost always appear in your life as some kind of interruption to your plan
 - We see it here with Peter and John
 - **Acts 3:1**
 - Peter and John are on the way to pray – to do something spiritual
 - That is their plan – God is at work, and they observe it
 - **Acts 3:2-8**
 - Was it God's will that this crippled man be healed? Yep!
 - Neither Peter nor John had healing power inherently within themselves – told the man – we got nothing to give you!
 - God was working in this man, Peter and John joined Him and something miraculous happened
 - Turn back to **John 5**
 - Jesus was observant – He was looking for where God was working, and joined Him, dependent upon God to do what God wanted, not what Jesus wanted
 - Be dependent – be observant – rest of verse 19 for third characteristic
 - **John 5:19c**
 - Jesus wasn't living to do His own will, and when Jesus saw the Father at work, He chose to get involved
 - The third characteristic of a man who is able to join God as he works is **Obedient**
 - Jesus depended upon God for every direction of His life, He lived His life looking for where God was working, and then He did what He saw God was doing
 - It almost goes without saying that doing the will of God requires obedience to God **1 John 5:2-3**
- By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome.**
- Love is the motivation – If we truly love God, we will want what He wants

- If you are not sure if you love God – start there – ask God to fill your heart with His love – ask Him to change your heart **Ezekiel 26:26**
I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.
- Three things Jesus shows us in this text
- **Dependent** – unlearn the ungodly trait of independence from God
- Turn to God with every choice and decision and seek His will
- **Observant** – God is always at work around you – pray and ask God to give you eyes to see what He is doing
- **Obedient** – When you do see God at work, choose to join Him, no matter what it is He is doing
- One of our problems, is that we often do not have spiritual eyes to see what God is doing
- Faith is acting upon what we believe
- You don't have to know where God is working, you just have to believe God is working – it takes a step of faith
- A step of faith is moving outside your comfort zone
- Every time you take a step of faith it teaches you a little more about being dependent upon God, helps you to see where God is working more clearly, and encourages you to obey more quickly
- Someone out there is thinking, that's great pastor, but how do I do it? Where do I start?
- I am going to give you three steps to experiencing God and doing His will fearlessly
- Step one – **Prayer**
- When you get up in the morning talk to God – ask Him to help you be dependent upon Him, to help you to see where He is working, and the faith to obey
- Step two – **Faith**
- You can't know the will of God if you don't know God – read the Bible every day
- Step three – **Do something**
- But what should we do? Ideally it would be what God wants you to do, right? What if you don't know what that is? Should we wait until

God splits the heavens and sends an angel with a scroll telling us what to do? No!

- As you go through your day, look around with eyes to see God at work
- In every situation, and with every person, ask God to tell you what He is doing – if you do that and you **think** you hear something, do it
- If not, just do something that causes you to depend upon God in faith believing that He wants to do something
- Here are seven things you can do
- First – **Pray with a stranger**
- If God is always working, is there a chance that He is working in someone you will encounter within the next 24 hours?
- Do you think God wants you to pray for that person? Is it possible that it is His will for you to pray with that person? You betcha!
- Say something like, ‘I believe God hears and answers prayers. And I believe He wants me to pray for you. How can I pray for you?’
- Second – **Start a spiritual conversation with someone who is undecided in their faith**
- I don’t mean preach the gospel to them – just talk to them about something spiritual – ask them what they believe in and why
- Third – **Invite a man to the Men’s Life Group**
- Especially a man who is spiritually undecided, or has drifted from God – be ready to tell them what you get out of the meeting
- Fourth – **Perform an act of kindness to someone you don’t have to**
- Fifth – **Invite someone to church** – spiritually undecided or distant
- Sixth – **Pray by yourself for longer than is comfortable**
- Seventh – **Serve at church on Sunday or for the church during the week**
- Each day pick one of these and do it, until you have done all seven
- My guess is, you will sense God’s presence in one or more of them
- That may give you a clue about where God is working around you, and where He wants you to join Him
- If you really want to experience God and do His will fearlessly, take these seven steps of faith and watch what God does - **Prayer**