

The Master's Hand

Pastor Gladwyn Turner
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Introduction:

God desires to have the right place in our lives...As our creator He wants us to recognise the fact that He plays an indispensable part in the life that we live. Luke writing the Acts of the Apostles says that He is *not far from each one of us* and that...

In Him we live and move and have our being... Acts 17:28.

The issue for many of us is that we go about life thinking that we are doing life on our own. There is no place given for God, or even the fact that He wants to be involved in our lives. Within the human context those of us who have a creative streak identify with the fact that there is an emotional attachment to the very thing that we have created....so if anyone criticises, alters, mars or destroys that work, whatever it is, we become distraught and just sometimes our wrath is second only to the wrath of God. Those who create always have an attachment to the things that they have created....God is no different! He has an attachment to us and the fact is that we live and have our being because of that attachment, even if we never acknowledge Him in our lives.

If God as our creator has such an attachment then is it possible that He has a plan for us, after all things are normally created for a purpose. One of my spiritual mentors many years ago used to refer to God as a great lonely God! What did He mean? Obviously, it was the fact that despite the angels, the stars and all that He had created there was some sort of void that God must have felt. The answer to that we find in the book of Genesis...

Gen.1:26 *Then God said, "Let us make man in Our image, according to our likeness... V27... in the image of God He created him... V28 God blessed them...*

God created for the purpose of fellowship so we find that after creating man and woman He has a constant communion with them (Note Chap 2). We find God coming to the garden in *the cool of the day* to talk with them (3:8).

God's hand in our lives does not stop with creation...it continues...

1. God has a purpose for us:

Jer. 1:5 *"Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; Before you were born I sanctified you; And I ordained you a prophet to the nations."*

We see God calling Jeremiah with a divine purpose. Note that God saw Jeremiah in the womb and states that He is a part of the formative process. He was to be a prophet, God's mouthpiece to the nation of Judah, the southern kingdom of Israel. There is always a purpose for every one of us. Sin has marred that purpose in our lives and comes against God communicating the purpose for which we have been created.

You might think, well that is good what a charmed life Jeremiah must have lived hearing from God, in fellowship with God, and speaking for God to His people. Well, just because you have such a connection with God doesn't mean that life will be a bed of roses. It certainly wasn't for Jeremiah. The people rejected the exhortations brought through him of repentance, of calling the people out from their idolatrous ways, and turning back to the Lord. The Lord said...

Jer.1:9b *"behold, I have put My words in your mouth..."*

The cost was great...it was personal because they were his own countrymen he was prophesying doom against. As we follow Jeremiah's life we find...

- He mourns

Jer. 8:20,21a. *"The harvest is past, The summer is ended, And we are not saved!" For the hurt of the daughter of my people I am hurt. I am mourning....*

- He is forbidden a wife

On top of this Jeremiah is forbidden to take a wife and have sons and daughters because God wants to relieve him of the pain that is coming upon his people...

Jer.16: 2-4 *"You shall not take a wife, nor shall you have sons or daughters in this place." For thus says the LORD concerning the sons and daughters who are born in this place, and concerning their mothers who bore them and their fathers who begot them in this land: "They shall die gruesome deaths; they shall not be lamented nor shall they be buried, but they shall be like refuse on the face of the earth. They shall be consumed by the sword and by famine, and their corpses shall be meat for the birds of heaven and for the beasts of the earth."*

As if that isn't; enough....

- He is persecuted

Jer.18:18 *Then they said, "Come let us devise plans against Jeremiah...Come and let us attack him with the tongue..."*

Jer.20:7 *I am in derision daily; everyone mocks me....*

- He is threatened with death (**Jer.26:8,9,11**)
- Falsely accused, beat and imprisoned him (**Jer. 37:13-15**)
- Put him in a dungeon (disused well), without water (**Jer.38:6**)

Despite it all God is with him. God preserves Jeremiah. You would think that after such trauma he might have given up on God. Jeremiah doesn't because he sees the master's hand in his life; he knows that God has created him for a purpose.

2. What is my purpose?

If we are without a purpose or feel misdirected in life it is because our purpose is always found in God. When we find God we find our purpose. The first purpose we discover is the purpose of life itself. Jesus said...

John 5:40 *"But you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life..."*

We discover life does not revolve around ourselves but around God as the author of life. In other words true life is not found in man's self centredness but in making God central to his life. When we meet God our life focus is changed...we move from narcissism to being more outward focused and concerned for others and in general our lives begin to revolve around the welfare of others to a greater extent. This is because we are all created in the image of God and no man can bear the image of God without truly being concerned for others who bear that same image, no matter the colour of their skin.

Finding God unlocks the purpose God has for me. The good news is that God has come to seek and to save those who are lost to that purpose.

Matt.7:7,8 *"Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened."*

God wants us to be fulfilled in not only the knowledge of our purpose but in practise of that. The redemptive factor is...that...

Luke 19:10... *the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost."*

We are lost to the purpose of God without Him in our life. Find God and you find not only life but also your purpose.

It all begins with His hand upon our lives and our wanting Him to take charge and give direction. We can't do it on our own no matter how smart we think we are! We are God dependant....all life issues from Him. A smart person allows Him to direct that life!

READ the poem:

**“The Touch of the Master’s Hand.”
By Myra B Welch**

*Twas battered and scarred, and the auctioneer
thought it scarcely worth his while
To waste much time on the old violin
But held it up with a smile,
“What am I bidden, good folks, “he cried,
“Who’ll start the bidding for me?
A dollar, a dollar, then two! Only two?
Two dollars, and who’ll make it three?
Three dollars, once, three dollars, twice;
Going for three.....”
But no,
From the room, far back, a gray-haired man
Came forward and picked up the bow;
Then, wiping the dust from the old violin,
And tightening the loose strings,
He played a melody pure and sweet
As a carolling angel sings.*

*The music ceased, and the auctioneer,
With a voice that was quiet and low, said;
“What am I bid for the old violin?”
And he held it up with the bow.
“A thousand dollars, and who will make it two?
“Two thousand! And who will make three?
Three thousand , once, three thousand, twice;
And going and gone, said he.*

*The people cheered, but some of them cried,
“We do not quite understand, what changed its worth?”
Swift came the reply;
“The Touch Of The Masters Hand.”*

*And many a man with life out of tune,
And battered and scarred with sin,
Is auctioned cheap to the thoughtless crowd,
Much like the old violin.
A mess of potage, a glass of wine;
A game- and he travels on.
He is ‘going’ once, and ‘going’ twice,
He’s ‘going’ and almost ‘gone’.
But the Master comes and the foolish crowd
Never can quite understand
The worth of a soul and the change that’s wrought
By the touch of the Master’s Hand.*

Questions

1. What do we mean when we say that people have an attachment to the things that they create? Do you consider this normal?
2. Is it reasonable to suggest that God has such an attachment to us?
3. Out of creativity comes purpose. For what purpose did God create man?
4. Is it appropriate to suppose that God has a purpose for each one of us? Read Psalm 139. What did you discover?
5. What is the greatest threat to a person fulfilling their purpose in God?
6. Where can a person find their purpose?
7. Discuss the changes that you would expect to find in a person that has found their purpose?