

God Is Working

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Date: 10 May 2020

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[0 : 00] The following sermon is made available by Lakeside Bible Church in Cornelius, North Carolina.

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Let's turn in our Bibles to Habakkuk chapter 1. Habakkuk chapter 1. We left our friend Habakkuk last week after exploring the desperate spirit with which he cried to the Lord and prayed to the Lord. And we saw that his initial question had to do with essentially two things, God's timing and God's seeming tolerance towards the sin of the nation.

[1 : 05] And I want us to be careful not to unwittingly disparage Habakkuk as we examine his prayer. To be honest with you, I feel like I probably did that too much last week in our study of the first four verses.

I hesitate even to reference Habakkuk's prayer as a complaint because it's really just a result of his confusion, the same confusion that we deal with.

It wasn't that he was antagonistic towards the Lord or doubtful of God. He was confused. He was perplexed by what God was doing or in his perspective by what God wasn't doing.

And so I want us to be careful not to portray this man in a way that he's undeserving of.

God's timing to Habakkuk seemed to be like tolerance. But Habakkuk knew better than that. He understood that God is holy and he wasn't questioning God's holiness.

[2 : 11] He wasn't questioning God's hatred of sin. He just couldn't understand why God was silent and had allowed things to seem as if he was tolerant of sin.

Habakkuk was a holy man and he prayed a righteous prayer. But there's still a lot that we can learn from the dialogue between he and God throughout this book.

And that's exactly why God has so graciously gifted it to us as a part of the Bible. Well, verses 5 through 11 that we cover today cover God's answer to Habakkuk's first dilemma.

God had actually been active all along, behind the scenes for a long time. And his explanation to the prophet immediately serves as a reminder to us that God's methods do not often agree with our expectations.

In fact, much about the way God works is actually a mystery to us. God said in Isaiah 55, he said, Interestingly, Isaiah recorded those words in the context of God's forgiveness.

[3 : 39] But the point is it lost. God's perfect character means that his methods will greatly differ from what we anticipate. And it's only as we look at life through the lens of the scriptures that we can begin to comprehend why God works in the way that he does.

We must know him in order to understand his ways. And even then, we will often feel confused and pray prayers like Habakkuk prayed in the first few verses.

It's in these moments that trusting God is of utmost importance. As Babby Mason sang, When you don't understand and when you don't see his plan, when you can't trace his hand, trust his heart.

And there's going to be a lot of times in our lives where we don't understand what God is doing. And we're questioning whether or not he's being silent and why he seems to be so tolerant of the wickedness that's around us.

Or why he has brought various things into our lives. Hardships and so on and so forth. And when we don't understand all of those things, we can always trust that God is right.

[4 : 49] And that though his ways do not always agree with our expectations, his ways are always best. And we must continually trust him. Now, Martin Lloyd-Jones in 1953, there was a book that

was published that was a series of sermons that he had preached on the book of Habakkuk just after World War II in England.

And I'm actually going to quote him a number of times throughout our message today. But in regards to this, he said, We all tend to prescribe the answers to our prayers. We think that God can only come in one way.

But Scripture teaches us that God sometimes answers our prayers by allowing things to get much worse before they get better. He may sometimes do the opposite of what we anticipate. He may overwhelm us by confronting us with a Chaldean army. Yet it is a fundamental principle in the life and walk of faith that we must always be prepared for the unexpected when we are dealing with God.

And this is how we come to understand Habakkuk's prayer most clearly. The expectation of his prayer did not match what God was doing.

[6 : 09] And it left Habakkuk confused. But it's not the perplexity of the prophet that is to gain our attention in these verses today, in verses 5 through 11.

Rather, it is the sovereign power of God that is to be our focus. And consequently, become the motivation for our worship.

God's answer reveals that he is always working. It reveals that he is in sovereign control of all the events of history, no matter how small or how great.

And that he is working all things according to his divine purpose. And that's the three observations that I would like to explore with you today.

But let's first read our text. You're there in Habakkuk chapter 1. Let's look beginning at verse number 5. Verse number 6.

[7 : 31] Verse number 6.

The first observation of which we're to make in these verses as it relates to God's response to Habakkuk is the fact that God is always at work.

God is always at work. Now, before God ever got to the description of his instrument of judgment, which we come to find out is actually the Babylonian Empire, the Babylonian army, the Chaldeans. He said enough in verse 5. He said enough in verse 5 to strike plenty of fear into the hearts of the Jews. And I want you to consider with me just here in this verse how this would have grabbed their attention.

Look at this very first phrase. Behold among the heathen and marvel, God says. Heathen there is just a reference to nations. God is saying, look out among the nations and marvel at what I'm about to do.

[9 : 13] God informed Habakkuk and subsequently the entire nation that they would have to look beyond their borders to actually see his work. And of course, his intent wasn't for them to marvel solely at the strength of their captors.

He wanted them to look beyond the instrument of judgment and marvel at the one who raised them up. He wanted them not to fear the Babylonians. He wanted them to fear God.

And so right from the beginning, as God begins to answer, he immediately says, you're going to have to stop looking here at Israel and look outside of the nation to see what I'm beginning to do.

And then in this next phrase, he said, because I'm working a work. And then he says, in your days. But consider how that would have come across to these people. This was not a potential judgment. Nor was this a prophecy that was to be fulfilled in the distant future. This was a cataclysmic event that was going to happen in the days of these people.

[10 : 20] They would be the ones to face the judgment that God was bringing. And they would not be able to escape it. It was coming quickly. And it would be there in just a matter of months after God delivered this prophecy through Habakkuk.

And then at the very end, he says, this work, you will not believe, though it be told you. Not only is this indicative of the potential rejection of Habakkuk's message, the fact that people wouldn't believe it, but it hints towards the enormous scale of God's judgment.

So fierce was this army that God was raising up that many would believe Habakkuk's message to actually be impossible.

And just imagine, as just this very first verse is delivered in the message, the fear potentially that could have begun to settle in. God was raising up a power outside of the nation. This judgment was going to come in their days.

And it was going to be so great that most people wouldn't even believe it. The essence of Habakkuk's question in the first four verses was, God, why aren't you doing anything?
[11 : 33] And the essence of God's response in verses 5 through 11 is, I never actually stopped working. I've been working all along.

And by the way, Habakkuk, you might want to sit down, because what I'm about to tell you is going to blow your mind. God had never stopped working. God had actually been at work long before Habakkuk had even discovered that there was a problem about which he needed to so passionately pray.

And we come to understand just from that point and that perspective that no matter what the nature of our cry is, no matter what the nature of your cry is today, rest assured that God does not only hear your prayer, but he is working.

And he was working long before you ever even prayed. God is always working. Now, it's significant to know that Paul actually quotes this verse for us in the New Testament in the book of Acts.

Obviously, the context of God's answer is a warning of a coming judgment. And the apostle Paul makes that connection and applies it to the unbelieving Jews in his day.

[12 : 50] In fact, why don't you take your Bible and turn there with me. The book of Acts chapter 13. And let's begin reading at verse number 40. Acts chapter 13 and verse 40.

Paul has been preaching about Jesus and his death and his resurrection and the necessity to trust Christ for salvation. And he's been preaching to the Jews in the synagogues. In verse 40, he says, Beware, therefore, lest that come upon you which was spoken of in the prophets.

And then verse 41 is the quote. He's quoting the Greek translation of the Hebrew text in Habakkuk chapter 1 and verse 5. He says, Behold ye despisers, wonder and perish, for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you.

Now, Paul's purpose was to warn the Jews that rejecting the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ was equivalent to Judah's departure from God in Habakkuk's day.

God was going to judge them in a way that they wouldn't believe. And the two are paralleled perfectly together. In Habakkuk's day, there was great rejection and departure from God.

[14 : 06] And God was sending a judgment that these people just wouldn't believe that God would do. And then in Paul's day, there was a departure from God in terms of faith in Jesus Christ among his own people.

And Paul brings up Habakkuk's prophecy and he says, Beware, lest the same thing that happened in Habakkuk's day happens now. God's going to bring a judgment and it's going to be so great of a judgment that you wouldn't even believe it, though I'm telling you now.

And then we come to find out that the Jews, just within a few days, had continued to reject the message of Jesus. And Paul revealed a glimpse of what that judgment would be.

Look with me at verse 45. You're still in Acts 13. Look at verse 45. Here's what happens with Paul and Barnabas. When the Jews saw that the multitude of the Gentiles, that is, they were filled with envy.

And they spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming. Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you.

[15 : 15] But seeing he put it from you and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, we turn to the Gentiles, for so hath the Lord commanded.

God had been long suffering to the Jews for many years, but this marked the official turning point in Paul's ministry away from Israel and to the Gentiles.

And this is significant to us because Paul's quote here helps lay the groundwork for the doctrine of justification by faith alone in Jesus Christ.

In fact, Robertson is helpful here. He says, Now, I don't want to get ahead of myself because we're going to get here as we study chapter 2.

But as we understand the layout of the book of Habakkuk and what the whole point of the book is, in chapter 1, we see God pouring out this judgment on Israel, who did not expect this kind of judgment.

[16 : 32] God had made a covenant that he was going to bring them into the promised land, and they never believed that God would actually remove them from that promised land. But that's exactly what he was doing.

And the question then becomes, especially in Habakkuk's mind, How, God, can you judge Israel in this way? How can you raise them up and judge your people, your covenant nation in this way? And the whole point is that salvation and being God's people was never about nationality. And it was never about a system.

And it was never about religious works and certain deeds. It was always about faith and following God and loving him and obeying him, as we see demonstrated in chapter 2.

When God essentially answers Habakkuk again, it says, All sin will be judged, and the only ones who will be justified are those who live by faith, those who follow God.

[17 : 33] And so Robertson says, By the devastation of those who thought themselves to be righteous by their deeds, the foundation is laid for the message of justification by faith alone.

And so it's significant that we notice Paul's quotation in this verse and how it bears in our understanding of even Habakkuk's book. But then before we move on from verse 5, we need to consider that God's work was not limited only to his instrument of judgment.

Now I want you to think about this because this is so encouraging. While he was working to raise up the Babylonians, while he was in charge and instrumental in bringing about this weapon of judgment against the sin of the nation, he was also preparing the faithful people of Judah to witness of his power and to be his covenant remnant while in captivity.

Now I want you to turn again in your Bible. This time turn to Daniel chapter 1. It's just a few pages back from where you are there in Habakkuk. And I want you to go to Daniel chapter 1.

Now hang tight. There's a reason we're going here, and I think that you're going to be encouraged by it. Daniel chapter 1. Look with me at verse number 1. Daniel writes, In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim, king of Judah.

[19 : 02] That's significant. We know that Habakkuk is writing this prophecy during the reign of Jehoiakim. So somewhere in between the death of King Josiah and three years into Jehoiakim's reign, Habakkuk is praying this prayer, and God is delivering this message of judgment through his prophet.

And here's what happened. In the third year of the reign of King Jehoiakim, came Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, unto Jerusalem and besieged it. And the Lord gave Jehoiakim, king of Judah, into his hand with part of the vessels of the house of God.

Now I want you to skip down to verse 3. And the king spake unto Ashpenaz, the master of his eunuchs, that he should bring certain of the children of Israel, and of the king's seed, and of the prince's children, in whom was no blemish, but well favored and skillful in all wisdom.

And I want you to look down with me to verse 6 now. Now among these were of the children of Judah, Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, unto whom the prince of the eunuchs gave names. For he gave unto Daniel the name Belteshazzar, and unto Hananiah of Shadrach, and to Mishael of Meshach, and to Azariah of Abednego.

[20 : 26] God had not abandoned his remnant while preparing the judgment. At the same time that he was strengthening Nebuchadnezzar's army, God was working in the hearts of the obscure parents of Daniel, and Hananiah, and Mishael, and Azariah, so that they would train up their kids in the ways of God, so that they would teach them the word, so that they would protect them from the wickedness around them.

And at the same time that God is working on this massive scale for this army of the Babylonians, over here in relative obscurity, in an unknown place, and in an unknown home, God was working in the hearts of parents to sit their son Daniel down, and to teach him the Bible, and to raise him up in the things of the Lord.

Now consider how seemingly insignificant this work was, but God used it in such a mighty way in Babylon. Think about it.

At the end of chapter number one of Daniel, we see that these four young men were immediately shown to have God's favor above all the other young men in Babylon.

What a witness that was right off the bat to King Nebuchadnezzar. Think about Daniel's three friends. We often know them to be Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.

[21 : 48] Nebuchadnezzar had made this idol. He had commanded that everybody bow to it, but they refused to bow. Nebuchadnezzar gets angry. He heats up the furnace of fire, seven times hotter than what it normally was, so hot that just opening up the doors of the furnace killed the two men that went to go throw Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego into the fire.

And as soon as they threw them in there, Nebuchadnezzar looks in, and he sees that they have not been consumed, that they're walking in the fire. Not only is there three of them, there's a fourth one that looks like the Son of God, and they are in the fire, but they have not been consumed and not been burned.

What a witness that is of God's graciousness to his covenant people. What a protection. What a sign that was to the wicked King Nebuchadnezzar. As we continue to study the book of Daniel, we see that Daniel was the mouthpiece of God's judgment.

And so over here, we see that God is working in this really large-scale way to bring judgment. But then over here, amongst people that didn't even know what was going on outside, there were parents that were investing in their kids, and God was using that investment.

He was working in their hearts because he was going to use them in a magnificent way. Yes, God is always working. While Habakkuk was asking God why he was silent and inactive, God was not only raising up his instrument of judgment, but he was also preparing his remnant to proclaim his glory and his power and his covenant while in the midst of captivity.

[23 : 24] He is always working. He's working out his judgment against the wicked, and he's working out his goodness for those that love and follow him.

So don't be distraught in your prayer today. You may not understand all that God is doing, and you may not understand why God is doing it the way that he is, but you can be certain that he is working for the good of his people and the praise of his glory.

God is always at work. Daniel's parents would never see the fruit of their labor. It's likely that they would have been killed in the midst of this captivity, but God was working through them anyways, and he used them in an awesome way.

God is always working. Not only do we see he's always at work, but secondly, in verses six through 10, we see clearly that God is the sovereign Lord of history.

He is the sovereign Lord of history. Now we've come to the description of God's judgment, and we immediately hear echoes of what was once God's power at work in the armies of Israel.

[24 : 40] Even the wicked people in Israel would have taken great national pride in the historical conquest of Canaan and all the historical battles that Israel had won in spite of all the odds being stacked against them.

So imagine their thoughts when God uses such a similar description to speak of Babylon. Let me just point out a few things about that.

Look in verse six with me. God says that they're gonna march through the breadth of the land. Not only does this speak to the size of the coming army, but it reflects the notion of total conquest.

They were gonna take the entire nation. Israel had at one time been the conquerors, but now they would be conquered.

Think about how God had promised this in Leviticus chapter 20 to the nation of Israel. God said, I have said unto you, ye shall inherit the land, and I will give it unto you to possess it.

[25 : 45] That is, the whole land. It was to be Israel's, but now they weren't the conquerors. They were to be conquered. Look again at verse six.

They will possess dwelling places that are not their own. And this was exactly the blessing that was bestowed upon the nation of Israel after they took possession of the promised land.

Consider Deuteronomy chapter six. And it shall be when the Lord thy God shall have brought thee into the land which he swear unto Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, that he will give you great and goodly cities which thou buildest not, houses full of all good things which thou fillest not, wells dig that thou diggest not, vineyards and olive trees which thou plantest not.

This was a blessing that was bestowed upon the covenant nation, but now this same description was being given to their enemy, to a wicked nation. They would now be the ones that come in and possess dwellings that are not their own.

Look at verse seven. They're terrible and dreadful. Everyone would tremble at the news of the conquering Babylonians in the same way that they had once trembled at Israel.

[27 : 00] Think about Joshua chapter five, verse number one. The kings of the Amorites and the kings of the Canaanites, their hearts melted and their spirit was not in them anymore because of the children of Israel.

Now Israel was experiencing that feeling. Look again at verse 10. They will deride every stronghold. They will mock at and laugh at every fortification.

No fortification was gonna be able to prevent this enemy. And one need only to reflect on the battle of Jericho to consider how God had once favored Israel in the same way.

Now the warning here is abundantly clear. Judgment is coming. Judgment's coming. God will not wait forever.

Though he is long suffering, judgment will eventually come to all who refuse to follow Christ. In Genesis chapter six and verse three in Noah's day, God said, my spirit shall not always strive with man.

[28 : 11] In other words, there's gonna come a day when enough is enough. And in Genesis chapter six, it would be 120 years that God was gonna give the people to repent.

And Noah preached and Noah proclaimed the message of God, but they did not repent. And they were swept away in the judgment. Isaiah chapter 55 again says, seek ye the Lord while he may be found, indicating that there's a time when you will not be able to find him.

Call you upon him while he is near. Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts. Let him return unto the Lord and he will have mercy on him.

Let him turn to our God for he will abundantly pardon. Though judgment will come, God is patient and he allows ample time for us to turn to him.

If you will only forsake your way and follow Christ, what awaits you is an abundant pardon. He will forgive your sin. He will wipe you clean.

[29 : 17] You will be his, but he will not wait forever. His judgment is coming. And the time right now is the only time that you have to repent of your way.

It's the only time that you have to turn to God. Eventually, his patience will run out. Eventually, God will say, enough is enough and your period and your window will be closed.

Judgment will be here. Paul said in 2 Corinthians 6, behold, now is the accepted time. Behold, now is the day of salvation.

The writer of Hebrews in chapter 4 and verse 7 quotes David when he says, today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your heart. Listen to me, friend.

If you're watching this video and you are not a true believer, I'm not asking if you take Christianity as your labeled religion. I'm not asking if you go to church. I'm saying, have you really turned from your wicked ways and truly trusted in Christ alone for salvation?

[30 : 19] If you have not done that, judgment is coming for you, but mercy awaits you if you will but cry out to God and turn from your ways and follow him.

But he will not wait forever. Sin always loses the blessing of God. Always. And if you're a believer, nothing can take away your salvation, but God will not allow your sin to go without consequence. You cannot expect in Christianity and in your walk with God to live however it is you please and not have to deal with the repercussions. Just like David with his sin with Bathsheba and Uriah, God will remove his blessing from your life and he will allow you to reap the consequences of your sin.

Sin always loses the blessing of God. And the nation of Israel heard that loud and clear in the message of Habakkuk. Now that's a bit about God's warning of judgment, but we cannot ignore the fact that all of this came from the divine hand of God.

He does not sit passively as life for us progresses. He is in sovereign control of all that takes place, including the monumental events of history.

[31 : 45] God took complete responsibility for the rise and fall of the Babylonians. Look back with me at Habakkuk chapter one, verse six. He said, I raise up the Chaldeans.

God was taking responsibility. This was in his plan and his purpose and his control. And he did not arbitrarily choose a nation that had already been established.

He was totally responsible for their rise and only the power of God could perform such a feat in the way that he did. And again, Robertson is so helpful here.

He says, this whole international escapade underscores the prominence of the divine hand in raising them up and also bringing them down.

Who would believe that a virtually non-existent entity could conquer the old capital of Assyria in 614, Nineveh in 612, Haran in 610, and rout the armies of Pharaoh Necho at Carchemish in 605.

[32 : 55] They became the world rulers of Babylonia, Assyria, Syria, Palestine, and Egypt when 20 years previously they hardly were known to exist.

Yet their energy dissipated almost as rapidly so that they were easily overcome by Cyrus, king of Persia in 539, just in time to fulfill the prophecy of Jeremiah concerning Israel's return in 70 years.

Astounding indeed are the ways of God among the nations, not by their own instinct, but by the hidden impulse of God do the nations rise and fall.

Think about God's sovereign control over the events of history. He raises up the Babylonians and at the same time that he's raising them up and allowing them to conquer the world, he's raising up Cyrus and the Persians to immediately be his instrument of judgment on Babylon and be his instrument of blessing on his own nation as he allows the people of Israel 70 years later to come back to the promised land.

What a God that is. The scriptures are clear that he is truly the Lord of history. Nothing happens apart from God's divine determination.

[34 : 23] He is in control of all things. It is he that raises up kings and puts them down. It is he that is in control of the circumstances of your life as well.

Proverbs 21 and verse 1 The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord. As the rivers of water he turneth it whithersoever he will. Daniel chapter 2 and verse 20 Blessed be the name of God forever and ever for wisdom and might are his and he changes the times and the seasons.

He removes kings and he sets up kings. Nothing is out of his control. His ways may be mysterious but the Lord of history is to be trusted and worshipped.

City of Light is one of my favorite musical groups throughout of a church in Australia and they wrote this song called Ancient of Days and the first verse goes like this Though the nations rage kingdoms rise and fall listen there is still one king reigning over all so I will not fear though this truth remains that my God is the Ancient of Days.

The chorus goes on to say none above him none before him all of time in his hands for his throne it shall remain and ever stand all the power all the glory I will trust in his name for my God is the Ancient of Days.

[36 : 00] So we clearly see not only is God always working but he is indeed the Lord of history and it is to this great God who is sovereign over all that we will face judgment it is to him that we must repent and turn before it's too late and it is to him that we must give all of our worship and all of our praise and all of our attention and then finally we see that God has a purpose God has a purpose now I told you that I was going to quote Martin Lloyd-Jones a number of times and I have only done it once up to this point but I have several things that I just want to read to you that he is so helpful in this book in fact I want to encourage you to get the book it is called From Fear to Faith you can get it from InterVarsity Press it would be an encouragement to you but he said great powers have been raised up and have conquered for a while but they have always become drunk with their own success and suddenly they in turn have found themselves cast down the real significance of history never dawns upon them the Chaldeans thought that their conquest was a result of their own strength in fact look with me at verse 11 then shall his mind be changed and he shall pass over and offend this is just speaking of the actual defeat of Israel imputing this his power unto his God in other words he was saying

I am God Nebuchadnezzar set himself up as a God and demanded to be worshipped because of this demonstration of power as he marched across the entire world at that point he failed to see that he was nothing more than a tool in the hand of God indeed God always has a purpose and it has to do exclusively with his kingdom again Lloyd-Jones says the key to the history of the world is the kingdom of God the story of other nations mentioned in the Old Testament is relevant only as it bears upon the destiny of Israel and ultimately history today is relevant only as it bears upon the history of the Christian church what really matters in the world is God's kingdom think about Romans chapter 9 and verse 17 for the scripture says Paul writes unto Pharaoh even for this same purpose God says have I raised thee up that I might show my power in thee and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth Pharaoh thought he was in charge Nebuchadnezzar thought he was in charge Cyrus thought he was in charge but it was God who was at work it was he that was affecting their hearts and it was his purposes that were being accomplished considered his divine purpose being worked out amidst the establishment of ancient Rome and Roman society it was through his work in raising up Rome that salvation was provided through Jesus Christ God might have been silent in that 400 year gap between Malachi and Matthew but despite his silence in the nation

God was working and he was raising up the Romans so that he could bring his son to provide redemption for us again Lloyd Jones says it was when the fullness of time was come that God sent forth his son he allowed the great philosophers with their clarification of thought to come first then

emerged the Romans famous for ordered government building their roads and spreading their wonderful legal system throughout the world it was after this that God sent forth his son God had planned it all all things are under his divine control in order that he might work out his saving purposes for his people think of Ephesians chapter 1 and verse 11 in Christ we have obtained an inheritance being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things according to the counsel of his own will all things related to salvation are being sovereignly worked out according to the counsel of God's own will think of 2nd Timothy chapter 1 and verse 9

Christ has saved us and he has called us with a holy calling not according to our works but according to his own purpose and grace which was given in Christ Jesus before the world ever began God had a plan set forth and everything you see happening in history whether it was ancient history or whether it's modern history is all within the sovereign control of God that he might work out his purposes among his people God's work among the nations is to provide redemption for mankind and the events of your life are being orchestrated by his divine hand even now he is calling sinners to repent and receive his grace through Jesus Christ and this is his ultimate purpose 1st Timothy 1 15 tells us Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners and if you're watching this video today and you don't know

[42 : 02] Christ and you don't believe him God has orchestrated the events of your life for this moment to hear his gospel preached if you would but trust him and turn from your own way what awaits you is abundant pardon and mercy but he will not wait long his judgment is coming and he is sovereign over all things and nothing can stop his purposes so turn to him whether it be through a worldwide pandemic a contentious election season or any number of events taking place in our lifetime God is working he is in control and he has a plan finally Lloyd-Jones says what God is permitting in the church and in the world today is related to his great purpose for his own church and kingdom we

Christians should therefore judge every event in the light of God's great eternal and glorious purpose church let's keep our focus on the kingdom God is in control of the pandemic only he knows how serious it actually is and he is using it for his purpose don't get wrapped up in the chaos of the pandemic keep your eyes on the kingdom it is God who will raise up a president and it is God who will put down a president ultimately our hope is not in the White House it is in the sovereign control of God don't get caught up in the politics trust God keep your eyes on the kingdom there will be times of loss don't get in such despair over loss that you lose sight of the kingdom

God is working all of these things out for his purpose they are but tools in his hand put your trust in him for he is working all things for your good as Romans 8 reminds us and we know that all things work together for good to them that love God to them who are the called according to his purpose and Paul goes on to say that purpose is to conform you and me into the image of his son Jesus Christ what's happening right now the fact that we haven't been able to gather as a church for six weeks maybe longer all of that God is using this to fashion us into the likeness of his son the sickness the hurt the potential job loss the economy all of these things they are serving God's purpose you can trust him trust the sovereign God so I will not fear for this truth remains that my God is the ancient of days thank you for listening to this sermon made available by Lakeside Bible Church feel free to share it wherever you'd like please do not charge for it or alter it in any way without express written consent from Lakeside Bible Church don't forget to visit us online at lakesidebible.church or find us on Facebook and Instagram by searching for Lakeside Bible NC if you live in the Charlotte or Lake Norman area we'd love for you to attend one of our worship services we meet every Sunday morning at 10 a.m. we'd love to meet you