

Orchestrating My Solutions

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Are you sometimes more preoccupied with orchestrating your solutions than asking God for help?

I am. Actually, **I'm pretty sure that God needs my help to get things done. Or at least that's how I act.**

I have innumerable ideas of how to fix the situations that concern me. And I spend a lot of time trying to figure out how to finagle people and circumstances to bring those about. ***When I feel its within my reach to change a situation, I often ask God to support my plans rather than simply giving him the problem.***

Essentially, I want God to bless my ideas and solutions rather than submit them to him. In my mind, it all depends on me.

When my daughters' father left our home, their worlds fell apart. I assumed that if I found just the right words or the perfect counselor, things would get better. So *I was constantly preoccupied with trying to figure things out, which left little room for trusting God.* I functionally was living by the false mantra of "God helps those who help themselves." But in truth God helps the helpless. I needed to take hold of the psalmist's declaration that "the helpless put their trust in you" (Psalm 10:14 NLT).

When I'm desperate and can do nothing to fix the situation, I do turn to God. I beg for help. I rely on him completely and ask him for strength. I lay out my pain before him, with no solutions of my own. All I bring is my need. I throw myself on God's mercy and I listen. I wait. And I see how spectacularly how God provides.

The kings of Judah faced many battles where their enemies seemed assured of winning. But when they completely threw themselves on the mercy of God, trusting him alone, they saw unprecedented victory over staggering odds. God inevitably provided and he got the glory. We see Asa, Jehoshaphat and Hezekiah all calling out to God in desperation and then witnessing his miraculous deliverance.

King Asa cried out, "O Lord, there is none like you to help, between the mighty and the weak. Help us, O Lord our God, for we rely on you, and in your name we have come against this multitude. O Lord, you are our God; let not man prevail against you" (2 Chron 14:11). The Ethiopian army of over 1,000,000 men were defeated.

King Jehoshaphat said when he heard that a multitude of enemies was coming against them, "For we are powerless against this great horde that is coming against us. We do not know what to do, but our eyes are on you." (2 Chron 20:12). Their enemies turned on each other and were all destroyed.

Hezekiah encouraged the people saying, "Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or dismayed before the king of Assyria and all the horde that is with him, for there are more with us than with him" (2 Chron 32:7). The angel of the Lord struck 185,000 Assyrians dead in their camp and the rest fled.

God's incredible provision for these kings was supernatural and unforgettable. But some had smaller battles in which they didn't ask or obey God. They reasoned they could handle it themselves.

Asa became self-confident and rather than relying on God in a confrontation with the king of Israel, King Asa formed an alliance. Perhaps he didn't ask God for help because he figured he could do it himself. While Asa won that battle, his subsequent self-reliance had disastrous results.

At times, I can relate to King Asa. **In huge situations when I know I can't do it myself, I've been on my knees regularly, begging God for deliverance. I know I am incapable of handling the situation and so I ask God for help constantly. But in more minor situations, when I think my wisdom and ingenuity are enough, I neglect to seek God beyond asking for his blessing.**

After studying 2 Chronicles, I've been more aware about praying about my concerns and then leaving them in God's hands. ***I've discovered that God doesn't need my help to get things done - he just wants me to pray and let him do the work.***

I was recently concerned about a situation, and during my quiet time started making a list of how I could fix it. I was going to write an email suggesting several alternatives to a friend and was jotting them down when I felt the Lord convicting me to leave it with him. So instead of crafting my careful argument, I spent the time praying instead. After prayer, I felt I shouldn't send the email.

Less than an hour later, I received an email saying that the person had decided to do exactly what I've been praying about.

I shouldn't have been surprised. **God moves people. He changes hearts. I always think it is my job to convince people to do something, but the Lord keeps showing me that only he can do that.** Nehemiah prays that the Lord would give him success and make the king favorable to him (Nehemiah 1:11). Proverbs 21:1 says, "The king's heart is a stream of water in the hand of the Lord; he turns it wherever he will."

God's power is limitless. He can accomplish his will however he chooses because all things are his servants. (Psalm 119:91).

My prayer life has been ignited by that experience. I mentioned in my last post that each morning I've been praying through all the appointments in the day. ***And I'm more convinced than ever that the burden is not on me to figure everything out. I can trust God to do that. When something is God-initiated and God-breathed, God's deliverance brings God alone the glory. His deliverance brings us real help. And it results in lasting change.***

My default has often been to figure things out in my own strength, and my prayer life has been largely asking God to bless my schemes and plans. ***But as I am learning, simply spreading my requests and needs out before God, telling him the situation and waiting for his instruction is doing much more than I could ever engineer. He who spoke the world into existence can do immeasurably more than all we can ask or imagine.***