

## Is God Active Today? Proverbs 3:5-8

Longer passages are not quoted in the study sheet, but they can be read in the accompanying transcript.

Some think God is \_\_\_\_\_ in our world today; and others say that God is \_\_\_\_\_. Is God alive and active in the world today and working for our \_\_\_\_\_? We want to know all we can about God, the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ; and the way to know God is through a \_\_\_\_\_ of His Word, the Bible. So we go again and again to the Scriptures.

How we view God matters greatly in how we view life and how we understand our \_\_\_\_\_ and role in this world. An atheist doesn't believe God \_\_\_\_\_ at all. An agnostic says he doesn't know whether God exists, because he \_\_\_\_\_ God is unknowable. Some believe God got the \_\_\_\_\_ going and then just abandoned it. Others believe God was relevant in \_\_\_\_\_ times, but now God is dead. They say we no longer \_\_\_\_\_ God.

Several years ago in graduate school, I spent a couple of semesters studying skeptics and atheists. One thing I found was that skepticism and atheism grew more out of an \_\_\_\_\_ than it did out of the \_\_\_\_\_. Atheists and skeptics tended to \_\_\_\_\_ on the disorder and the ugly in life. They seemed to \_\_\_\_\_ the intelligent order, the beauty, the grandeur, and the wisdom that's so evident in our universe. They were intelligent, but they missed the intelligent \_\_\_\_\_. I'm amazed at how easily people can slip into a very \_\_\_\_\_ view of life and of God. Some folks choose to close their eyes and their minds to the \_\_\_\_\_ of God and see only the \_\_\_\_\_. God is good and actively blesses us every day. Thankfully, we can \_\_\_\_\_ Him and what He has done for us to bless us and to give us eternal life.

### **Our scripture reading today comes from the book of Proverbs 3:5-8.**

Paul said in Ephesians 1:18-19, "I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you may \_\_\_\_\_ what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe." God wants our hearts to be open to His \_\_\_\_\_. God's power towards us who believe is \_\_\_\_\_ than we think!

Have you ever had an "aha!" experience—awakening to some great \_\_\_\_\_ that had eluded you up until that time? That's what Paul wanted for the Ephesians. He wanted them to understand what God \_\_\_\_\_ to happen—God is at work! God has great power—and His power \_\_\_\_\_ in the lives of His people.

You might ask \_\_\_\_\_ God is at work. He is working in a variety of ways. First, God works in the \_\_\_\_\_. As a prophet of God, King David said, "The heavens are telling of the \_\_\_\_\_ of God; and their expanse is declaring the \_\_\_\_\_ of His hands" (Psalm 19:1). One can hardly look at the beauty, the order, and the wisdom of our universe and not see how

wise and powerful God is. The God who makes the sun shine and flowers bloom, the God who regulates times and seasons has such great power and wisdom that it is truly \_\_\_\_\_ our understanding. Paul proclaimed: "And in the generations gone by He permitted all the nations to go their \_\_\_\_\_ ways; and yet He did not leave Himself without witness, in that He did good and gave you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, satisfying your hearts with food and gladness" (Acts 14:16-17). All that we have, all of our blessings \_\_\_\_\_ from God!

Jesus is not only our Creator, He is also the one who \_\_\_\_\_ this world together. **Read what the Bible says in Colossians 1:15-17.** God's \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ cause our seasons, cause the earth to rotate every 24 hours making night and day, cause the moon to revolve around the earth every 28 days and controlling the tides of the ocean, and cause the earth to go around the sun every 365 and one fourth days determining our year and our seasons. This couldn't just happen on its own; God has been in \_\_\_\_\_.

The Lord Jesus taught us to pray: "Give us this day our \_\_\_\_\_ bread" (Matthew 6:11). We're blessed to have food to eat each day, food that God \_\_\_\_\_. Have you ever thought about the power of one \_\_\_\_\_ planted in the ground? One kernel of corn planted in the ground, watered, and fertilized can \_\_\_\_\_ an ear of corn with sixteen rows and 800 kernels. Many cornstalks will have \_\_\_\_\_ than one ear! God created that kernel of corn with the information and the ability to \_\_\_\_\_ itself in that marvelous way.

God is indeed powerful and wise! **Read what the Lord Jesus said in Mark 4:27-29.** God has been taking \_\_\_\_\_ of us in marvelous ways for a very long time.

Second, God is at work in our \_\_\_\_\_. God sent His only Son to die on the cross; God through the Holy Spirit inspired men to write the Bible including the gospel, which has the \_\_\_\_\_ to save; and Christ built His \_\_\_\_\_, who are the saved. From the beginning, God has been \_\_\_\_\_ toward our salvation. **Read what the apostle Paul by inspiration said in Ephesians 2:4-9.**

The salvation that we enjoy through Christ was \_\_\_\_\_. It's the gift of God, and for that we are thankful. Great gifts are never \_\_\_\_\_, and our redemption came at a \_\_\_\_\_ greater than silver or gold. God sacrificed his Son Jesus, and Jesus sacrificed His \_\_\_\_\_ on the cross. We must not take our salvation for granted or treat it lightly as if it were \_\_\_\_\_. People who mock the Lord, ignore the cross, and criticize the church are usually people who are unthankful for what God has done to \_\_\_\_\_ them. They don't realize what He sacrificed to give them \_\_\_\_\_ life. The Bible is the message of that life. Without the message of the Bible, we would all be in great peril—without \_\_\_\_\_ and without God in this present world.

The Bible teaches us how to come to Christ, and how the blood of Christ cleanses us, and how we can have \_\_\_\_\_ life with Christ. The Bible says, "having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised up with Him through \_\_\_\_\_ in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. And when you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you \_\_\_\_\_ together with Him, having forgiven us

all our transgressions” (Colossians 2:12-13). It is God who is “at work” in baptism.

In baptism, God \_\_\_\_\_ us with Christ, and washes away our sins, takes away that old man of sin, buries us with Christ, and raises us up from spiritual death to life. In baptism, God adds us to the \_\_\_\_\_ and makes us His children. God is very \_\_\_\_\_ working on us in baptism. For this reason, I cannot understand why anyone would say baptism is unnecessary for our salvation. Read what the scripture says. Baptism is \_\_\_\_\_ God works on us.

God doesn't \_\_\_\_\_ us once we are saved as Christians, once we've been baptized. Every Christian still has weaknesses and still \_\_\_\_\_. Christians wish they could keep from sinning; they hate it \_\_\_\_\_ they sin and they want to stop it afterward. God knows that we're \_\_\_\_\_ but He has provided for our weaknesses. The Bible says, “He is \_\_\_\_\_ to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them” (Hebrews 7:25). That's what Jesus is \_\_\_\_\_ right now for us. He is interceding with the Father on our behalf, asking the Father to forgive us and to continue blessing us, even when we have sinned. I am so thankful for the Lord who \_\_\_\_\_ me enough to pray for me.

Third, God is at work answering \_\_\_\_\_. The Bible says, "It will also come to pass that before they call, I will \_\_\_\_\_; and while they are still speaking, I will hear" (Isaiah 65:24). God wants to \_\_\_\_\_ your prayers. He \_\_\_\_\_ you to pray to Him. The Bible says, “Every good thing bestowed and every perfect gift is from \_\_\_\_\_, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation, or shifting shadow” (James 1:17). God loves us enough to hear our prayers and to help us when we \_\_\_\_\_ Him. The apostle Paul reminds us, “Now to Him who is \_\_\_\_\_ to do exceeding abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, to Him be the \_\_\_\_\_ in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen” (Ephesians 3:20-21).

Fourth, God is busy \_\_\_\_\_ our lives. He works in us. The Bible says, “For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good \_\_\_\_\_ in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus” (Philippians 1:6). God \_\_\_\_\_ His people to do His work, so we may live for an eternity in heaven with Him. What God is doing in us now prepares us for the life to come. The Bible says, “So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your \_\_\_\_\_ with fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure” (Philippians 2:12-13). God is shaping our hearts, our attitudes, our will, and our lives to \_\_\_\_\_ to His will, so that we might live with Him always.

God also saved us so that we might be His \_\_\_\_\_, doing good works and impacting the world for love and righteousness. The Bible says, “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for \_\_\_\_\_ works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them” (Ephesians 2:10). So much good is being done in the world; \_\_\_\_\_ of the love of God and the teaching of the Bible, Christians feed the hungry, take care of widows and orphans, help unwed mothers, provide help to the lonely and homeless, and point sinners to

righteousness. Oh, yes! God is at work through the \_\_\_\_\_.

I saw a book the other day written by a skeptic, called, The God Problem. His subtitle suggested that God never addresses the problem of \_\_\_\_\_ in the Bible. I wondered \_\_\_\_\_ Bible he was reading, because it's \_\_\_\_\_ the Bible that I've spent my life studying. God knows about our suffering, and the cross of Christ demonstrates God's willingness to \_\_\_\_\_ for us. Romans 8:28 says, "And we know that God causes all things to work together for \_\_\_\_\_ to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose." God doesn't stop every event of suffering, but He \_\_\_\_\_ even suffering to work for our good. We don't always understand what God is doing or why; but we know that God loves us and will use every circumstance in our lives, good or bad, pleasing or painful, to work for good in some way. We can \_\_\_\_\_ God!

**Read what David, who was inspired of God, said in Psalm 103:1-5.**

God has been working in our \_\_\_\_\_ a very long time. He isn't hidden or dead; and the Bible reminds us of all the good that God is doing \_\_\_\_\_ us and \_\_\_\_\_ us. The apostle Paul said, "And now I commend you to God and to the \_\_\_\_\_ of His grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified" (Acts 20:32). God's Word is far from being \_\_\_\_\_. It is the \_\_\_\_\_ of love and life and good and righteousness. We need the Bible every single day to help us \_\_\_\_\_ spiritually and in character, and to \_\_\_\_\_ like God intended.

I join Paul in His prayer: "and I pray that the \_\_\_\_\_ of your heart may be enlightened, so that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the surpassing greatness of His \_\_\_\_\_ toward us who believe" (Ephesians 1:18-19). God can work in your life, IF you let Him. He won't twist your arm; He won't \_\_\_\_\_ you to do anything. But if you out of love and \_\_\_\_\_, put your life into His hands, God can do amazing things. It's not the \_\_\_\_\_ of God that's lacking. It's not the willingness of God to \_\_\_\_\_ in our lives that's lacking. What is lacking is our willingness to let God into our \_\_\_\_\_ and into our \_\_\_\_\_.

Proverbs 3:5-6 says, "Trust in the LORD with all your \_\_\_\_\_ and do not \_\_\_\_\_ on your own understanding. In all your \_\_\_\_\_ acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight." You must trust Him and let Him work in you. God desires that we believe in Jesus Christ enough to \_\_\_\_\_ Him and \_\_\_\_\_ His promises. Do you?

That starts by trusting Him enough to \_\_\_\_\_ of your sins and \_\_\_\_\_ the name of Christ before others. Christ doesn't want a \_\_\_\_\_ disciple. He wants you to confess with your mouth that He is your Lord and that you believe He is the Christ, the Son of the living God. After you've repented and made that confession, God wants you to be \_\_\_\_\_ into Christ where God cleanses you with the \_\_\_\_\_ of Jesus and makes you into one of His own children. Won't you do that today? Won't you obey the gospel and put the Lord Jesus Christ first? Will you let God work in your life?