

26-0215a Transcript

26-0215a - Areas of Divine Intervention - Personal, Steve Cain

Bible Readers: Mike Mathis and Roger Raines

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Areas of Divine Intervention - Personal

Scripture Readings

1st Reading (0:04 - 2:55): Mike Mathis

2 Corinthians 1:3-11: (0:04) The first scripture reading is taken from second Corinthians 1, verses 3 through 11, I'm reading from the New King James Version, (0:13) Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, (0:19) a Father of mercies and God of our comfort, who comforts us in all our tribulation, (0:29) that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, (0:36) with the comfort of which we ourselves are comforted by God. (0:44) For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also abounds through Christ. (0:57) Now if we are afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation, which is effective (1:07) for the enduring the same sufferings which we also suffer. For if we are comforted, it is (1:19) for your consolation and salvation. And our hope for you is steadfast, because we know (1:30) that as you are partakers of the sufferings, so also you will partake of the consolation. (1:43) For we do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, of our trouble which came to us in Asia, (1:53) that we were burdened beyond measure, above strength, so that we despaired even of life. (2:05) Yes, we had the sentence of death in ourselves, so that we should not trust in ourselves, (2:15) but in God, who raises the dead, who delivered us from so great a death, and does deliver us, (2:27) in whom we trust, that he will still deliver us. And you also, helping together in prayer for us, (2:41) that thanks may be given for many persons on our behalf, for the gift granted to us (2:50) through many, that completes the reading of God's Word. (2:55)

2nd Reading (3:00 - 5:20): Roger Raines

Philippians 4:10-20: (3:00) Good morning. I'll be reading from the book of Philippians, chapter 4, verses 10 through 20. (3:09) But I rejoice in the Lord greatly, that now at last you have revived your concern for me. (3:17) Indeed, you were concerned before, but you lacked opportunity. Not that I speak from (3:24) want, for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am. (3:31) I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity. (3:39) In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of being filled (3:45) with joy, and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need. I can do all (3:55) things through him who strengthens me. Nevertheless, you have done well to share with me (4:05) in my affliction. You yourselves also know Philippians, that is the first preaching of (4:13) the gospel after I left Macedonia. No church shared with me in the matter of giving and (4:21) receiving, but you alone. For even in Thessalonica, you sent a gift more than once for my needs. (4:32) Not that I seek the gift itself, but I seek for the profit which increases your account. (4:41) For I have received everything in full, and I have abundance. I am amply supplied, (4:50) having received from the Epaphroditus what you have sent, a fragrant aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, (5:02) well pleasing to God. And my God will supply all your needs according to his riches in the glory (5:09) in Christ Jesus. Now to our God and Father be the glory forever and ever. Amen. This concludes this (5:19) reading. (5:20)

Transcript (0:04 - 36:04), Preacher: Steve Cain

(5:25) Good to see everyone this morning. I appreciate your presence very much. This morning (5:31) I'm going to do something that I very seldom do, but I like doing, and that is I'm going to give (5:39) you a personal testimony, but not right away.

I'm going to lead up to it and then let you (5:48) figure out where it is and when it was. The lesson this morning is entitled (5:57) Areas of Divine Intervention, and then I broke it down. One area is

personal, (6:04) and the other area is financial.

And this morning's lesson is going to be personal. (6:10) That's one of the reasons why I'm going to give you a personal testimony, because it is dealing (6:16) with personal. I'm sorry.

As you can tell, it doesn't take very long for you to be in my (6:31) classes or listening to my lessons that I believe in the divine intervention, (6:35) providence, and preservation of God. And it doesn't take very long for me to read in the (6:42) scriptures where I get that concept. I have a practice of reading five psalms and one (6:50) proverb every morning before I start anything in the day.

And in those proverbs and psalms, (6:58) you cannot help but get the concept that the person believes they too believe in the divine (7:06) intervention, providence, and preservation of God. And God wants us to come to that conclusion that (7:12) he does intervene in our lives. He providentially works in our lives, and he preserves our lives.

(7:20) There is no reservation in my mind concerning those particular issues. (7:27) I am in age at this time, and I've told many of you, I'm not a secret. I'm 84, soon to be 85 in (7:37) July.

And so I have quite a few experiences to draw from, and those experiences have emboldened (7:47) and bolstered my faith in the divine intervention and providence of God. (7:54) Paul believes in that very much also. The main thing is, as we tried to point out in this (8:01) morning's lesson in Romans, that we need to absolutely believe in the divine God who created (8:11) the world and preserves the world and continues to do so.

And if you look at the proverbs and (8:19) the Psalms will also point out to you that belief in God's preservation of life. (8:27) When you look at the creation of the world, you can see that when God created the world, (8:32) the seven days that he creates and uses to create, one leads to the other. One has to precede, (8:43) can't come up with the word I want.

One precedes the other, that's the word I want. (8:49) If day one precedes day two, and day two precedes day three, and if that was not the case, (8:56) day three would not be existing, and day four would not have an opportunity to exist either. (9:04) So we see that God builds upon it, and he created the world in such a way that (9:11) he preserves it, and he intervenes in it, and he interacts in it, and he provides for it.

(9:16) And the Psalms will point out to the fact that they believe that God looks after his creation (9:22) very much. And so the divine intervention, providence, and preservation is depending upon (9:29) the God that you want to believe in. And so when we reflect upon this, (9:36) I wanted to point out the fact that we need to believe in the God that Abraham believed in.

(9:44) We need to believe in the God that Isaac believed in. And we need to believe in the (9:49) God that Jacob believed in. And so that's the God that you and I need to come to conclusion.

(9:57) And so what pleases God? I point this out, and I ask this question quite often because (10:02) I believe it's so important for us to understand it. But if you look at Hebrews, the 11th chapter (10:10) and the 5th verse, he'll point out about Enoch. The writer of Hebrews wants to point out about (10:18) Enoch and how that he was, and that he was taken away and did not experience death because of his (10:26) faith.

And he pleased God. And then the writer goes on and points out in the next verse what that was

(10:34) about Enoch that pleased God. And he points out what it is.

How do we please God? We need to (10:42) believe that he is and that he's a rewarder of those who diligently seek him. And so as we look (10:49) at the Old Testament in particular, especially in Abraham, and I pointed this out in my class this (10:55) morning, that God had to develop his faith. God had to develop Abraham's faith.

Not only did he (11:06) have to develop Abraham's faith, but he had to develop all mankind's faith. And he does it in (11:13) his interaction with them. And when you look at Romans, he's going to point out the fact that (11:18) he's holding it against those who do not believe that he exists.

And he's pointing out that (11:25) they are without excuse because he, through his creation and through his involvement in the life, (11:31) he proves that he exists and that he is, and that he's a rewarder of those who diligently seek him. (11:40) And so he wants us to believe in him. And so he's helping develop their faith.

(11:47) And I believe that he helps you and me to develop our faith also. When Jesus was on the face of this (11:56) earth in his lessons, we see that he pointed out his faith in God and that God's divine intervention (12:04) and providence in our lives. As you look at Matthew the sixth chapter, and this is one of (12:12) chapters that I love, the passages that were read in your hearing are ones I'm going to be (12:20) referring to again.

And that is because they point out the fact that God divinely intervenes in our (12:27) lives. And he wants us to recognize the fact that you and I, even though we work, even though we (12:34) do things with skill and with ability, those skills and abilities are given to us (12:41) by God at birth. And those skills are expected to be developed.

And those skills are expected to (12:50) lead us into creation and be able to help one another exist. But God wants us to, (12:59) Jesus wants us to realize that we're not doing this for our own ability, but that God provided (13:07) those abilities and God provided us with the avenues in which to develop those abilities. (13:14) And so in Matthew the sixth chapter, Jesus is pointing out to us that very thing, (13:20) that God is intervening in our lives and he is giving us the opportunity to provide for this.

(13:29) But he also wants us to realize that I depend upon you, and you depend upon me, (13:37) and that he is using you and me to help in this way. Let's take a look at Matthew the sixth (13:44) chapter. Let's pick up what Jesus is teaching concerning God's involvement in our lives.

(13:50) And let's pick up with verse 25, reading from the New International Version. (13:56) Therefore, I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink, or about your (14:05) body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothes? (14:13) Look at the birds of the air.

They do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your (14:22) Heavenly Father feeds them. There's our divine intervention for the Creators, the Creatures that (14:29) he has. God's Heavenly Father feeds them.

Are you, and this is the question, are you not much (14:39) more valuable than they? Can any one of you, by worrying, add a single hour to your life? (14:50) Can you? Where's your ability? It's all dependent entirely upon God's divine intervention, (14:59) providence, and preservation. What

we're going to do when we leave here, what we're going to do (15:04) for the rest of our lives, those are all in God's hands, divine intervention, providence, (15:10) and preservation. So let's continue Jesus' lesson.

In verse 28, Jesus continues to say, (15:18) Do not, and why, why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow? (15:27) They do not labor or spend. Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor (15:35) was dressed like one of these. That if that is how God clothes the grass of the field, (15:43) which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, (15:48) will he not much more clothe you, you of little faith? So do not worry, saying, (15:57) What shall we eat? Or what shall we drink? Or what shall we wear? For the pagans run (16:04) after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them.

But seek first his (16:12) kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore, (16:23) do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble (16:32) of its own.

Divine intervention, providence, and preservation. Jesus is teaching that. (16:38) Jesus wants us to rely upon that.

And so God created the world, and he's sustaining the world, (16:45) and he makes sure that we have the rain that we need, and he makes sure that we have the sun. (16:50) He makes sure that the animals are there for us to consume and to use for our benefits. He makes (16:59) sure everything is there.

When we leave this auditorium this morning, we're going to go (17:05) downstairs to a meal. I'm looking forward to it. We're going to go downstairs to a meal.

(17:14) Did you grow it? Did you prepare it? Did you slaughter it? What did you do? It was all there (17:21) for us to consume, assimilate it. He provides for us. And so Jesus is telling us, rely upon that.

(17:31) Rely upon the divine intervention and providence and preservation of God. Do you really believe (17:37) in God? That's the question. Do you really believe in God? If you do, then your life will reflect it.

(17:48) The things you do and you say, your life will reflect in the fact that you believe in God. (17:54) If you don't, then you're going to be going about, trying to strive about, trying to figure out, (18:00) what am I going to do for my meal? What am I going to do for this? And what am I going to do for that? (18:05) And there are many people out there on the street who are doing that very thing, (18:11) and yet they're still alive, aren't they? And yet they have a meal. And yet they have a place to sleep.

(18:22) Very seldom do you ever hear of anybody starving to death, especially in the United States. (18:30) Very seldom do you ever hear somebody freezing to death. People look after them.

God prepares (18:41) individuals who have heart and concern for these individuals, and he uses them, too. (18:48) You're given abilities to do these things. The point I wanted to bring up is that when we look (18:57) at Paul's life, Paul's life was divinely intervened and providentially brought by God.

(19:04) We know that when Paul was raised, he was raised as a Jew, and he was a Sanhedrin, (19:14)

and he was a Pharisee. And we know that in these many things that he did, (19:21) he strove to be a God-fearing person in the Jewish faith. But it took God to change his life, (19:31) didn't it? Paul thought he was doing God's will.

Paul thought he was doing what God wanted him to (19:39) do when he was going out and getting Christians off the street and putting them in prison. (19:48) Paul thought he was doing the things that God wanted him to do, but it took (19:52) divinely intervention and providence for Paul to change, didn't it? Which one of us would have (20:00) wanted to be the one who went to Paul and tried to convince him to be a Christian, (20:05) knowing full well that he would have you committed to prison? Who would do that? (20:11) Even when God comes to Ananias and says, go and talk to Paul. He's looking for somebody to come (20:20) and to baptize him and make him a Christian.

Ananias says, do you hear about Paul? (20:29) I don't want to go see him. And God had to convince him that he's ready. And he's receiving, (20:37) he says, changed man.

It took a divine intervention and providence of God, Jesus in particular, (20:45) to change this man. But what was his faith? And how was his faith? And that's one of the (20:51) reasons why I had us read 2 Corinthians. And this is one of the reasons why I thought we would look (20:56) at it.

Because Paul, even though he was going out and was very active in recruiting and being an (21:07) advocate for Christ, his faith in God wavered quite a bit. And he was challenged. And he was (21:17) challenged and he was given a test to see how far his faith was going.

He was given a test. (21:25) You and I have given tests to see where we are in our faith, too. And I would like to emphasize (21:31) the fact that each one of us, every day, God tests us to see just how much we really believe in him, (21:41) just how much we really depend upon him.

God is testing us to be passed. (21:51) Take a look now at 2 Corinthians once again. (21:57) When we look at Paul, picking up at verse 12, which was read in your hearing already.

(22:08) Excuse me. Paul thinks at this point that he is the master of his own faith. He is the master (22:30) of where he is going and what he is going to do.

And he really is not completely entirely (22:37) relying on God to work in his life the way he should. But let's pick up at verse 18 in particular. (23:03) Yes, verse 8. I'm sorry.

I got too far down there. I had the passages in my mind. Verse 8. (23:17) Reading again from the New International Version.

(23:29) Notice now, this is him giving them a personal account of his life. (23:40) He and his travelers were under great pressure. We don't know exactly what that pressure was, (23:48) but it was bad enough that they feared for their lives and their safety.

(23:55) We were under pressure far beyond our ability to endure so that we despaired of life itself. (24:09) He's being tested, isn't he? Indeed, we felt we had received the sentence of death. (24:19) But this happened that we might not rely on ourselves but on God.

Notice now the things (24:30) that he's experiencing. He says, I experienced because God wanted me to come to the conclusion (24:38) that I cannot rely on myself. This happened that we might not rely on ourselves but on God (24:50) who raises the dead.

He has delivered us from such a deadly peril and he will deliver us again. (25:01) On him we have set our hope that we will continue to, that he will continue to deliver us. (25:09) As you help us by your prayers, then many will give thanks on our behalf (25:16) for the gracious favor granted us in answer to the prayers of many.

(25:24) I see the time is running out on me a little bit, but I want to go ahead and give you a personal (25:31) experience because I believe in personal divine intervention of providence and I believe God is (25:41) working in each one of your lives. And when you come away from here, I want you to really, (25:51) really consider it and come to that conviction yourselves. God is working in your life if you (25:57) haven't already come to that conclusion.

Many of you probably already have. When I was younger, (26:09) I had three children. They were in grade school still.

I had great aspirations. (26:18) I wanted an occupation that would create wealth, that would give me the opportunity to (26:26) leave my family in a nice house, not just an average house, but a nice house, (26:36) nice car, and to be able to do things that money can buy. I was looking for occupations (26:46) that would do that for the very thing for me.

I tried sales. I tried accounting. (26:53) My business degree.

I tried various other aspects. I was in car sales. I was in insurance sales.

(27:02) And the only reason I was in those things is because they all offered the opportunity to have (27:07) a successful financial life, but I failed miserably. I was a failure. (27:20) I got to the point in my life where I only had five dollars in my savings account and no money (27:26) in my checking account, and all I needed now was somebody to call and ask for payment.

I was so in (27:34) debt up to my eyes that all I needed was a phone call that would throw me into bankruptcy. (27:43) I didn't know where I was going, what I was going to do. I was unemployed.

(27:56) I needed a quip or a bit of fire. One night, I'm in bed. I'm so (28:09) disappointed.

I got up, went out on the living room floor. I sprawled out there, (28:25) and I prayed to God. I threw everything on him.

Got up, went to bed. Got up the next morning. (28:45) We headed to the morning newspaper.

I picked up the newspaper, looked into the job this morning. (28:56) Believe it or not, there was a man from Coca-Cola, a morning driver salesman. (29:05) This job I hadn't considered.

You're looking at a guy who was almost 300 pounds, flimsy, (29:17) couldn't run around chasing his kids without getting out of breath. I was so bad. (29:27) I went down.

I put a suit on. I went down, applied for that job. I go in this room.

(29:36) There must have been at least 20, 25 other guys standing there wanting the same job. (29:49) I went in for my interview. The guy says to me, believe it or not, (29:56) you have the job if you can get a CDO.

At that time, I wasn't a CDO. I said, okay. (30:14) I was the only guy that had a suit on.

He was offering me the job, flimsy, overweight. (30:27) I went down to the license bureau. I had not studied for the test.

I walked in. I said, (30:36) I want this license, choker's license is what it's called. I want a choker's license.

(30:47) They sent me down, gave me the paper, and the test. I could only miss six questions. (30:56) I took the test.

I didn't study. I missed six questions. I got the license.

I run back there. (31:09) They gave me the job. I'm not going to tell you the rest.

I can tell you this. Within three months, (31:20) I was down to 160 pounds. I had muscles now that I could pick up a case of Coke that weighed 60 (31:27) pounds.

My hands were so sore that I could hardly close them. My muscles were so sore. (31:38) Six years later, I'm still working on the job.

I have made so much money. (31:47) I was completely out of debt. I went to school to become a minister.

(32:01) Do I believe it's my mission? You better, dude. That's just one story. (32:09) I have several.

I can tell you. Those are the ones I believe in. I can identify with Paul.

(32:19) I identify with him 100 percent, especially when we look at his letter to the Philippians. (32:30) In Philippians, the fourth chapter, which you have read in your hearing, what does he say there? (32:48) I believe God does test our faith. I could have gone different ways, couldn't I? (32:58) Paul could have gone different ways, too.

He says, I rejoice greatly in the Lord that at last you (33:05) renewed your concern for me. Indeed, you were concerned, but you had no opportunity to show it. (33:12) I'm not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the (33:21) circumstances.

I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. (33:30) I have learned the secret of being content. Isn't that a beautiful thought, being content? (33:39) I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well-fed or hungry, (33:49) whether living in plenty or in want.

I can do all this through him who gives me strength. (33:59) And so we could go on and finish out the chapter, but we're wrong. You can do that yourself.

That's (34:10) what believing in God is all about. God knows whether we believe in him or not, (34:18) and he knows by the way we live our lives, because the way we live our lives is a statement about (34:27) whether or not we believe in God or not. God is asking us to believe in him and to repent from our (34:37) lifestyle, to repent from our attitude towards him, and to accept the fact that he is, and that (34:44) he's a rewarder of those who diligently seek him.

And he's providing us anybody who will, (34:53) who would like to come back to him and be reconciled to him, is willing to offer that to (35:00) us. It will come to him through Jesus. He's

provided Jesus as our high priest.

He's made (35:09) Jesus our high priest, and Jesus is able to offer a sacrifice for our sins. That sacrifice has already (35:18) been made. All he's asking us to do is to become his disciple, and to be baptized for the remission (35:26) of our sins, and put him on in baptism to walk in this newness of life.

This newness of life is why (35:35) we're offering our lives to him. (35:39) And living a life that demonstrates the fact that we believe that he is, (35:47) that he does look after us. He wants to be our father.

And if there's anyone here this morning (35:57) that needs that assurance, I'd like to extend to you the opportunity to do so. (36:02) Now together we stand and sing the song of courage.