

# **What is Jesus Doing?**

## **DON'T LET YOUR BUT GET IN THE WAY OF YOUR FAITH**

I will let you in on something... This has been a very bad year for business. It has also, praise the Lord, been a very GOOD year for ministry. I am an executive recruiter that works on contingency. This has been my job for the whole 20 years that I have been in ministry (for which I do NOT get paid, praise God!). I like my profession because I am always on the cutting edge of God's Will. When I close a deal (we are talking straight commission here) I have a wonderful and bountiful influx of income, however, I can be working on 15 deals at any given time (all pretty work-intensive) and if I don't actually place those candidates then I can make nothing for six months work (which is close to my current situation). This is a wonderful faith building situation, in that I find I must trust Him more than the money in the bank (or lack thereof).

Add to this that the Lord has blessed me with a wife who is a true partner, and who agrees with me in prayer and trust and helps me through the darker moments before the light of faith shines and chases the dark cobwebs of concern (I won't say the word fear) from my mind and heart. What a gift from God!

I always tell people that I am the most blessed person I know. I came from a good home, with great parents who taught me by example to live by the "Golden Rule." Although they were not Christians (in fact they were Jewish) they were emotionally intelligent, smart and articulate, and they really loved me. If there was anything that might have served me better in my upbringing, it was, that as an only child, I was a good bit spoiled, and I have a big ego and an entitlement bias because of it. Therefore, when things don't go my way, professionally speaking, I tend to fret and stew. . (mostly my OLD self, the Holy Spirit and I are still working on it) These are NOT good things for a faithful Believer to indulge in, and so, once I catch myself doing that, I seek God's strength, and quit it.

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I had a friend who was a very “downcast” type of person. His demeanor was really pitiful. He had been raised by an unbelieving father (also Jewish, as it happens), who told him from childhood that he would never amount to anything. This is a devastating curse for a parent to put upon a child and it always impacts the thinking of the adult after they have “grown up.”

My friend, we’ll call him Bob, was very poor and although he was not homeless, he used to go up to the local mall with a sign, and accept charity from anyone who would stop and take pity on him (and he did look pitiful). When I first met him at a local church he put the squeeze on me for money to buy Christmas presents for his daughter. I found out later that he did this all the time and went to many churches always with a similar story, depending on the time of year.

As it happens, I got to know this guy when I invited him to join a group of men with whom I was doing weekly Bible studies at the time. Once I got to know Bob, and saw his true and loving heart for leading people to faith, I realized that he was not a beggar, really, but that the Lord was using him in that capacity to be a “lightning rod” for mercy. There are many people who rarely (or never) think about blessing someone else, but when they see a particularly pitiful-looking person or circumstance (think of those dog and cat rescue ads on TV) they will then be moved to show mercy and dig deep in their pockets. I came to realize that this was Bob’s “Kingdom job.” He was blessing people by accepting their heartfelt donation and he was also sharing his love of the Lord with them as a special gift from Bob to them.

When we would get together he would usually start to complain about his circumstances. He would start by saying I really love the Lord and I know He is doing great things in my life BUT... then he would run down the litany of his woes. His car was shot, his health was bad, his daughter’s boyfriend was a slug, etc.

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One day, after I realized that Bob had the faith to wake up each morning and do his job (hey, he went out every day and did his best to “earn” his daily bread, so it was like a job to him), and that he really DID love the Lord with all his heart, mind, soul and strength, AND that he loved other people enough to see them saved, then the Lord gave me a Word for him. I told him “Bob, don’t let your BUT get in the way of your FAITH.” Who says God doesn’t have a sense of humor?

Bob said “what do you mean”? I explained to him that it is alright to run down your laundry list of troubles before the Lord, but instead of doing it after you tell Him how great He is, as if as great as He is, He can’t change it, try this...

Praise Him for Who He IS and what He has already done, THEN run down your list of troubles, trials and worries to Him, and THEN tell Him that you are confident in His ability to change circumstances (oh He can!) and deliver you from temptations (oh, He WILL!) and that you are choosing to believe that He is BIGGER than your problems. “That, my friend,” I said, “is not letting your BUT get in the way of your faith!”

When he heard that, the biggest grin that I ever saw on Bob came over his face. He said John, you’re right, and I will begin doing that right now! Now, as it happens, we did see the deliverance of the Lord in quite a few areas of Bob’s life through the power of that Godly perspective and the prayers of Bob and many of his brothers, including his daughter being delivered from a horrible and idolatrous relationship and being befriended by a very good and Godly couple who are her friends and mentors to this day. Hallelujah!

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*without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.*

- Hebrews 11:6

*I will make you a great nation; I will bless you And make your name great; And you shall be a blessing. In you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.*

- Genesis 12:2

*By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.*

- 1 John 3:16

*But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.*

- Matthew 6:33

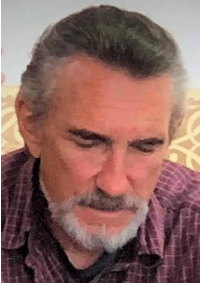
We are made/born to put God first. He is worthy to be praised and worshiped and we are created to give Him glory. We are also given free will and with that comes the possibility that pride and fear (the remnants of sin) will cause us to worship the things He has given us instead of the Giver Himself. That is idolatry, and it makes God angry.

Jesus showed us that the best way we have to bless God and glorify His Name is to lay down our lives for each other. That is what pleases God most.

Sometimes we go through a time of drought. I am going through one right now. The resources that have been plentiful in years past are dwindling. The enemy wants me to believe that God is angry because He has withheld the blessing on our income for a season.

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My attitude in this circumstance is what will dictate the REAL blessing that only God can give. He is deepening my faith. Why is that important? Because I LIVE to please God, and when God is glorified in this servant, then I am joyful! Be joyful saints! Faith and trust is a choice that is yours to make. Be assured, He is worthy of your praise and ABLE and WILLING to deliver you from your circumstances, but first He will walk you through your fear. Don't let your BUT get in the way of your faith.



*Love and eternal blessings,*

*- John Henry Raskin, Roadhouse Rabbi*