



Does God Need Me? (Part 1)

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There is an unspoken assumption in the world today. It disguises itself as many good things. Many of my years of walking with Jesus, I have heard it even on the lips of Christians. It is a devilish lie that seeks about to devour and handicap followers of Jesus. It is the personal demand to be needed by God.

Several years ago I was in a dialogue with a friend of mine regarding this. She insisted that God needs us to accomplish His work. She emphasized over and over again that without our obedience, God's work could not get done.

Let's look at this. When Jesus entered Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, the people were greeting him with "Hosanna!" The Pharisees told Jesus to rebuke the shouting people. But Jesus said, "If the crowds become silent, these stones will shout out" (See Luke 19).

Likewise, John the Baptist, offering his own rejoinder to the Pharisees, said that God is able of mere stones to make children of Abraham. The Pharisees were reminded of this truth at the beginning and end of Jesus ministry: in the area of usefulness, people can be replaced by stones. The point is important to consider. Perhaps there is more to this life than seeking after our usefulness to God.

At the risk of being misunderstood, I want to clarify that to be used by God is marvelous. To make His name lustrous on the earth is one of our highest goals. But to need to be useful, to bear in our hearts the motive that God's need of us will cause Him to love us more, smacks of terrible pride.

Jesus made His point more than once. "And when you pray," Jesus says, "don't do it so that others will see you. Go into your closet." Again he says, "And when you fast, don't display your fatigue, but rather fast in secret." And just so His audience understands, he continues, "And when you give, do it in secret." God is more concerned about the state of our heart than about all the usefulness we can conjure.

Imagine God's perspective for a moment (See Psalm 8). The words He utters are the recipe by which He

makes the universe. He fills the earth with a flood of lively animals and colorful plants and then crowns His creation with a creature in His own image. God sees the beginning from the end. He knows when sparrows fall and when our hair goes thin. He clothes the flowers of the field. He moves the hearts of kings and guides the fates of nations.

Even philosophically speaking, God, by definition, is self-sufficient. To be God, He needs nothing. If He needed anything, He could not be God.

Where did we get the idea that God needed us? Yet many of us are plagued with the quiet idea that unless we are busy doing things for God's kingdom that He will not love us and that His plans will come to naught.

But God demonstrated his love for us, says Romans 5, that even while we were sinners, Christ died for us. Why? Because He found Himself overwhelmed by all the chores to complete on planet earth? Because governments would grow like Babel unless someone lends God a hand? Because if we don't proclaim Him, that the rocks would still be silent?

I see this is a conclusion that could be reached if the new trend of open theism gained more sway. God, limited in his mind to know of the outcome of humanity, may also be limited in His power to produce His will or conquer evil without our helping hand.

But God demonstrated his love toward us. What is love? Love, in brief, is willing the good of another. When God wills our good, it is not with the hidden motivation that He needs a few more laborers. He does it because He wants us to have the very best thing we could have.

And one of the very best things for us is that we walk in obedience to Him (see Ephesians 2:8-10). This obedience is not directly for the purpose of helping God out. This is for the purpose of fulfilling who and what we were supposed to be from the beginning (like setting a bird free to fly). God does not need us to accomplish His work, but it does appear that He delights in our working with Him in the world (see the Book of Acts).

If you are motivated to gain God's favor by being useful to Him, you need to no longer. You are already loved by Him. Let an outpouring of gratitude and

love be your motivation for obedience, and you may find yourself more effective for God's kingdom than you even anticipated.

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