

Spirituality for Today

The Hidden Hand of God

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Faith teaches us that Divine Providence is somehow at work behind the scenes in the day to day events of our lives. Ask yourself, how did your parents meet? What sparked the mutual attraction between them? They probably met by accident; or so it seemed to them. Whatever the surface explanation might have been, the fact is that God knew from all eternity that you were to be born from these two people. Only they could have produced you.

Consider the truth that from all eternity God wanted you to come to life. Jesus told us He wanted our joy to be full, and that included you. We don't understand these mysteries, but Divine Providence is certainly a factor in all our lives, not only on good days but also on bad. Knowing this, we are often puzzled about God's silence, especially when we pray for him to take on the role of a super hero, and come charging to our rescue. We need to know why he is silent.

One of the great spiritual writers, Meister Eckhart had this to say on the topic: "Take courage, do not be afraid. Be sure that God will save you, even though there are times when you must suffer God's silence." He meant that we should bear patiently with God, even when we do not fully understand why he seems so aloof at times. We must learn to trust the Lord always.

To remain accepting and uncomplaining takes courage, but remember: a single act of trust, based on your faith in God's love, is far more meritorious than a dozen professions of faith. Cardinal Newman put it this way: "One little deed, done against natural inclination for God's sake, has in it a power which outbalances all the dust and chaff of mere profession." Trust Divine Love in all circumstances; the hidden hand of God is always present.

You are responsible for your thoughts and actions. Accept the fact that you have become who you are largely because of your own choices, good and bad alike. Therefore, as you move into the future, think wisely. Do not give in to any doubt about God's loving presence in your life. Thoughts may come willy-nilly into your mind, but you can weed out the doubts and fears that sabotage your joy. The will can say yes or no to each and every thought you think.

Feelings follow thoughts, just as actions follow feelings. Actions in turn lead to habits; and habits determine your character and destiny. Therefore, to paraphrase Newman: one little doubt about God's loving control over every situation can weaken your faith. Trust God in all circumstances. Trust Him in spite of his silence. It will enable you to rejoice even more when he does come through for you, as He always does. Therefore when the down times come, find the courage to "Be glad in the Lord and rejoice" anticipate the victory, "shout for joy, and be upright of heart." Psalm 32:11.

The Lord is aware that life, with its many sorrows, can be a penance. We all pine for paradise. This yearning for God is always with us. Be at peace then, and trust that God will support you, not only on good days but also on bad. His silence is an illusion. Your supreme purpose in life is to save your soul by trusting the goodness of the hidden hand of God.