

*What in the World is God Doing?
Getting on Board with God's Plan for His Church*

Sunday School Class

January 17, 2010



Class Outline

Class #1:

Introduction: The Cry of the Prophets

(Psalm 80; Hosea 10:1-2; 14:4-7)

Class #2:

All the Promises of God find their Yes in Jesus

(2 Corinthians 1:20; 1 Peter 1:10-12)

Class #3:

What God is Doing Now?

(John 15:1-11)

Class #4:

Three Implications

(Luke 9:60; 2 Corinthians 6:1-10)

INTRODUCTION: THE CRY OF THE PROPHETS

In the quiet moments, when you're being honest with yourself and God, do the following thoughts ever pass through your mind?

God, what are you doing?!

We know that you are strong and mighty and majestic. You rule over everything. You hold the world in your hand.

But how long are you going to leave us like this?

We are begging you for some growth, for strength, for some *upside*. You know how it is. Numbers are stagnant, morale is flagging, the money is all over the place.

We are a joke. The world laughs at us.

Every mistake and scandal, real or imagined, is raked over with glee by the latte-sipping reptiles of the media--the ones with the trendy, thick-rimmed glasses and the 'correct' opinions.

Is it that you are angry with us? When are you going to do something to turn this around?

Because don't forget that the whole thing is your idea. You planted the vine in the first place--cleared the ground for it in the backyard, dug the hole, put up the trellis--and we flourished. But now look at us! We're being eaten alive.

Restore us, Lord, God of hosts! Let your face shine that we may be saved!

Apart from the last two sentences, which are a direct quote, the rest of this little outburst is a re-phrasing of the 80th Psalm, which was written at a time when Israel felt like many churches do today. The days of God's power and redemption in victory all seem to be in the past. More to the point, his favor -- the shining of his face upon them -- was worryingly absent. (p. 29-30)

How are you feeling about ministry here at Nauset Baptist Church? Do you have any questions like these for God?

The Vine Metaphor (Psalm 80:7-13)

1. What is this metaphor being used to describe?
2. If you were in their shoes, do you think you would have had these kinds of questions for God?

What the Prophets Did and Didn't Know (Hosea 10:1-2; 14:4-7)

1. What is promised in Hosea 10:1-2?
2. What is promised in Hosea 14:4-7?

It seemed to all outward appearances that nothing was going on except sin, failure and judgment. And yet the prophets promised that, like a phoenix from the ashes, Israel would rise again by the life-giving power of their God. The vine would blossom once more, and grow to be a beautiful plant known throughout the world. But the path to these glories would be through suffering and judgment. (p. 33)

... we find ourselves plunged into the middle of a story that has been unfolding since before there were any such things as vines, or for that matter earth into which they can be planted. It's the story of what God is really doing on planet Earth. It begins with his plan to create all things by and for his son, and it culminates in new heavens and a new earth, populated by a newly resurrected people of God who are United to Jesus Christ.