



Looking for the Providence of God in All Things: Meditating on the Works of God

MAIN IDEAS

- Often we don't rejoice in the works of God because we don't see, remember, or understand them.
- To rejoice in the works of God, we must learn to meditate on His works.

MEMORY VERSE

I remember the days of old; I meditate on all that you have done; I ponder the work of your hands.—Psalm 143:5

SCRIPTURE

- 1) Psalm 103:2
- 2) Psalm 111:2
- 3) Psalm 143:5
- 4) Isaiah 55:9
- 5) Matthew 16:5-9
- 6) Romans 11:33



LESSON SUMMARY

Great are the works of the LORD, studied by all who delight in them.—Psalm 111:2

The wonders of God's creation are amazing! His works are everywhere, but we are often blind to them. Often we don't see God's works of providence because we don't take time to stop and meditate on what we see.

We need to be intentional or we will not remember God's works of gracious providence. Taking the time at the end of each day to rehearse God's benefits that day is a helpful practice that keeps us aware of God's providence.

We often don't understand God's works because His ways are so different than ours and we are limited by seeing only pieces of the plan He is orchestrating. "God is His own interpreter" and may, in time, give us understanding.

We will never see the great works of God unless we stop to SEE, REMEMBER, and UNDERSTAND some of what He is doing or He has done. Psalm 143:5 tells us how to take time to reflect—to meditate—on all that God has done.

Review God's benefits to you this week. Meditate on His works. Isn't God amazing! When you are tempted to question God this week, remind yourself that "God is His own interpreter"—someday we will understand what we now see dimly. Determine to slow your life down and in quietness commune with God.

Take time now with your son or daughter to meditate on the works of God. Rejoice in His goodness, wisdom, and power.

AS YOU WALK BY THE WAY

Read Psalm 103 with your son or daughter. Discuss the benefits this psalm tells us about. Then help your child think of specific things in his or her life or in the life of your family that reflect this psalm. For example, how has the Lord been merciful and gracious to your family?

ACTION STEP

During application time, each student was asked to decide on a personal response to what was learned. After recording this step below, discuss how your child can apply this response to his or her life this week.

SUGGESTION FOR JOURNALING

At the end of each day, reflect back on your day, and rehearse the benefits of the Lord that day. Then write about some you especially want to remember.

**SEEING GOD AT WORK****Remember God**

by Carrie R. Zeman

Charlie Horton was sitting down to lunch at the Minneapolis Fire Department garage when the gong on the wall began clanging. He tossed his sandwich—pickled herring on rye, which his Norwegian landlady loved and Charlie was too polite to refuse—back onto the piece of newspaper in which it had been wrapped. The series of long and short clangs was a code for the location of a triggered firebox. Charlie was surprised to recognize the alarm for his own neighborhood.

Six shaggy draft horses had been harnessed, ready to receive the hose wagon with its big brass water tank by the time Charlie and his fellow fireman pushed out of the garage onto the street. A teamster hitched up the wagon, and the horses started with a bell-ringing lurch. Hose Company Number 6 galloped toward the column of smoke smearing the sky above Addison's Addition—a neighborhood where many Swedish, Danish, and Norwegian immigrants like Charlie's landlady lived. As the wagon veered onto 12th Street, Charlie could see that it was not a house on fire. It was the First Swedish Baptist Church.

The team pulled up to hitching posts along the street, and the firemen jumped out of the wagon before the wheels stopped turning. Charlie clutched the brass nozzle under his arm, pulling the waxed-linen hose behind him. Hook and Ladder Company Number 3 had arrived just before Charlie's company, and were climbing ladders that rested on the church's brick walls. Charlie and his hose man followed them up the ladder. The Hook and Ladder men swung fire axes, quickly hacking holes in the roof. Charlie aimed his hose through a hole while men down on the tanker wagon pumped up the water that streamed out onto the fire. The firemen knew it was too late to save the church. But next door stood the wooden houses of dozens of people who lined the sidewalk, watching for sparks that could send their own homes up in flames. Through the smoke, Charlie saw his landlady praying with others from the First Swedish Baptist Church.

The men on the roof could feel the heat of the fire licking up through their thick-soled leather boots. "It's time to get off of here!" the Hook and Ladder captain shouted. "Hose Company, too!" Charlie and his hose man kept pouring water on the fire while firemen scrambled down the ladder off the roof. Then it was their turn. Charlie turned off the nozzle. His friend backed the wet hose down the ladder.

Charlie coughed in the smoke that still swirled about him, waiting for the ladder to clear. Then the roof beneath his feet began to groan and pitch. Charlie almost fell as the roof swayed beneath his feet and he reached for the chimney for stability. But before his hand even touched it, the chimney crumbled, collapsing onto the sidewalk in a hail of bricks and soot. Charlie was thrown to his knees as chunks of the roof began caving, falling into the flames below. Finally, the trembling stopped, and Charlie heard a voice shouting up at him, "Ladder! The ladder!" He opened his stinging eyes just wide enough to see the top of a ladder poking up through the smoke at the edge of the roof. He groped for the top rung and scrambled down blindly. Then his feet touched the ground, and he thought nothing had ever felt so solid.

The captain led Charlie to the sidewalk across the street, where he sat coughing, watching the two fire companies extinguish the fire. Someone handed him a kerchief and he gratefully wiped the soot from his eyes. Behind him, he heard the soft syllables of church members talking in Swedish. Then he felt a hand on his shoulder and he heard his landlady's voice: "You look good at that, son," she said in English, pointing to the burned-out church building. "You look good at that and for always you remember God." Charlie stared at the building for a long minute, seeing nothing but the smoking shell of the ruined church, wondering how she could look at so great a loss and see God. Then his eyes wandered up the wall to where the roof had been. Only one small piece of roof had not caved into the fire: the corner on which Charlie had been standing.

Although Charlie's landlady was not a real person, this is a true story based on newspaper accounts and photos from 1885. We don't know if Charlie knew God before the fire, or if he came to believe in Him afterward. But if you could meet him, what would you tell him about God's providence? What great works of God in this story can you remember and think about? What should be your response to God as you look at His works? Pray for this kind of response.