

What is Working in You?

1 Thess. 2:13 - "... when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, **the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.**"

What does it mean to say that something is "working in you"?

- Physical – bodily functions (blood, nerves, heart, lungs, etc.); digestion or indigestion; etc.
- Mental – thoughts (good or bad) that just won't go away
 - "I should (or should not) be doing this"
 - Scripture or pornography
 - Confidence or fear
 - Love or hate
 - Charity or bitterness
 - Peace or anxiety
- Spiritual (activities of the Holy Spirit) – conviction; repentance; renewing of the mind; etc.
- Providence – God is moving in the circumstances of your life to bring his will to pass

Consider the action of yeast - it starts out small and then expands to fill the loaf. The Bible refers to leaven symbolically. Jesus said to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees. There was to be no leaven in the OT offerings, or during the Passover week, yet Mt. 13:33 uses it as a figure for the spreading of the kingdom of God.

So How, and What, is Working in You?

Evil Workings in the Soul

Eph. 2:2 – "... the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience."

Surely it is not hard to see the devil and his demons at work today, in the "trans movement", obscenity and profanity, libraries and schools being used for filth and propagandizing of children, etc. The devil is the "prince of the power of the air", and is actively working in individuals and institutions of society, through the "children of disobedience".

And such were we, until Christ opened our eyes, gave us life and repentance, and forgave us our sins!

Why does God put up with such in-your-face, rampant perversion and abomination? Ac. 17:30-31 – "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained ..."

God temporarily overlooks sin, giving men time to repent, but will ultimately judge those who don't. For those to refuse to repent, their conscience may become seared (1 Tim. 4:2), and sometimes God just gives men up to their uncleanness, to a reprobate mind (Rom. 1:24, 26, 28)!

Feelings of Guilt

God has put in men a conscience, telling them, "Do right, don't do wrong", and the pains of guilt because of that conscience. Rom. 2:15 – "Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another;"

Guilt Removed through Christ and Repentance

But one of the greatest parts of the gospel message is that, not only will God forgive our sins through Christ, he will cleanse our consciences so we no longer need to live under that burden of guilt.

2 Cor. 7:10 – "For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death."

Heb. 9:14 – "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"

Heb. 10:22 – “Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.”

Godly Transformation

After we come to Christ, God continues to change us, through the Word, Christ, and the Holy Spirit.

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Phl. 2:13 – “For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.”

Rom. 12:2 – “And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.”

Jas. 1:2-3 – “My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.”

Eph. 3:20 – “Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us.”

Spiritual Gifts

1 Cor. 12:4-6 – “Now there are diversities of gifts ... administrations ... operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.”

1 Cor. 12:11 – “... worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.”

Fruitfulness in Ministry

Col. 1:29 – “Whereunto I also labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily.”

Sufferings and physical death, but spiritual life, through persecutions

Death is working in this world still, which is why even Christians die. But even in this life, we can experience the life of Christ in our mortal bodies – both spiritually (we have entered into eternal life), and physically (through divine healing).

2 Cor. 4:10-12 – “Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus’ sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh. So then death worketh in us, but life in you.”

2 Cor. 4:17 – “For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.”

Providence, Predestination, Sovereignty, and an Eternal Inheritance

Eph. 1:11 – “In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.”

How Do We Maintain this Work in Our Souls (really it is God, not us, Phl. 2:13)

Phl. 4:6-8 – “Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.”

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