

# Maple Springs Baptist Church

**Series: What was I thinking?**

**Week 3: God is more Active.**

**What do you think about God?** We like to think we can control everything around us. But often things happen that show us how quickly we can be thrown into circumstances well beyond our control. Many different factors can cause us to feel out of control in our lives.

**2 Chronicles 16:1-3**

1) **God is always working, even when we are not, ...**

**2 Chronicles 16:7-10, 12-13**

2)... **and He invites you to join Him in His work.**

The way we handle ourselves when circumstances get out of control is directly connected to our focus. Focus on right things, maintain a sense of peace. Focus on the wrong things, become more & more stressed. Unfortunately, most of us focus on the wrong things during difficult circumstances. We either Look Out or we Look In, when we should be Looking Up.

**-LOOK OUT: FOCUS on CIRCUMSTANCES** around us that are spinning out of control. Means keeping our focus on the problem. Danger of LOOKING OUT is: It keeps our sights on our circumstances. It makes us more & more aware of what's wrong, preventing us from finding a solution.

**-LOOK IN: FOCUS on SELF.** Danger of LOOKING IN usually there's nothing we can do to regain control. **STRESS is fearful concern experienced when life's demands seem greater than my ability to meet them.** All we're going to do is become more and more aware that we don't have the resources to make things better and that the demands of our circumstances are greater than our ability to manage.

**Right Focus is to LOOK UP: FOCUS not on circumstances & not on SELF but ON GOD.** Focus on the One who has the resources to solve the problem—the One who is able to fill us with peace no matter the circumstances.

**MARK 4:37-41.** Some disciples were focused on the storm. They tried their best to row or bail or to fix the situation in their own strength. They were Looking Out.

Other disciples were Looking In. They woke up Jesus, "don't you care if we drown?" meaning, "Can't You see how this situation is affecting me?" –Looking In.

Jesus wanted to change their focus. “Why are you afraid? Do you still have no faith?” He wanted them to recognize who was in the boat with them. He wanted them to look up and see that if Jesus was sleeping peacefully, they could take comfort in His peace, because the situation was under control.

**Key Principle: Our circumstances do not shape the way we view God; Our God shapes the way we view our circumstances.**

**GOD IS MORE ACTIVE Than We Think** Many people believe the hoax that God is distant, passive, sitting on the sidelines of the universe, uninterested in what happens. Even Jesus followers can drift into this way of thinking when they encounter circumstances beyond their control. During difficult times, it’s easy to wonder if God really cares about us after all.

Amos had something much different to say about God. Amos wasn’t writing to people who were doing great in life. Amos was writing to a nation experiencing famine, drought, persecution, and even a plague. In other words, Amos was writing to people smack in the middle of circumstances beyond their control. (**AMOS 4:13**).

Notice there are 5 verbs that describe God’s activity: forms, creates, reveals, turns, and treads. Amos is highlighting a God who is active. Each term was recorded as a participle in the original Hebrew. Participles are ongoing. They don’t just describe something God did or does; they describe who He is continuously.

A closer look at the 5 verbs shows us that **God’s activity in our world is Powerful**. The words forms and creates are translated from the same Hebrew terms used to describe the power of God’s creation in Genesis 1 & 2. God is omnipotent—He is all powerful—and every action He takes is born out of that power.

**God’s activity is wise**. In the original language, that word translated “reveals” speaks to that which is unknown being made known and understood. It’s a form of revelation. God is active in our world, and He reveals things to us we wouldn’t otherwise be able to know. God is omniscient (all-knowing), and His every action is rooted in His deep and eternal wisdom.

**God’s activity is present**. Amos 4:13 declares that God “treads on the heights of the earth,” the prophet is speaking to the omnipresence of God—to the truth that God is everywhere at all times. We never have to face any circumstances by ourselves, because wherever we are and whatever we’re going through, God is right there with us. He is present.

God is active in the world—and not just in the world, but God is active in our lives specifically. Your life and my life. He acts in power and wisdom, and He’s present with us no matter what we endure.

**God is More Active that We Think.**