

The Travail of Everyday Life

Commentary of May 1, 2007 — Our Christian Life in God

This Month's Newsletter and Article

God's will is supreme. His will shall be fulfilled. Jesus Christ always subordinates His will to the will of His Father (Matthew 26:39; Mark 14:36; Luke 22:42). He is truly a servant.

"I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which has sent me."

• *John 5:30*

The "[May 2007 Newsletter](#)" and the ASK Article for this month, "The Two Apostle Johns," deal with the writings of the apostle John (his epistles and his Gospel), his role in dealing with Jewish customs, and his final change to accept the progressive teachings that God intended for the *ekklesia* to learn. Dr. Martin shows that the final instruction and teaching from God, the Mystery, was totally accepted by the apostle John which radically changed his thinking about the relationship of God to mankind. The Gospel of John is the final expression of God's teaching through John.

Those Called of God

It occurred to me that the *ekklesia* that God has on earth today is exactly what He wants it to be. This may seem strange because we usually feel that there is always room for improvement both on a personal as well as on a corporate level. However, to be honest we rarely interact effectively with others of the *ekklesia* of God, and many times we operate more effectively, and more usefully to God when we do not interact with others of the *ekklesia*. He can always influence us to do otherwise. There will be a time and a place for that, perhaps in the future, and most assuredly after our resurrection in the Kingdom of God. If you choose to interact with others now, consider yourself privileged to do so, but do not feel "left out" if you cannot do so with a group.

In the world the general wisdom is that "there is strength in numbers." However, God deals with quality not quantity. You are quality because God values you. You are decidedly **not** quality as far as the world is concerned, but you **are** quality as far as God is concerned. God chose you. Granted He chose you "as you are," warts and all (and you know you have them), but nonetheless He chose you and He is perfecting you to accomplish the counsel of His will (Ephesians 1:11).

I have written before that in a certain sense all creation was brought forth for you. In regard to your relationship with God and Christ, you individually are the object of creation and the entire work that God and Christ have performed. Of course they did it unselfishly and not for you alone. Likewise we should live and act unselfishly and not for ourselves alone.

Look at all that God has done for you. Apply the verse below and include yourself within its meaning. After all it is talking about you, the gifts you have received from God, and your participation in the work of God in salvation:

"In whom also WE have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who works all things after the counsel of his own will:"

- That WE should be to the praise of his glory,
- [WE] who first trusted in Christ.
- In whom YOU also trusted,
- after that YOU heard the word of truth,
- the gospel of YOUR salvation:
- in whom also after that YOU believed,
- YOU were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise,
- Which is the earnest of OUR inheritance

until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.”

• *Ephesians 1:11–14*

Read that passage again slowly, emphasizing the underlined words. The apostle Paul includes himself in the “we” and the “our” statements, and he refers to his readers who were members of the *ekklesias* in Asia in the “you” statements. You are included in the “we,” the “you,” and the “our” statements. There is no doubt that you are where you are supposed to be, doing what you are supposed to do, no matter what your situation.¹

The Drudgery of Everyday Life

God is training people to be like Christ, training us all to subordinate our wills to His will. That is why there are not many powerful personalities in God’s *ekklesia*. It is not just a matter of meekness, although that is generally part of our training from God. It is not just a matter of wisdom, might, or nobility (by which I mean good breeding or social status):

“For you see your calling, brethren, how that

not many wise men after the flesh,
not many mighty,
not many noble,

are called: But

God has chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and
God has chosen the weak things of the world to confound

the things which are mighty;
And base things of the world,
and things which are despised,

has God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought [nothing] things
that are: [Why?] That no flesh should glory in his presence.”

• *1 Corinthians 1:26–29*

These verses certainly describe me. And they describe every other Christian I have ever known. They even describe the apostle Paul, who wrote those words. All of us are seriously flawed by the standards of the world. Even those few who are wise, mighty, or noble have other flaws to compensate as vanity drags them down. The apostle Paul had such flaws.

We are all misfits.² Sometimes we get discouraged because we feel that God is not using us to our self-perceived (may I say self-deceived) potential. Or we may be suffering, or we may not be able to help our loved ones the way we would like (we want to save them, of course).

We, like Paul, should rejoice in our infirmities (2 Corinthians 11:30, 12:5–10) because they keep us humble, as they kept Paul humble. Nonetheless we should even bear up and help those around us, especially our brothers and sisters in Christ:

1. This should not be an excuse not to improve our situation or grow. We are instructed to grow in grace and in knowledge (2 Peter 3:18) for a purpose, not just to improve ourselves (“**not to please ourselves**,” Romans 15:1). We are to do so to increase our service to others.
2. See my article “[Are You a Misfit?](#)” which goes into detail about the concept of “misfit-ism.”

"We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves."

• Romans 15:1

In fact God through His Spirit actually is helping our infirmities, although we probably do not realize it. (Likely our vanity prevents us from noticing it):

"Likewise the Spirit also helps our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered."

• Romans 8:26

Read this month's article and I hope you begin to understand how God changed and molded the apostle John through decades of learning so he would subordinate his will to God's will just as we see Christ's example subordinating Himself to God's will. Remember that Christ and God our Father understand our situation, which is limited to this life.

"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."

• Hebrews 4:15

God is training you and me in the same manner with infirmities of life. Rather than be discouraged, rejoice in the "training" that you are now enduring. Of course it is not easy, but that is what the apostle Paul says to do. Keep in the back of your mind that whatever you are enduring at the present time (1) it is for your own good, and (2) it will pass, either through finding a solution or through death. God is performing His work through you. Thank God for this time in your life, no matter how much the drudgery of life may overload you. Your present situation will also work to God's glory.

"Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant,

Make YOU perfect in every good work to do his will, working in YOU that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen."

• Hebrews 13:20–21

Feel free to ask for relief, solace, peace, comfort, respite, and healing when you or those around you are suffering. That is what a child does. Fathers, especially God the Father, like to be asked. So pray and ask. Do so with a heart that is willing to accept God's answer, even when the answer to your prayers is "no."

Express your willingness to submit to God's will, even if it means enduring evils, and even if you may not feel 100% committed. God likes to hear it. You need to express it. You do want to obey God's will on some level or you would not even make the statement. That commitment also comes from God, and He increasingly gives it to His children, particularly.

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