

Daily Devotional, May 11, 2021 Not My Will, But Yours

Moses saw that Aaron had let the people get completely out of control, much to the amusement of their enemies. So he stood at the entrance to the camp and shouted, "All of you who are on the LORD's side, come here and join me." And all the Levites gathered around him. Exodus 32:26-27 (NLT)

Our relationship with God cannot be founded merely on a feeling or emotion—not solely built on what can be seen or unseen. But it must be based on the truth of who God is revealed to us through scripture. Just as the Israelites in Exodus 32 were diverted from the truth of God, it is easy enough for us to accept the lies of false teaching. It is just as easy to get swept up in the fortune of the gospel and focus solely on all the blessings God bestows on us while forgetting about the glory and true majesty of God. When we take God's grace for granted, it is very easy to make God into a sort of soft, timid, fulfill all your needs, fits perfectly into your back pocket kind of god.

However, *God is God!* Don't ever forget that even though God is compassionate, loving, and forgiving, God is also mighty, powerful, wrathful, and just. Yes, God is always faithful and willing to extend grace to us, but that does not mean that as God's people we have the freedom to live a life in opposition to how God's Word has instructed us to live as true believers.

When Jesus died we received God's grace to us as a gift. However, I believe it is possible to abuse this gift of grace. When we choose to disobey and to live a life that takes pleasure in the very things that Jesus was killed on the cross to save us from, do you think God just shrugs His shoulders and nods His head in humiliation? Do you think God is sitting in Heaven thinking "aw shucks there goes Rhonda, shoplifting again, she's so cute." NO! Although God takes great delight in us as God's people, God is also hurt and angered when we make the choice to deliberately disobey His word.

The Israelites misjudged badly. They forgot about the Lord and instead created an idol to worship instead. God was incensed with anger. "I have seen these people," the Lord said to Moses, "and they are a stiff-necked people. Now leave me alone so that my anger may burn against them and that I may destroy them. Then I will make you into a great nation." (vv. 9-10)

After Moses pleaded with the Lord to have mercy on His people, God had a change of heart and extended grace towards them. Moses then asked those gathered around, who was for the Lord, and then under God's direction, they killed all the people who were against God. The Lord offered forgiveness and allowed His people to turn back to Him, however, those whose hearts were hardened and chose to rebel were put to death.

God is gracious, but as we clearly see, God is also just. One thing that God always convicts me of is what I choose to worship and place first, ahead of God. I have to ask myself, "Will it be the way that I speak, my friends, the activities that I take part in, my wife, my family, or will it be my Savior. Jesus? There is only enough room in my heart to fully worship one, and God's Holy Spirit is constantly reminding me to shed the things that I am worshipping above Him and remember what I was put on this planet for—the glory and the expansion of His kingdom on earth. It's not easy, and I constantly fail at this. But over time I have learned to listen to the impulses of His Spirit and ask God to cut out whatever is in me that is not working for Him. That's a hard prayer to pray, and it hurts when God faithfully answers it. But it's worth the growth that it brings.

I want to ask you to take time this morning to repent to God for placing other idols ahead of God, or for trying to use grace as an excuse to purposefully live the life of an unbeliever. Set aside moments to read scripture and meditate on God's word, and ask for God to transform your heart and mind as more of His truth and glory is revealed to you.

Dear God, Help me I pray, to live each day of my life in humility of heart and with self-control. May I look to You and not to the ways of the world. May I grow in grace and in a knowledge, and may I apply myself diligently to pursue You greater plans and purpose in my life, willingly accepting correction, eager to forgive others and enjoying my fellowship with You day by day. This I ask in Jesus' name, Amen.