

Notes for the Ekklesia Meeting

Sundays @ 10:00 a.m. Info: (651) 283-0568 Discipleship Training Ministries, Inc www.dtminc.org Today's Date: May 3, 2009

Servants & Stewards: Being, Becoming, and Faithful

by Dan Trygg

"...and y'all are having-been-made-full-ones in Him, Who is the head/source of all rule (initiators) and authority (out-from-being)." Col. 2:10

"...that the person who is God's may be adequate, thoroughly equipped toward every good work." II Timothy 3:17

"As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God." II Pet. 4:10

The scripture passages above address three questions (1.) Who are we, as believers in Christ? (2.) What are we supposed to be doing when we meet together as a group, and how does that affect my need to grow? and, (3.) What am I to be doing with all this, as a servant of God? Roughly, these inquiries boil down to three main areas: (1.) identity; (2.) equipping; and (3.) obedience; or, to put it in still different terms, (1.) my position in Christ; (2.) my maturation process; and (3.) my vocation, or calling to serve. My **being** is who I am, **becoming** reflects the process involved in growth, and **faithfulness** refers to my effectiveness in accomplishing the Father's will for my life.

My **being** has to do with **the person I am in Christ, by God's creation**. It has to do with all my God-given potential, as well as my true, present status as a child of God. *It is given to me as a gift*. In Colossians 2:10, the apostle Paul says that in Him (i.e., in Christ), we are all "having been made complete ones". The word for "complete" does not mean "fully grown", rather it means "filled full". The full provision, the full potential, the full set of foundational ingredients that are needed for me to become what God has in mind for me to become has *already* been instilled in my very being, by virtue of His creation and indwelling presence. I am not defective, or lacking, in any way, in my spiritual-genetic makeup. *My essence, my internal core, is equipped with all the necessary equipment to do what I am called by God to do*. There is nothing I have done, or could do, to earn this. It has been *granted* to me by my Creator-Redeemer. It has been His good purpose to place in me the special combination of potential abilities and gifts which are intended to express the unique aspect of His great glory to the world which He has intended for me to express. **This is the starting point for me. It is the given, the foundation, the baseline, the "hard wiring" of who I am. It is a done deal, given to me in Jesus for free.** It is like going to bed tonight and waking up tomorrow morning inside the cockpit of a jet, or inside a tank, or inside a nuclear submarine, or a locomotive, and being told this was ours, and our assignment was to learn how to use it. There are all these dials, displays, buttons and switches staring us in the face, and we don't know what they are all for. Or, to take it one step further, to wake up and find that I *am* the jet, the tank, the submarine, or the locomotive, ...that I am suddenly self-aware, and able to control my own systems, but I do not know what all my systems are, what they are for, or how they can operate most effectively. **My being is the hardware of who I am, the essence of the gift package that is me as a new creature in Christ. Some of my being is consistent with every other believer in Christ, but some of it is unique to me.** I may understand some of who I am, but *there is a great deal more that I do not yet grasp* concerning the potential *which has already been given to me*.

My **becoming** has to do with **the process of discovering who I am**, and learning how to effectively utilize the equipment which God has placed in me, in agreement with His purposes and leading. There are parts of my hardware, my essence, which are capable of being hijacked and used in wrong ways, and other parts of my being which become virtually inoperative when I am not "plugged in" to God as my power source. When Paul exhorts us to "no longer present your members to sin, as instruments of unrighteousness" (Rom. 6:13), he is referring to the *misuse of our God-given hardware for a wrongful purpose*. There are many aspects of our person which we have learned to misuse in this way. **The process of becoming involves the *renewing of our minds***, seeing things differently so that we begin to understand and correctly use the potential which God has given to us. As an illustration, I remember in the movie, *The Prince and the Pauper*, which was the story of virtually identical boys, one who was the prince of England, and the other who was just a street waif who somehow got mistaken for the prince and ended up in the palace. In the story, the pauper was using the seal of the King of England as a nutcracker, having no clue as to its real function or value. It was very useful for this purpose, and he would stash it in a suit of armor, whenever he heard anyone coming to his quarters. Eventually, it became a significant part of the story, as the real prince needed the King's seal to officially ratify certain laws which were important to the plot of the story. Of course, the pauper had no idea what it was they were looking for, and continued using the seal to crack nuts. We are like the pauper, in that **we have abilities which we have misused for wrong purposes, not understanding their real function**. Whether in the physical, emotional, or spiritual aspects of our being (which are artificial distinctions, at best, because there is much overlap and inter-relatedness between these

"areas"), we have potential which we must learn to understand, care for, and develop skill in utilizing in a healthy, God-honoring way. **The King's dominion (the Kingdom of God) extends to every aspect of our lives**, whether it be physical, emotional or spiritual. It includes not only how we invest our time, energy and resources, but also how we invest in our own personal development and maturation. In fact, **that is what our becoming is all about, the maturation of our beings, i.e, the "growing up" of our God-given selves into the fulfillment of our God-intended potential.** A mature person is a "fully-grown" person, one whose potentialities have become established, developed, and are effectively being used in agreement with the design and purpose which God has for that individual.

While our being is given to us as a gift, our becoming is a process that requires a partnership between us and God. *If we put forth no effort, we will never come to understand who we are.* Just as God is a hidden God, who desires us to pursue Him (Isa. 45:15; Acts 17:24-27), in the same way, He has said that we are fearfully and wonderfully made (Psa. 139:14). We should expect that if God's ways are past finding out, there ought to be parts of His handiwork that would be amazing, baffling, and difficult to fully grasp with just a surface investigation. **If we do not seek to understand, and apply ourselves to grow, ...to discover and develop our humanity, our gifts and abilities..., we will never know what God has put within us.** Self-understanding is a life-long pursuit, simply because we are made in the image of God and, of all creatures, we can most closely resemble and express His personality and likeness. Furthermore, **the key to our self-understanding is the guidance of our Maker.** He *alone* truly knows who we are, and what we are capable of. We could expend countless hours, and much money, in self-analysis and self-development, and still miss significant aspects of our being. Remember, Jesus said, "The one loving his self, will ruin it..." (Jn. 12:25)? Without the guidance which only God can give, we will mess up, and fall way short of our potential. **As we walk in partnership with God, and come to understand who we are, and develop our life-skills and ministry gifts, He will inevitably lead us into our calling** (Eph. 2:10).

Being **faithful** has to do with **effectively fulfilling my responsibilities as God's servant and steward.** All this potential we have been given, and the process of self-discovery that comes from walking with God, has a *design* and *purpose*. We have been bought with the price of Christ's blood, freed from bondage to sin and self-delusion, *so that we might serve the purposes of God for our lives.* Just as God Himself is the greatest Giver and Servant, having given us life and having come among us as the Suffering Servant to "seek and save that which was lost" (Mk. 10:46), **God has created us to express His character as givers, lovers, and servants.** Just as He is the King-With-The-Giving-Heart, the One who draws us to loyalty by His benevolence and self-sacrifice, He who will rule and reign by truth and love, in the same way, **He has called us to reign with Him by declaring and living truth, and by expressing love through acts of service and self-sacrifice to others.** His heart and example sets the culture, character and policies of His Kingdom. **He is making us like Himself** (Rom. 8:29; Eph. 4:13), *so that we can faithfully represent Him by our attitudes and actions.* He created us new, ...giving us a new heart and spirit, a new being ..., so that we could be *capable* of walking with Him. Then He Himself comes to live inside of us to *empower us* and *guide us* in discovering who we are, teaching us to walk with Him and guiding us into His will. Finally, as our King, He then sets us about His business, assigning us tasks and responsibilities which fit with our abilities and gifts. **The world-wide enterprise of the Kingdom is that, since Christ has bound the strong man (Satan), we are to plunder his house by preaching good news and setting people free from satanic oppression. Then we are to disciple these people, helping them to discover (becoming) who Christ has made them inside (being), so that they could obey Him and do His will (faithfulness).** Every one of us is given various assignments and responsibilities within this over-arching plan. Serving God will be an adventure, and will continue to develop and stretch us. **Just as our becoming requires effort and a partnership with God, the walking out of our salvation requires even greater risks, ...because we have to step outside of our own safe boundaries and begin to reach into the lives of others.** We have to depend more on God's ability to communicate with us, trust more in our ability to discern His leading, and risk more as we step outside of our normal patterns of living. As Henry Blackaby says, "You cannot go with God and stay where you are at the same time."

Being a steward is taking seriously the reality that God is our King, and that He has made us for a purpose. All we *have* and *are* is *to be at His disposal*, since He bought us for His own. **Faithfulness is living out the reality of that commitment** which we said with our hearts and mouths when we gave ourselves to Him. It is taking up our responsibility to be about the King's business in the lives of others, and learning what it takes to do that effectively.