

Notes for the Ekklēsia Meeting

Info: (651) 283-0568 Discipleship Training Ministries, Inc www.dtmnc.org Today's Date: September 7, 2014

Staying In Step With God's Will

by Dan Trygg

“Woe to the rebellious children,” declares Yahweh, “Who execute a plan, but not Mine...” Isaiah 30:1

“Therefore Yahweh waits to be gracious to you, and therefore He waits on high to have compassion on you. For Yahweh is a God of justice; how blessed are all those who wait for Him”

Isaiah 30:18

“Those who wait for Yahweh will gain new strength; they will mount up with wings like eagles, they will run and not get tired, they will walk and not become weary.”

Isaiah 40:31

“For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.”

Ephesians 2:10

I have just spent the last five days seeking God diligently about His will for me. I have been in full-time ministry for more than 34 years, but **I find myself in a unique situation.** For most of this time, I have been very busy, often meeting 30-40 people a week in one-on-one discipleship, or small group Bible studies. Most of the time, God has brought these people to me. Several times, I have seen God virtually clear my calendar, as people have moved on, only to have new people immediately come into my life. For whatever reason, **I find myself in a time of relative inactivity.** It hasn't affected my support, or negatively impacted me, in any way, but **I feel uncomfortable not being used more.** I know I have a lifetime of learning stored up in my mind, and years of experience walking with God and working with people. I have a lot to offer to those really serious to grow in their faith, or to someone who is struggling with problems. **For whatever reason, God has not chosen to bring new people into my life to work with,** and I find myself feeling uneasy with the relative lack of usefulness. **I have been praying about this issue for months, but this week, I felt like I needed to find some answers, so I determined to fast, pray and draw near to God for clarity.** In addition to my daily discipline of Bible study and prayer, I picked up a copy of Henry Blackaby's Experiencing God, because it deals with learning to discern God's will and doing it. I determined to read a chapter a day as a way of “stirring the pot” and gaining some new perspective on the matter.

One of my concerns has been not to get ahead of God, not to generate a bunch of activity just from my human flesh. The passage from Isaiah 30:1 alludes to this. Israel was in a quandary, as well, as they saw their enemies, the Assyrians, approaching from the north. Instead of seeking out God's counsel, and trusting in Him, they took refuge in human wisdom. They came up with their own plan. They would send ambassadors to Egypt, make political alliances, in hopes of getting military support for their protection. It seemed reasonable, on a human level. They were operating as any other country would operate. BUT, they were not seeking God, or His plan. Therefore, He told them, “Go ahead, do it your way, but *it will not work.*” He said, “In returning to *Me* and *resting*, you will be saved. In quietness and trust is your strength” (30:15). Then, He adds, “...but you were not willing.”

There can also be a problem with being too passive, of disregarding the promptings of God because you don't see the entire finished vision of what God wants, or how to get there. Remember God's words to Abram, “Go forth from your country, and from your relatives, and from your father's house, to the land that I will show you...” (Gen. 12:1). God didn't give Abram much to go on, but He expected him to get going on what He *did* tell him. Did he do it? Yes, and no. He left his country, but took his father's household along. The strong aspect of Abram's faith is that he got moving in obedience right away. God could work with him and develop him, because he was in motion toward obedience. When you look at the Hall of Faith (Heb. 11), one of the key aspects of people of faith is that they “did”. *Faith is trust, expressed in action.* **I wanted to be sure I wasn't disregarding God's leading, when He was telling me to “get going”.** I wrote, “I am asking for a closer walk with God, more of the Spirit's power in my life, and for being useful and fruitful for the Kingdom. If I am being too passive, Lord, help me. Condescend to meet me where I am, or give me that holy aggravation and boldness that will compel me to action.”

The next several days were spent stripping down and evaluating my life and my expectations. I read in Luke 8 the parable of the four soils. I spent time praying and meditating over the third and fourth kinds of soil Jesus described. **Had I been caught up in worldly concerns?** Jesus said that “the seed which fell among the thorns, these are the ones who have heard, and as they go on their way they are choked with worries and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to maturity” (Lk. 8:14). Even though I live a fairly simple, non-materialistic life, ...compared to many saints around the world, my life is incredibly plush. Is God calling me to simplify? Is my lifestyle limiting or strangling the leading of God? Am I unwilling to do what God asks? I have chosen to watch my grandkids in the past couple of years. That responsibility has lessened, but I have two more on the way. Is God indicating that this is too much of a drain on my time? What about the home repair project at my daughter's, or the tinkering I do to keep my

cars running? Am I allowing these things to steal too much time? I had to honestly weigh each question, and bring it with an open mind before God. “And the seed in the good soil, these are the ones who have heard the word in an honest and good heart, and hold it fast, and bear fruit *with perseverance*” (Lk. 8:15). **Had I make the mistake of giving up on people too soon?** Was God saying I just needed to keep *persisting*? Was I coming up short because I was giving up, or compromising, or diverting my focus? “Now no one after lighting a lamp covers it over with a container, or puts it under a bed; but he puts it on a lampstand, in order that those who come in may see the light” (Luke 8:16). **Was I not putting myself out there enough, so that people don’t know about me?** Do I need to be more aggressive in sharing with people? Do I need to seek out speaking opportunities? Do I need to publicize? Have I become too comfortable with my current schedule and pattern of life that I am not reaching out enough? “If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me. For whoever wishes to save his life shall lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake, he is the one who will save it” (Lk. 9:23-24). **I had to be willing to lay everything down. I am Christ’s slave**, at His discretion, willing to do *whatever* He wants. **Whatever He wants me to change or adjust, I must be willing to do it.**

These were my thoughts from Monday through Thursday. Then, on Friday, Blackaby wrote about **we should not worry or be concerned about God’s plan for our future. It is more important to simply get close to God and abide in Him.** He talked about the tendency to want to be “doing things for God”. He said, “Don’t just *do* something, stand there!”, meaning again that the relationship with Him is more important than anything else. **If we are attentive to God, and willing to do whatever He asks of us, He will give us the direction and instruction we need.** This was the same message that two other friends gave me that same morning. One told me he got a word from the Lord that indicated *this was a testing of my resolve to wait for God* to bring people to me. Blackaby talked about how **God often does not give us future details, this is a daily walk.** The pillar of cloud and fire would stop, and they would camp there until it arose and led them off again. Sometimes it was the next day, sometimes it was a month later. They just *waited*, went about daily life, *until* God directed them *again*. **The key is to put aside all expectations and to be open to whatever God might direct.**

As I headed home in the car, I flipped the radio on. There was a man praying. He was saying, “Lord, sometimes it seems that we can’t see Your will, because of the clouds or fog. God, will you, by Your Holy Spirit blow away the clouds and the fog, so we can see clearly *what the next steps are?*” Then a song came on, it sounded like, **“He loves me anyway, it doesn’t matter what I’d ever do...”** *It was such a strong confirmation! I instantly felt a release from my introspective struggle.* I texted a friend about my experiences, and he responded with, **“Standing and waiting is contrary to the world system. It drives us to be and stay busy, ...placing value on those who are most busy. It takes faith to wait upon the Master.”** He then quoted Psa. 46:10,11, *“Cease striving and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth.”*

I told my minister friend, “It is the whole ‘Levite thing’. **God set me apart for Himself. People should support the “Levites”, not strictly “for services rendered”, but to free us up to pray, study, meditate and serve Yahweh**” (Num. 3:5-12; 18:21-25). Some people get the idea that they pay for a particular service, e.g., a wedding service, a funeral service, a counseling session, to hear a sermon, etc. **To be effective in ministry, however, requires a life set apart.** There must be hours of study, prayer, seeking God, and preparation to enable a person to be an equipped and ready tool for the Master to use. **I have never charged anyone a “fee for service” for any ministry activity I was involved with. I have operated on a free-will offering basis, trusting that people would want to support my entire life.** In fact, most of those who currently support me do so, not because I am presently giving them a particular service. Rather, they have been touched by my life in the past, and believe it is a valuable investment to keep me freed up to do what God has called me to do. About an hour later, **the Lord reminded me that soldiers are not paid by the war, or by the battle. They are paid to be set aside from civilian duty, to be trained and ready to fight. Their orders and duty assignments are given by their commanding officers.** Sometimes they are *not* “on a mission”, but simply sharpening their skills. Didn’t Paul write to Timothy, his young minister friend, “Suffer hardship with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. No soldier in active service entangles himself in the affairs of everyday life, so that he may please the one who enlisted him as a soldier” (II Tim. 2:3-4)? Again, to the church in Corinth, he wrote, “Who at any time serves as a soldier at his own expense?” (1 Cor. 9:7) **Many times, I have reminded the Lord that He recruited me to His army, so I trust Him to provide for my needs, and He has! I have spent years in training, and in ministry assignments.** I have experienced many skirmishes with the enemy, fire-fights and attacks in spiritual warfare. I still do not know why I am not more busy at this time. But, I know *the warfare has not abated.* The *need* continues. I pray for the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest. I am doing my best to train some. **Today, I am waiting for orders.**