

New Website Offerings

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MONTH OF NOVEMBER

GOLDEN NUGGETS

TAKE YOUR HANDS OFF!

“And they brought the boy to Him. And when he saw Him, immediately the spirit threw him into a convulsion, and falling to the ground, he began rolling about and foaming at the mouth. And He asked his father, ‘How long has this been happening to him?’ And he said, ‘From childhood. And it has often thrown him both into the fire and into the water to destroy him. But if You can do anything, take pity on us and help us!’ And Jesus said to him, ‘If you can!’ All things are possible to him who believes.” (Mark 9:20-23)

The only place I know of in the Scriptures where Jesus made that kind of statement is in this passage. The father looked at his son, then turn to Jesus and said, “Lord, if You can help . . .” And Jesus said, ‘If I can?’ “Why, I’m a specialist in this kind of thing. It’s impossible with you, but with Me it’s a piece of cake.”

The father’s response is commendable. When he realized his need to trust completely and not fret any longer, he cried out, “I do believe; help me in my unbelief.” (vs. 24)

Sure enough, some of you who are reading these words are facing some of the most unbelievable situations anyone could imagine. You’ve come to the absolute end. There is nothing else you can do—zero!

What's God saying to you now? "All things are possible to him who worries?" No.

**"All things are possible to him who attempts to work it out?"
No.**

"All things are possible to him who believes!" The story in Mark 9, of course, is that Jesus saves the son's life, freeing him from an unclean spirit and providing healing.

The inner work God wants to accomplish occurs when we learn the family secret: God specializes in things we think are impossible. But He won't grab them out of our hands if we insist on holding on to them.

"The Lord longs to be gracious to you," says Isaiah, "and . . . He waits on high to have compassion on you . . ." (Isaiah 30:18)

Your impossible situation might be a marriage that is almost or altogether on the rocks. It may be a romance that's left you disillusioned. It may be a terrible habit you can't seem to conquer. It may have to do with your work or your career or your dream. Listen, if it seems impossible to you, here's what you should do . . . after you have done all - TAKE YOUR HANDS OFF! Ask God, in absolute faith, to take over.

WHAT IS REALLY HOLY?

Centuries ago somebody began spreading the false idea that the Christian life is to be understood in terms of two arenas – sacred and secular. Sacred places are church buildings. Sacred events are those such as worship or baptism or weddings.

Sacred people are preachers or church officers. The remainder of life was declared secular. So farms, stores, and schools were secular places. Surgery and manufacturing, accounting and teaching, driving and watching TV – all were labeled secular. And ordinary people doing the routine and humdrum things of shopping, eating and reading are secular.

But that is so terribly wrong. In God's plan for human existence, it makes no sense. In light of Christ's teaching, work is witness. And it can be a truly holy thing!

I can grant that there is a sense of the sacred and holy in a church assembled for worship that is sometimes missing from a crowded, noisy office. But work is sacred too. It is holy by virtue of divine presence you bring to it as a person filled with God's Spirit and participating in God's creative work.

Writing letters, hiring people, selling lumber, stocking shelves, cleaning office buildings, firing someone who broke company policy again, answering phones – these and whatever other things you will be expected to do today are not secular. They're not, that is, unless you misunderstand your role in them. You and I are in the world to continue the work of God. Creating. Improving. Empowering. Doing things that we and others will look at and say are "good" or even "very good."

My appeal is not that we should become workaholics. Instead, it is that we see ourselves as God sees us. We are extensions of His presence into the nooks and crannies of the world. If Paul could tell slaves to do their chores **"with enthusiasm, as to the Lord and not to human masters" (Ephesians 6:5-8), surely all believers should take a more elevated view of their tasks in the workplace.**

Work isn't an unspiritual curse from which you should desire freedom in order to visit retreats, seminars, and workshops on spiritual life. It is your lab for turning lead to gold, humdrum to holy by the Spirit-presence you bring to life.

Your spiritual life won't be on hold as you work today. It will be on display.