

Melva's Corner

LIFE'S REMOTE CONTROL (Your Destiny Awaits You)

December 25, 2006

(Ephesians 4:31-32)

Central Truth: When it seems that we are powerless, God wants us to know that He is with us.

When was the last time you picked up life's remote and contemplated switching channels on an education, a job, a friendship, a church, or maybe a marriage? If so, you've slammed up against one of life's most annoying realities - the inevitability of choice. Contrary to the slogan, you can have it all, meaning you can have both the kingdom of darkness and the kingdom of light – just isn't true; you must make a choice. Daily choices can often be confusing, some will be obvious, and some will happen almost unconsciously. But all have consequences, and the sum of those consequences forms your destiny.

Here's the crucial question: by what criteria will you choose? Our culture's most popular alternative is happiness. During the seventies we heard, "If it feels good, do it." Nowadays, we hear about "self-actualization," "listening to the inner child," or "following your heart." But often, self-focused pursuit of personal happiness exacts a steep toll from "peripheral" relationships. Happiness, like the rainbow, is the by-product of something else. Chasing happiness for its own sake is doomed to frustration and ultimate failure. Like Tantalus in the Greek myth, the more we swallow, the more we crave.

Is there another, more reliable criterion? I remember a church song: "Trust and obey . . . for there's no other way . . . to be happy in Jesus . . . but to trust and obey." Is there truth in this old hymn? By looking away from my desires and focusing instead on a higher Good - on what is right, honorable, and best for someone else - might I discover the key to a meaningful life?

Jesus said, “. . . whoever wants to save his own life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will find it.” This may sound like Columbus’ blather about sailing west to go east. If your world is flat and the horizon of your wants is the boundary for your confidence, Columbus’ voyage looks like a lousy bet. But if the world is round; if there really is something out there beyond our narrow vision, maybe heading west to go east makes more sense than we thought.

One thing’s for sure, we will spend the rest of our life making choices. That’s a given. And the most fundamental choice of all is deciding how to decide.

When we think about the Christmas story, we think of the destiny of Jesus Christ. He was born in a humble manger, but His destiny was to die on the cross for our sins. Even some of the Christmas Carols mention that He is Lord at His birth and that myrrh was given to Him symbolizing His death.

Should we have a sense of destiny in our lives? Yes! Let me help you with your choice, Paul declared this way, **"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 NKJV)

God has plans for our lives. David said it like this:

**"For You formed my inward parts;
You covered me in my mother's womb.
I will praise You,
for I am fearfully and wonderfully made;
Marvelous are Your works,
And that my soul knows very well.
My frame was not hidden from You,
When I was made in secret,
And skillfully wrought in the lowest parts of the earth.
Your eyes saw my substance,
being yet unformed.
And in Your book they all were written,
The days fashioned for me,
When as yet there were none of them.**

As we make choices in our life, God wants us to turn to Him in prayer. He will hear and He will answer. He wants us to trust Him in times of trouble. He cares and He will bless. He wants us to have hope in times of sorrow and comfort in times of sickness. When we are afraid, He will give us courage. When we are attacked, He will give us victory. When we are tempted, He will give us strength to resist sin. In His great love and mercy, **"The eyes of the LORD range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him"** (II Chronicles 16:9).

When it seems that we are powerless, God wants us to know that He is with us. When it appears that wicked people are controlling the world, God wants us to know that they will answer to Him. After listing the spiritual and world forces that Satan uses to try to destroy our faith in our heavenly Father, the apostle Paul says, **"that there is nothing that can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord"** (Romans 8:37-39). No power, either spiritual or earthly, can break God's hold on us as we completely trust in Him.

Paul assures us that while **"our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms,"** (Ephesians 6:12) our mighty God, **"the God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet"** (Romans 16:20). For we are indeed more than conquerors!

Fulfilling God's purposes for our lives is one of the most gratifying things I can imagine. As we think of the destiny of the Christ Child and the beginning of a new year for each of us, let's ponder on what God's destiny may be for our lives.

Prayer: With a more forgiving attitude in 2007, I will choose not to hold grudges. I will let go of offenses against me. I will ignore more comments. I will not assume the worst in people. I will not hang on to their mistakes. I will not remind them of the mistakes they have made, the flaws I see, and wrongs they have done. I will be more forgiving of myself. I will allow God to truly free me of my sins. I will let go of my past and enjoy the experience of being new.

With a bigger heart in 2007, I will be open to more of the blessings God sends my way. I will notice the small things He places in my path as well as the large ones. I will spend more time with children.

I will listen more, try to understand more and affirm others more often. I will guide more and inform less. I will suggest more and dictate less. I will touch people with more gentleness, hold on to them more loosely and release them with more confidence, hope and love. With a bigger heart in 2007 I will sing more, smile more, hug more, encourage more and enjoy more. In Jesus name Amen.

Scriptural References:

“Get rid of all bitterness, rage, anger, harsh words, and slander, as well as all types of malicious behavior. Instead, be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you.” (Ephesians 4:31-32)