

Encouragement Encouragement

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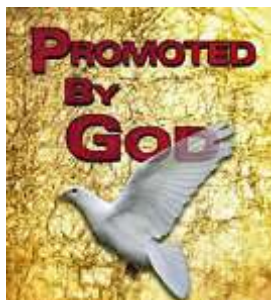
'PROMOTION'?

God sees the heart. To Samuel He said “Men and women look at the face; God looks into the heart”. (16 vs: 7) - What a wonderful statement this is. He does not evaluate whether we are weak or strong, old or young, wise, clever or uneducated. He simply views the heart. He chooses people after His own heart, those with a deep yearning for Him and a loving and open disposition. Today, self-promotion and improvement have become almost an obsession. You are seen as a failure if you have not achieved certain milestones at a certain age. Even young children are evaluated in this way. We are seen as unambitious if we do not seek promotion or desire to ‘improve’ ourselves, or get richer, wealthier. Not only does this lead to pressure and even breakdown, as people push themselves onwards and become competitive, but unhappiness abounds and disillusion flourishes.

Clearly to aspire to use our God-given talents is a positive attribute. Indeed many people undervalue their gifts and talents, both temporal and spiritual, so never serve fully. In all situations we should be asking the question... what kind of promotion, advancement, should we be seeking?

Jesus said ‘Seek first the Kingdom of God and all other things will be added to you’ (Matt. 6:33). He makes a promise to us that if we look toward the Kingdom and establish this, other things will be provided whatever, whenever needed.

So often we see people ‘making it to the top’ and see their power and wealth and wonder how this can be, when sometimes their means of doing so leave us questioning their integrity. We also see that they are not necessarily at peace, or happy. Conversely we see people who serve, perhaps going through rejection, pain, suffering, illness and yet having an inner radiance and joy which nothing can remove. Both sets seek ‘promotion’ but the promotion is very different. The second group seek the promotion of the things of God, and to be promoted by God.



They build up the Kingdom. Sometimes too, they are given recognition and are asked to do more and more, but they do so only insofar as the Lord bids. No one doubts that the Apostles are famous, but did they self-promote? Not at all. (Even if James and John’s mother would have them do so). No, their part was one of learning, humility and service, and relying on the Gifts of the Spirit. When the Holy Spirit sent by Jesus descended they received a second anointing.

It is clear that when God chooses He does not always choose the likely candidate. He then schools whom

He chooses. King David was a shepherd. Joseph was rejected by his brothers, Ruth the outsider was chosen for her loyalty, love and self-sacrifice, Jeremiah, the prophet, was very young, Samuel too... but they knew how to listen to the Lord and had an open heart. The Lord wishes us all to respond to His call and to listen. We are all

His sheep and He, being our Shepherd, guides and leads us, but we have to recognise His voice. How many people today take many years to respond or to hear His call to serve, sometimes discovering all too late that they have missed it. If we listen to The Shepherd then He will guide us gently to where He wants us to be, and will give us the freedom and joy of following Him. He can then use us and He will *promote* us in every sense of the word, in order for us to fulfil what His best plans for us are. They may take us to great heights and into stormy waters but His intentions for us will be fulfilled. If we abide in Him we will be able to do great things because the glory and honour will be attributed to Him.

It matters not whether we think we are suitable or not. If the Lord wants to promote us He will do so. Many great and holy people have responded with an open heart and have become famous, not for their own glory, but God the Father’s. Mother Teresa is a good example, as are saints of our time. Even little children... Jacinta and Francesco Marto of Fatima

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were promoted to the rank of Saints for being little shepherds, faithful to Our Lady's request to be penitent and truthful, honest and totally willing and obedient to her requests. They were seven and nine years old.

Recently I heard a five point plan for the Lord's promoting of us. Incidentally 'promotion' means to elevate or exalt. The five point plan describes the pre-requisites for promotion.

- A servant's heart
- Humility
- Diligence
- Faithfulness
- Integrity... (George Pearson and Gloria Copeland)

The above commentators said that is why King David was chosen.

Sometimes we wonder why one person is promoted while others are bypassed. Although we here are speaking of God's promotion all these attributes can be seen in those who, in spite of man's condemnation, are promoted. Saint Joseph is one example; clearly Jesus' Mother is another. God raises the lowly so beautifully. God keeps His promises and if He calls someone He enables them to complete the task. This may take them to the heights and depths but His plan is accomplished through this. Sometimes 'the promotion' is after their death – but then of course, they are in Heaven for eternity, the ultimate elevation. When the Apostles boasted of being obeyed by evil spirits, Jesus chided them and said "Rejoice more that your names are written in Heaven" (Luke 10 vs. 20).

If we want to be promoted, be used mightily by the Lord, and our focus is His, not our glory, then we must let our hearts be open and receptive to His bidding: we must be open to change, faithful in prayer, humbly accept His path, work to the best of our ability and be honest at all times. A servant does his Master's bidding. If you are setting out on life's journey make sure that you have bought the right ticket...
Halina Holman

Prayer for Pentecost

This month we see many special occasions – children meet Jesus in the Sacrament of Confession, Reconciliation, and receive Jesus in Holy Communion. Priests are ordained and have special anniversaries – 25, 40 and 50 years of service. There are also anniversaries of Marriage.

All over the world, children are Baptised, people Confirmed and Anointed. We thank God for His Goodness and Mercy.

We pray that the Holy Spirit fills all the faithful with the zeal and passion for living the Gospel and spreading the Faith by word and example. We pray that all use their gifts wisely and humbly. We thank Jesus for sending the Holy Spirit. H.H.



Pope Francis' comments to the newly appointed Cardinals...
Jan. 2014

The unique role of cardinals within the church does not imply promotion. It is neither honour nor decoration. It is simply a service that requires you to broaden your gaze and open your heart.



Pope Francis and Pentecost

The Holy Spirit is the 'interior Teacher,' guiding us along the right path, throughout the situations of life. In the early days of the Church, Christianity was called 'The Way', and Jesus Himself is The Way. The Holy Spirit teaches us to follow him, to walk in his footsteps. More than a teacher of doctrine, the Spirit is a teacher of life. The work of the Spirit is something 'we have all experienced' - for example, in reading Scripture, when we are drawn to one passage after another and feel Christ speaking to us. The Holy Spirit gives us 'the wisdom of memory', which grows in us through prayer. It is not only the speech of prayer that the Holy Spirit gives us, however, but also 'fraternal dialogue' and 'prophecy', helping us to 'speak with friendship, with tenderness', as 'humble and docile channels', for the word of God. Rome June 2014

Feasts in June

1st St. Justin, 3rd Charles Lwanga and Companions

4th Pentecost Sunday

5th St. Boniface

11th The Most Holy Trinity

13th St. Anthony of Padua

16th St. Richard of Chichester

18th The Most Holy Body and Blood of Jesus

21st St. Aloysius Gonzaga

22nd St. John Fisher and St. Thomas More

23rd Most Sacred Heart of Jesus

24th Nativity of John the Baptist

28th St. Irenaeus

29th Ss. Peter and Paul