

The Value of His Dealings

by John Follette

The sermon emphasizes the importance of God's dealings in our lives to conform us to the image of Christ through spiritual discipline and intercession.

Scripture: Romans 8:26-30, Romans 8:34

Topics: "Spiritual Transformation", "Holy Spirit"

Description

John Follette preaches on the process of being conformed to the image of God's Son, emphasizing that our predestination is based on God's foreknowledge of our choice to submit to Him and desire to be like Jesus. He highlights the role of Jesus and the Holy Spirit in interceding for us when we are unsure of how to pray, guiding us according to God's will. Follette stresses that our prayers, though important, cannot solely bring about our transformation, but they express our desire for God's work in us.

Transcript

"For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren" Rom 8:29.

Our being predestinated is related to the foreknowledge of God. He chose us because in foreknowledge He knew that we would choose Him and submit to His workings, because there was that within which desired to be conformed to the image of His Son.

We are not left on our own in this desire to be conformed to the image of our Lord Jesus Christ. Each one of us would come short of His intention, if all we had was the result of our limited prayers.

We know not for what we should pray, as our perspective is very limited. We are too involved in the present aspect of our daily pattern of life to pray as we ought. But we have two sources of help, for the Word tells us that both Jesus and the Holy Spirit are involved in intercession for us.

"Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died,

yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at
the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession
for us" Rom 8:34.

"Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities:
for we know not what we should pray for as we ought:
but the Spirit Himself maketh intercession for us
with groanings which cannot be uttered" Romans 8:26.

There is a resounding "but" in this Scripture, which speaks of an "alternative" which lifts our seeking
from our ways to His.

The Lord will see us through. Those who say that they are "pressing through," or that they are "getting
hold of God" are usually expressing self-ability. Our prayers are invaluable, but we cannot redeem or
pray ourselves through. However, our prayers establish our desire for the Lord, and He will take
notice and intercede in our behalf.

"And He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the
mind of the Spirit, because He maketh intercession for
the saints according to the will of God" Rom 8:27.

Thus, this intercession in our behalf is not according to what we ask, but rather, in agreement with the
will of God. The Father only responds when prayer and intercession is made in the will of God.

We cannot intercede unless it has been given to us by the Holy Spirit. If we attempt to push into
intercession on our own, we will only quench and grieve the Holy Spirit. We should not be surprised if
the Lord apprehends us to intercede through us for some purpose which is totally apart from us. This
means that the Lord has gained access to our spirit, and therefore will use us.

"And we know that all things work together for good
to them that love God, to them who are the called
according to His purpose" Romans 8:28.

This does not say, "to them who are saved, or are desperately praying." Rather, it is to them who are
"the called according to His purpose." A sign of spiritual maturity is when we are able to yield, or

submit to the outworking of His purpose, and then move with Him in a cooperative relationship.

We can do this in confidence, because He has an established purpose and goal for each one of us,

"Moreover whom He did predestinate, them He also called:

and whom He called, them He also justified: and whom

He justified, them He also glorified" Rom 8:30.

Many years ago, the Lord spoke these words within me, "My objective is to conform you to the image

of My Son." When I came to understand this, I prayed, "Lord, this is what I really desire." The Lord

responded to my prayer and said, "This will involve every aspect of your being; spirit, soul, and body.

I will first develop within you the discipline that it takes to make this change."

I had prayed this with little understanding, as I did not realize that it was a life process. The next

several years of my spiritual development were primarily taken up with being prepared, or

conditioned, so I would be able to appropriately respond to His work of recasting my life into the

image of His Son.

I went through a time of spiritual revolution in the entirety of my being. My spiritual consciousness -

my becoming aware of the atmosphere of Spirit, had to develop. This cannot happen in a few days. As

soon as I felt that a particular working of the Holy Spirit had been completed, another dealing began on

an even deeper level. My whole soul life had to be purged out, and then finally, my body was brought

into subjection to my spirit.

During this time, I was not able to accept any openings for ministry. I had many opportunities, but I

had to turn them down, as I was to be alone with the Lord. If we really desire to enter this process of

being conformed to His image, then all this must be worked through. It cannot be imparted through

the laying on of hands, though this may help us through a particular aspect of His workings.

If we are not, in some measure, being drawn into this process of discipline and change, then we are

missing the most important aspect of the work of the Holy Spirit during our probationary time on

earth.

Each one of us should learn, in some measure, what it means to be identified with our Lord. This is the

greatest privilege we will ever have in this life. In the outworking of our identification with Him, that

which He experienced in fullness during His time on earth will be experienced by us in part.

From the moment in which we make this deeper commitment to be conformed to His image, the Lord will begin to build up our spiritual capacity and being. This is the only thing that we will take with us when we enter His eternal presence.

Many Christians falsely believe this will automatically happen when they enter heaven. We will be given a glorified body, but that which lives within this body must have been developed while we are on earth - in this life. This period, in which we presently live, is the time in which the Lord plows our hearts and sows the seed. Then this seed, fully developed through life experiences, will be planted in the soil of heaven where it will come to full fruition and be harvested for an eternal purpose.

One day while meditating on the Lord, He spoke to me about plowing. As I was growing up on a farm, I remember how the hired hand would whistle and sing as he plowed the fields. He was not worried about the harvest. He was happy with the plowing. I wrote a poem about this,

SINGING PLOWMAN

God's plow struck deep within my heart

And plowed long furrows, one by one,

Through fallow ground so hard and firm

From early morn till set of sun.

The plow-share was eternal truth

Which tore the hidden roots in me,

And turned them to the light and air

Till self-hood lay a field set free.

I felt Him walk each furrow plowed

I knew He felt the briars sting,

The field was His, it was His joy

For lo, I heard the plowman sing.

He only plowed that He might sow,

There must be seed to scatter wide.

And then I felt His presence near,
He stood in silence by my side.
And so I gave Him all of me,
My hopes, and dreams, and inner throne.
All these he scattered far and near
And left me naught to call my own.
They fell like seed in furrows deep,
And all were buried 'neath the sod.
All that I had went down in death
To wait the mighty breath of God.
He did not leave me then alone
To mourn the loss of earthly things,
To be thus stripped gave greater place
For life His radiant presence brings.
How could I grieve for heart thus plowed,
I covet now no sweeter thing
Than wait with Him the harvest day,
And in the meantime, hear Him sing.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/john-follette/the-value-of-his-dealings/>

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