

What is Jesus Doing?

FOLLOWERS AND CHURCHGOERS

And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.

- Romans 8:28

These words of the Apostle Paul bring comfort to every true follower of Christ. There are many church-goers however, who may be plagued or at the least concerned about two questions this passage raises... Who are the called? What is His purpose? The following scripture clarifies this to a degree...

For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover, whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.

- Romans 8:29-30

First, to me it is clear, that God works all things together for good BECAUSE we are being conformed into the image of Jesus Christ by going through trials (things which we would not desire but which God designs for us to reveal hidden resistance towards His sovereignty in our lives, giving us the opportunity to choose His way or our way). Only by choosing His way in response to the trial (as opposed to REACTING in our flesh to the trial/problem) do we achieve victory which brings Him glory and therefore joy to us.

Many church-goers may become confounded by this passage but true followers of Jesus, who take up their cross daily as He commands, should understand that Paul is not talking about predestination in the natural, or human sense that supposes that whatever we do here in life on earth, if God called us, we are automatically with Him in paradise. Everything we do here has eternal ramifications. God calls but it is we who answer the call.

What is Jesus Doing?

I maintain that we are foreknown and predestined only in the sense that in God's TRANSCENDENT nature He is the Alpha and the Omega and so knows all within the time and space He created in a way that we, in our human perspectives, cannot. In other words, He knew us then (before we were born) because He knows us in His eternal NOW because we have passed from death to eternal Life in Christ Jesus by the choices we make, have made, and are making here on earth in the time we have been given.

Most importantly, of course, is that in the time and life we are given, we come to believe in our inner person with faith (in our hearts) that Jesus died for our sins and was resurrected by God the Father, ruling and reigning right now from the Throne of Grace, and that we confess this with our mouths before men. This action here causes our spirit to be awakened and allows the indwelling of His Holy Spirit.

It is through this process that we become (have become, are becoming) the "called according to His Purpose" and hearing from and obeying the inner voice of the Holy Spirit becomes our highest priority if we are truly His. It is in God's IMMINENCE (the Person of His Son Jesus through the Holy Spirit of God) that we can truly know Him and choose to do His Will.

And what does the Holy Spirit say? Each of us are called by the way we are made and each of us is unique and special in God's eyes. Therefore, the Spirit speaks to each of us differently, but always consistent with His Word. Here is what John the Beloved says...

By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him?

- 1 John 3:16-17

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If the love of God does not abide in a person, then the Holy Spirit does not abide in that person because “God is Love” as John also illuminates for us. This leads me to think that there are many “Christians” who may have made a “confession of faith” in Jesus but do not believe in or know Him as Lord. Jesus tells us in the Gospel of Matthew...

You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thorn bushes or figs from thistles? Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Therefore, by their fruits you will know them. Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven.

- Matthew 7:16-20

Why is this important to those who truly follow Jesus? Because if we do not address let alone acknowledge, the issue of lip-service in our brothers and sisters with whom we attend church, they may never become useful members of the Body of Christ or worse yet, ever truly receive the salvation prepared for them as the called because they never in fact, answered the call, in truth.

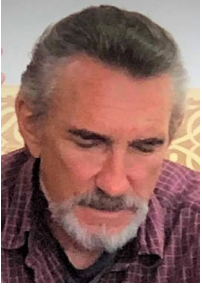
Above all, press in and love with all you have those who God has put in your life. It is never too late for even the hardest heart to repent and turn from their sin.

Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

- Luke 12:32

What is Jesus Doing?

Let us do His Will, His way, in truth and in Love.



*Your brother and friend in Christ,
- John Henry Raskin, Roadhouse Rabbi*