

With Each Stroke of the Brush

~Other Speakers S-Z: K.P. Yohannan:

Have you ever watched an artist paint a picture at a street corner or in a park? I have, and it's a fascinating experience. Let me tell you why.

When the artist first takes his canvas, puts it on the easel, dips his brush into a color and begins to paint, he alone knows how the painting will look when it is completed. For me as a bystander, it's a complete mystery. I may even wonder what on earth he is doing. But slowly the painting emerges—with each stroke of the brush. Finally, I stand amazed before a marvelous picture, and now that I see the end result, everything the painter did along the way makes sense.

Did you know that God is such an artist?

All of humanity, the sons and daughters of Adam, sinned and became by choice slaves of Lucifer. Controlled by demons and totally darkened in their spirits, they agonized and fought but could not escape the grip of darkness and Satan's kingdom.

When Christ finally came on the scene, He overcame our enemy through His death on the cross and destroyed him who had the power of death (Hebrews 2:14). In Christ, we who were destined for hell were forever set free and translated from this horrible kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son.

In Ephesians chapter 1, Paul reveals that our redemption through the precious blood of Jesus is only the beginning of what God has in mind for His Church. If indeed our salvation, forgiveness of sin and deliverance from hell were all God had planned for us, then it would have been best if He had taken us to heaven right after we were born again. That way, we would no longer have to live on this hopeless, sin-ridden and temptation-filled earth. But God left us here.

What exactly is God trying to do? We find the answer in Ephesians 2:10: “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.”

Some years ago I completed a detailed study on the book of Ephesians. It was an exhilarating experience for me when I looked up the word “workmanship” in the original text. I discovered the Greek word used is *poiema*, from which we derive the word “poem.”

When we research the meaning further, we find that this verse describes God as a poet or an artist who has feelings deep in His heart—and a dream that no one else can see. He takes a brush or pen and begins to paint His dream, either with colors or words. And when He is finished with His painting or poem, we see the expression of the very heart of the Master Designer.

As children of God we are destined to become His poem, His painting, the expression of His heart in our generation. Romans 8:29 tells us: “For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son...” This simply means that we are predestined for this one purpose: to become like the Lord Jesus Christ.

The goal of God, the Master Painter, is that with each stroke of His brush the life, character and nature of Jesus increasingly fills our hearts and is clearly expressed through us.

Only if this happens are we able to represent Jesus to our generation, serve others with His love and compassion, and have rivers of living water flow from our lives to a lost and dying world.

Let this song written by Albert Orsborn become the desire and prayer of our hearts:

Let the beauty of Jesus be seen in me / All His wonderful passion and purity / Oh Thou, Spirit divine, all my nature refine / Till the beauty of Jesus be seen in me.