

Devotional Thoughts :: Ladies, we can only do so much!

Ladies, we can only do so much! - posted by Gwammy (), on: 2007/8/10 11:54

I went to a restaurant one day with some friends and there was Ruth, another friend who is a lovely Christian lady who worries about her Christianity. This precious soul is a bundle of virtue and she and her good husband have raised four sons who have done well. The entire family is a credit to this once-small community. Ruth, who was with yet another friend (all right, I admit this is still a small-enough community that we run into friends -- how fortunate we are!) confided that she wasn't feeling well. Later on that afternoon, after we had all enjoyed our lunches and gone our ways, Ruth called and shared that her daily prayer, along with the usual requests that we all have, is that she is doing enough for God.

I think this dear gal may live with the fear that she never does enough, not only for God, but for her family, friends and strangers as well. It's a Christian and female syndrome. Put that together for a peculiarly Christian female syndrome and we have a problem -- which just about every Christian gentlewoman I know harbors in her tired heart and mind and body.

The more I thought about Ruth the more I wondered if we ladies haven't been sold an imperial (read that "repressive") bit of goods that we gals can have the whole taco and the store with it. After all, how many of the virile macho breed have we heard of late lamenting that they just haven't quite done enough today. Ladies, when was the last time you heard "Honey, is there anything I can do for you? Put the kids to bed? Do the dishes? The five loads of laundry?" Are you kidding? It's more like, "I'm tired. I've worked hard today, and I'm cashing it in." And this is before the kids go to bed! As I thought of Ruth and all of us distaff side who staff (read that "unendingly supply") life, I recalled a verse that helps me when I am so tired I want to climb under the covers and take a 24-hour reprieve from life, of course worrying that I am wasting God's time and not doing enough for humankind: "She did what she could" (Mark 14:8). I have a habit, whether good or bad I know not, of taking Bible verses out of context and applying them to personal needs and this one met an immediate need one tired day of accepting God's message that we gals can only do so much.

Years ago I read the following story in a very old book: There was a poor acrobat who turned monk but who was so ignorant and unlearned that he could not even say his "Pater-noster" or "Credo" properly. Greatly disheartened at his failure, he used to go before a picture of Christ hanging on the cross and perform his old acrobatic feats, until he sank to the ground, exhausted. And while he lay there, it is said, Christ Himself came down from the cross and wiped the perspiration from his brow. This beautiful act surely expresses the very heart of the divine understanding and sympathy. God does not expect from us what we cannot render, but even the seeming unspiritual things, the common duties of life, if done in His spirit, are beautiful to Him, for if He accepts the cup of cold water given to others, He will not refuse the smallest thing offered in love to Himself. He will come down to receive it with His divine grace and, in accepting it, will bless the giver.

This is such a magnificent message to us who wonder if we have put in enough time or money or strength today. I mentioned to Ruth that I wondered if we exhibit a lack of trust when we feel we haven't done enough for God. Perhaps we need to get back to meditating on what God has done for us and not worry about whether we have filled today's cup; just be enormously grateful for our own full cup of blessings from God who knows our dust and simply do what we can this day, believing wholeheartedly that our dear Father supplies our many lacks.

God realizes more than we do how much emotional and spiritual and physical strength we have or don't have, and we can trust Him to accept what we can do -- and what we can't do, which is perhaps even more important. When we feel like collapsing, we can hear Jesus saying to us, "Come aside by yourselves to a deserted place and rest a while" (Mark 6:31,32). Jesus said this to His friends, His beloved disciples, after a heavy-duty day, "for there were many coming and going, and they did not even have time to eat." How many wives and mothers fit in that category! We had five sons and I well remember missing meals and running to and fro, and also wishing I could find a deserted place to rest a bit. The kids always found me, even when I hid in the closet, taking literally that grand verse in Matthew 6:6 to enter into your closet, only I had the ulterior motive of saving my sanity, which is now questionable -- just ask the boys!

J.K. Mackenzie advised years ago, "Don't be unwise enough to think that we are serving God best by constant activity at the cost of headaches and broken rest. I am getting to be of the opinion that we may be doing too much." This crazy world we must live in has convinced us ladies especially that we can bring home the groceries and cook them, too; that we can be supermoms and superCEOs, too. Impossible! How can one person live two lives at the same time? I'm old enough to have lived in the era when it was taken for granted that men and women were different, they each had their special

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gifts and when these were combined, they made the whole of life, and together they produced a stable and loving family. How sad that this formula is now considered extinct.

Ladies, God doesn't expect us to kill ourselves doing so much. Indeed, He bids us to "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28). If ever there is a verse for our killing days, it is this precious promise. Now if we could just find the time and quiet to read it over and over!