

Articles and Sermons :: The Cup**The Cup - posted by HopeinChrist, on: 2009/1/31 22:44**

Someone sent this to me today. I've never heard of the author/pastor but this is certainly a good message.

The Cup**Part One: The Death of Ambition**

by Francis Frangipane

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(En Espa ol) When I first came to Christ, the Lord gave me a dream about my future. I thought that everything the Lord said was supposed to occur immediately; I didn't know of the work of preparation and dying to self, of learning patience and maintaining vision through testing, that would occur before God's promise would find fulfillment. Consequently, I was filled with ambition. Ambition is the first motive that arises in the spiritually immature. I was like the disciples who, a few days after Jesus' resurrection, were already asking, "Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom?" (Acts 1:6).

Ambition is very deceptive. It can seem just like obedience, yet because we don't truly know the Lord, the voice we find ourselves obeying is not God's, but our own. Our vision can actually be from God, but our motive be self. Consequently, where there is ambition, James tells us there will soon emerge "disorder and every evil thing" (James 3:16). Why? Because we begin thinking we can accomplish the will of God through the strength of man. We are seeking a breakthrough; God wants to give us brokenness.

The spiritually immature do not recognize their immaturity because they are immature. Thus, they become impatient, fearful and demanding. Because pride blinds the ambitious, we presume we are ready for greater assignments in God. In fact, we become a harder assignment for those who work with us, for our actions continually generate strife.

Ambition seeks to put to death what stands between it and spiritual fulfillment. Yet, it is ambition itself that must die to reach fulfillment. Webster's tells us that ambition is "an earnest desire for some type of achievement or distinction, as wealth or fame, and the willingness to strive for it." The word translated "ambition" in the NAS is rendered "strife" in the King James. Truly, ambition is a major cause for strife, church splits and conflicts within the church.

I thought having a promise from God was the same thing as receiving a commandment from God. I did not understand what I personally lacked in character or what I needed to attain concerning faithfulness, becoming a bond-servant, and possessing a grateful heart. These things needed to be worked in me before God would truly begin to fulfill His larger promises and opportunities. What I became for God was more important than what I did for Him.

Today, I am living in the spiritual substance of what was just a dream thirty-eight years ago. My ambitions have suffered greatly, yet my dreams are being fulfilled. While I have not yet arrived at the greatest aspects of my calling, I understand the difference between ambition and true leadership and it is this: Ministry is not a call to lead, but to die.

Every advance that I have made spiritually was preceded by an opportunity to die to self. The power in my life comes from where I have died to self and now live unto Christ.

Do you want to advance spiritually? The gateway to resurrection power is crucifixion. God will arrange opportunities for you to die to self. You must discern them. Dying to self and its ambition is the means of reaching true spiritual fulfillment. If you react to the opportunity to die with fleshly anger or resentment, you will fail to reach fulfillment. However, if you can maintain your vision even while your ambition dies, you will succeed.

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Please feel free to forward this message to others; acknowledging our web site would be kindly appreciated.

Re: The Cup - posted by MJones (), on: 2009/1/31 23:15

It is all so simple. We are to seek God first. Even ministry can be a distraction. SI can be a distraction. So many good things can distract us from the main thing. If we can stay focused on seeking God first, without any planning whatsoever, we will find ourselves in the middle of God initiated ministry. But then we can focus on that ministry and kill its life flowing effect. Rare are the ones who can truly do organized ministry.

Whoever wrote or preached this has endured an intense fire.