

Many Are Called. Few Are Chosen. Even Less Respond.

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Thank You, Jesus, for Your invitation to lead a life dedicated to You, even in lifestyle. Amen.

Well. Many are called. Few are chosen. Even less respond. That's been our experience. And what causes a soul to respond to the Lord, to want to leave the world and be totally His is really a disgust with world. You know? You just live with the world, and so many things

happen in the world. And there are so many disappointments. And there's victories, too.

But after a while, you get tired of the world! And that cycle.

Why? Why is it that the grace of God calling us to deeper, fuller, and more total consecration is greeted with hope and enthusiasm? "Wow! That sounds great!" But is soon doubted and forgotten in the ho-hum business of daily routine?

In my agonizing efforts to discern what God wanted for my life, it was finally resolved that I was called to a penitent life St. Francis once lived. Penitent means going about, praying and making reparation to God for those who don't believe in Him. And penance can be fasting or denying yourself something for a season. And we've seen how rich the fruit is from that practice.

So, a penitent life is one that is so focused on God it has no place in its heart for the frills and the outside pleasures that we have indulged in before in the world. And that is normal in the world.

I mean, it's normal to come home and watch television, fall asleep and go to bed. Get up the next morning. Go to work. Come home, watch television, eat dinner. Fall asleep. Get up the next day, go to work... This is normal!

But for someone who serves God, it leaves no room for Him. So, He's called us OUT. The ones of us that are called out. That doesn't mean that we're any 'better'. It just means that we want more of Him, and less of the world. And that that is our calling. That's what God designed for us from the beginning of Time. That's what He designed for us.

For other people, He's designed them to be IN the world, to serve Him in the world. To be dedicated to Him in the world. There's nothing wrong with that.

And then, for others, they just don't know yet. They haven't discovered God and how sweet and wonderful He is. So, they're just living in the world for their own flesh.

And there comes a time, I think... Some people call it a second childhood. I don't know what it's called. But there's an expression for that. Where at 40 years old, somebody has a whole new way they want to lead their life. Duh! I can see it! That's exactly what happened to me at 40 years old. I didn't want to be in the world anymore. And I was a Christian! But I was a worldly Christian.

Even though I spent a lot of time in prayer and was in prayer groups. And did all these good works for the church. I was still IN the world and worldly. Thinking of worldly benefits. But I got to the point where, the world didn't hold my attention anymore. And I got very excited about the idea of leaving the world altogether, just to serve God on His terms.

So. With a lot of folks, there's a lot of enthusiasm. But then when they think, 'Oh, I'm gonna lose being able to take a bath. I may have to take a bucket bath and not a shower?? I'm not gonna have the Internet or watch TV? Oh, geez. I don't think I can handle that. I won't be able to see my kids growing up. (talking about grandchildren or whatever) My family is here. I get to see my family once a month, maybe. I don't want to ...you know. I don't want to disappear and go serve the Lord so that I don't see my children. My grandchildren.'

Well. Guess what. The Lord said, simply. *"Anyone who desires to serve Me and is not willing to leave their family behind. Is not worthy of Me."* And that's a harsh saying. But it's very important that we marry the right person! So that our husband and our children also come along on this journey. Which is what happened with me. We, all of us. All six of us went along on this journey.

So. In my agonizing efforts to discern what God wanted for MY life, it was finally resolved that I was called to this penitent life of St. Francis, that he lived. Clothed in a poor habit. How often do we spend money, time, and energy on clothing? How nice it was just to have a habit, and not have to worry about wearing anything else.

Living in very primitive housing, like that of the migrant worker, without electricity or running water. This discovery left me feeling so unworthy, so humbled, and joyful. That He was calling me up much higher. And that there would be things we would deny ourselves of. And I think not getting to take a shower every morning is penitent. Absolutely...

Now, after walking in His holy footsteps in my own meager way, I know more than ever, I am unworthy. In the unfolding of this life and vocation, I have learned well that my frailty is greater. Far greater than I ever imagined. In looking back, I see that I am more prone to sloth, weakness, and sin than I ever thought.

And it has been precisely this knowledge of self and the unwarranted attention I gave it that has been the most formidable enemy in my attempts to be faithful to follow God's will for my life.

To see the dream of a consecrated life held out to you. Desiring it with all your heart. Discerning that God is indeed inviting you—and then to go home and be swallowed up by the mundane daily concerns of the old life can cause us to flounder around in prayer. Feel deeply insecure in our hearts, secretly fearing that we have lost the better portion.

Which, by the way. If we go that way... Yeah, we have.

And can eventually lead to lukewarmness or even despair.

When we fall prey to this self-defeating deception, it becomes harder and harder to hear God's voice. We lose the peaceful conviction that we are able to hear Him, and we are in His will. And the grace He shed in our hearts when He called us to that deeper conversion lies dormant under a mountain of mundane 'realities' of everyday life.

We may forget—but He never forgets. The gifts of God are without repentance, and He is waiting for us to turn around and go back to that place of commitment when we loved Him more than life itself—and make a giant leap of faith into the Chasm of the Unknown.

In Matthew, 13, the Lord told this parable, "A sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seed fell on the path, and birds came and ate it up. Some fell on rocky ground, where it had little soil. It sprang up at once because the soil was not deep, and when the sun rose it was scorched, and it withered for lack of roots. Some fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked it. But some seed fell on rich soil, and produced fruit, a hundred or sixty or thirty-fold. Whoever has ears ought to hear."

Then the Lord later explained to the disciples the meaning of the parable, "The seed sown on rocky ground is the one who hears the Word and receives it at once with joy. But he has no root and lasts only for a time. When some tribulation or persecution comes because of the word, he immediately falls away."

"The seed sown among thorns is the one who hears the word,"

Boy, this is the one the Lord taps me on the shoulder with.

"...but then worldly anxiety and the lure of riches choke the word and it bears no fruit. But the seed sown on rich soil is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and yields a hundred or sixty or thirty-fold."

At first glance, failure to act may be attributed to a love for money and security, as in the rich young ruler. But going deeper, do we really believe that the Lord of Heaven and Earth is holding out to us the very pearl of great price: a personal invitation to join the courts of Heaven while yet on Earth? To work for His glory and for souls every day of our remaining lives? To rely on Him for empowerment and resources? Isn't the most nagging doubt in our hearts not His faithlessness—but our frailty and unworthiness?

This is where the Lord intervenes in the life of souls. And by His Own Holy Will, constructs a highway to Heaven by which we unworthy mortals may ascend to holiness in the consecrated life. This highway is His Divine Mercy.

The Imitation of Christ exhorts us, "Pay more attention to My Mercy than to your own unworthiness."

Last night during adoration, Our Lady said to me, "It is written: the just shall live by faith." She pointed to me to open the Scriptures and I opened to Galatians 3: "The one who is righteous, by faith will live." This was not spoken just to me, but for all of us who are struggling to fulfill God's highest calling in our lives. Each one of us, right now, in this moment is facing a challenge, a decision to give some part of our lives up for the sake of the Kingdom of Heaven.

You know? This is Springtime. And all kinds of wonderful new things are being birthed. So, this is a time now to spring forward, so to speak.

Mark these words well; the issue is not worthiness. The issue is willingness. Will we believe, with Mary, that what was spoken to us shall be accomplished by God and the supernatural working of His grace? Or are we so mired in our unworthiness and self-defeating preoccupation that we are deceived by the devil into thinking that God's arm is too short to accomplish such a work through us?

The false theology Satan has used to deceive many a soul into abandoning the call of God on their lives is simply this lie: "You are not worthy. Look at your life, look at your past sins, and continual temptations. You're so weak, look at your mistakes. You can't even live up to the simplest works of holiness without blowing it! Ha! You? Chosen by God? You can't even walk out of the confessional and stay clean for 15 minutes, let alone hang onto enough grace to serve."

Wow. Brutal? With good reason is he called the, "Accuser of our brothers" in Revelation 12.

And it's true. You know, I would go to confession. Really be sorry for some of the things that I'd done. And within 1/2 an hour, I would get tempted in a situation to pass judgment. And I'd do it. And I'd realize I couldn't even stay clean for 30 minutes.

And I think when you come out of the confessional, there's demons waiting there to put you right back where you were before you confessed your sins and received the grace of absolution from the hand of the priest.

Of course, you can confess to the Lord and receive absolution. Of course. And it's mostly important that your sorrow over your sins is from the heart. Because the Lord is looking for true contrition.

So. Simply stated, what Satan is saying: this is works-equals-righteousness theology. This is that same teaching that Paul warns the Galatians of in chapter three, "Oh, stupid Galatians! Who has bewitched you, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified? I want to learn only this from you: did you receive the Spirit from works of the law, or from faith in what you heard?"

Wow. This principle is a dynamic based on legalistic thinking. And that's what the devil uses against us, to try to trump up false guilt. We negate the invitation by imagining that we have not earned the grace and calling of God by being perfect Christians. Therefore, since we have not lived according to the Law, or the Christian precepts perfectly, we are unworthy to be called and chosen.

So, we do not respond. We negate the grace of God in our lives, because we do not believe we deserve it.

Consider Abraham: "Abraham believed God and it was credited to him as righteousness." Paul addresses the Galatians again and says: "Are you so stupid? After beginning with the Spirit, are you now ending with the flesh?" Right. We are in the flesh whenever we think we can earn or must earn the grace of God, or His calling. Or His Love. We can't earn a thing.

"Does, then, the one who supplies the Spirit to you and works mighty deeds among you do so from works of the law or from faith in what you heard?"

Did Moses part the Red Sea because he knew his arm had great supernatural powers? And he knew he was so holy that he earned and merited such a miracle? Or did Moses know God's character so thoroughly that he believed that whatever he asked for in prayer, whatever answer he received from God for the good of His people, would be done for them? Moses had faith in God's power.

In the first mentality, which is a lie from Satan, you must first be good enough to be a Christian. But the Lord said, "I did not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance ... and it is not the healthy who need a physician but the sick."

Another lie to delay a vocation is, "But I still have so many faults! I am unworthy of such a high calling." And that might be very true. In my case, I knew it was true. But again, the Lord has said, "He who has begun the good work in you will perfect it."

A vocation is not a reward for a life lived perfectly. Rather, it is an invitation to learn how to live life perfectly. We will never be worthy. We will be covered in heavenly graces and rewarded abundantly in this life and the next with the fellowship and familiar friendship of Jesus, the Lord of Love. And we will be continually empowered to overcome our many faults. To get back up on our feet and try, try again—for Our Lord longs to see us succeed.

Therefore, He gives us another chance. Another chance. Another chance.

God does the doing. Again, this is not about worthiness, but willingness. God puts the desire deep in our hearts. Then brings vessels to stir us to desire greater holiness. Then makes the invitation. And if we will respond, He will form us in holiness. He's calling us to an environment where we can be perfected. All is done with Him and through Him. We do nothing but say "yes" and be obedient to what He has asked us to do next.

A companion of the holy St. Francis once asked, "Why you? Why has God chosen you?" Since so many miracles and signs were accompanying his way of life and teachings, the brother wanted to know why God had chosen him.

St. Francis, simple and true, answered, "Because the Lord could find no greater sinner on Earth." And I'm sure he meant that with all his heart. Because the Lord has said similar things to me, and I know He means it. But He could find no-one less deserving.

This was not said out of a false sense of humility. St. Francis had lifted his heart in prayer to the Almighty God, asking this question. The answer came simply from the Lord of Heaven and Earth, who had surveyed the entire world and found none as insufficient and lacking as this poor man of Assisi.

His answer is surely our invitation, only if believe.

Will you believe? Will You Respond? IS God calling you?

This night, I saw our Mother of Mercy holding a very exquisite and grand-sized pearl in the palm of her hand.

She put it into a red velvet bag very gently and set it down beside me. I snatched it up and held it firmly to my heart, feeling enkindled with great love. To me, it represented The Pearl of Great Price: Jesus her Son.

Our Lady began to speak, "You see, my child, to have this very Great Treasure, you must forsake all. There is nothing worth having more than this precious Treasure. But oh, how few there are who are willing to treasure Him as He deserves. How very few are willing to abandon the purse of their own opinions. How few are willing to exclude all kinds of clutter from their lives; noise, as well as possessions.

"How very few trust Him. Trust that He can truly be their Everything. There is nothing in this world worth having over Him. Nothing.

She continued, "This is this soul's test. She is called, she is chosen... will she respond? I want her to respond. She is chosen of me, one of my hand-picked ones. I wish her to abandon the world to make an oblation: an offering of her own will, her own plans, her own opportunities. For my Son has His will, His plans, His opportunities.

But will she respond?

I am calling her to respond."

Our Lady is now addressing the soul directly, "My daughter, there is nothing that you have planned that can even begin to compare with what God has in store for you, if you will respond. There will always be those who hold the purse strings. But you, daughter, have been called to a higher calling, where the sweat and toil of "provider" shall be delegated to others.

"This I will confirm to you. Many times, it is not circumstances that conspire against you, rather the gentle Hand of God orchestrating change."

Yeah. Like, you hit a place where there's opposition after opposition. There's confusion in your readings and you don't know what to do. And we don't think that maybe God is doing this to get our attention. To move us in an opposite direction from where we've been going.

And this is what she's saying. Many times, it's not the circumstances that conspire against you. Rather, it's the gentle hand of God orchestrating change.

Will you respond? Will you respond to what He is doing in your life? These are the times of opportunity; are you ready to respond? Heaven is waiting. I am your Mother of Mercy.

"Mercy has come to this house this night."

It is a joy to add to this message that the sign Our Lady promised came, in the form of a very large sum of money, to undertake this book and help the poor and meet this soul's needs. She responded beautifully to this grace and is moving towards a total commitment to the Kingdom of God, and His plan for her life in working for the salvation of souls.