

Living by Principle

We have an enemy that is incredibly intelligent and crafty. He has schemes and designs that except for our Master would destroy us and the work that we are to do. He has ways to tempt us, to deceive us, to entice us, to persuade us, to lure us, to lull us to sleep. He has siren songs that appeal to our senses. He has every avenue into our lives. He was our lord. We have been delivered from him.

Every day we must come into fellowship with our Savior. Every day we must desire Him. Every day we must know that we can do nothing apart from Him. Every day we must know that He is salvation. Every day we must come to hear His voice.

If you get up in the morning and pray because you are supposed to, then it would be better for you to sleep on. Praying without seeing your desperate need for His grace, His power, His wisdom, His strength will only cause you to become very dull. Praying in rote is sin. If you pray because you are supposed to, then you are being deceived. If you pray because you are supposed to, then you are set up for a fall. If you pray because you are supposed to, then a feeling will eventually come to you that says you are in fellowship. If you pray because you are supposed to, then this feeling will give you a false confidence. And this false confidence will eventually lead you to become a sorcerer.

However, we have a merciful God. He does not desire to see us fall away. He knows us intimately. He does not expect perfection from us yet. He does want our hearts, souls, minds, and bodies to love Him. He does not want us to perform for Him. He only wants us to love Him. Love will compel us to obey Him, to seek Him, to desire Him. Everything we do must come from this obligation — Love. Anything else is dead and useless and will not last. Anything done in principle is wasted. Praying in the morning in principle is wasted effort.

However, we have a merciful God. He is going to deliver us from the hands that are too strong for us. He is going to deliver us from principle. Our enemy taught us how to think (first), how to walk, how to talk, how to "be cool," how to be sophisticated, how to be insecure, how to be secure, how to love, how to hate, how to live, how to die, how to be a success, how to be a failure, how to Oh yes, one thing he also taught us — was how to worship God. He taught us wrong. He gave us what he had — nothing. No hope, no promise of anything, no friends, no life. But he made it look really good. So today, we can from our memory be what we were taught to be. From our memory we can be a success, from our memory we can be a failure, from our memory we can love, we can hate, we can walk, we can talk, and we can think. From our memory we can even worship God. However, we have a merciful God. He knows that we were hopelessly trapped in the web of our enemy. He knows that sometimes we think that we are in fellowship, he knows that sometimes we think we love, that sometimes we think we are insecure, that sometimes we think we hate, that sometimes we think we are a success, that sometimes we think we worship Him. He knows all of this. We have a merciful God. Our God desires us to be free from our enemy. Our God desires us to love, to care, to be a success, to be secure. Our God desires us.

Our enemy taught us first how to think. He taught us how to think according to his economy. He taught us how to think according to what is reasonable. He taught us how to be efficient, systematic, productive, methodical, orderly, well-organized, how to have everything all worked out. From the day you were born, your life could have been all planned out. And according to your economic circumstances, it could even work out the way you planned it. Even if your parents did not have every step of your life planned, then at some point in your life there were times when it was necessary to "decide what you are going to do with your life." Life was a process that you entered through birth and left in death. What you did in between was not necessarily up to you. If you were poor, your choices were this or that; if you were rich your choices were almost unlimited; if you were in between then your choices were almost unlimited; if you were in between then your choices were only limited by your ambition. And our enemy fueled our ambitions by his siren songs of success, money, power, lure of far away places with strange sounding names. The siren song of getting rich, the siren song of being famous. Many set out upon this road only to fall by the wayside after a year or two. the siren song of misspent youth coming into the reality of a family with so many mouths to feed. Frustration being taught to us by our enemy, who held out the promise of our own kingdom and kept it ever so far away from us by the mine field of temptation, and

the snares of uncontrolled self. Frustration at what we were told we could have and never having it. So today we see the goal of where we are heading. We know that our Father's words are true and will come to pass. We know this with certainty. We are confident. But we do not know that we cannot accomplish this — without Him. Without Him we will think our way to the kingdom. Our reason will rule us; and like the great middle class that is hopelessly trapped in between, we will be trapped thinking we are succeeding when we are not. Our reason will lead us to the greatest demonstration of the flesh that has ever been seen. Our reason will lead us to the greatest frustration of our lives. Deliver us from principle. Because He first loved us, we ought to lay down our lives for others. Because He first loved us, we ought to lay down our lives for others. Because He first loved us, we ought to lay down our lives for Him. Let us come to know Him, to desire Him, to obey Him.