Due Diligence

2/7/16

Deuteronomy 28:1

*"Now it shall come to pass, if you diligently obey the voice of the Lord your God, to observe carefully all His commandments which I command you today, that the Lord your God will set you high above all nations of the earth.*

In this Bible verse, not only are we instructed to obey the voice of God, but we are told to diligently obey God. When I hear the word diligent, I think of being thoughtfully exacting; thorough and careful; persistent, and unrelenting. I see it as being steadfast in belief, having fortitude or courage, and not giving up.

Diligence is the antithesis of sloth or laziness. Diligence requires that we budget our time and monitor our activities to guard against apathy and sluggishness. A diligent person makes no excuses, but gets busy with the task and moves through whatever obstacles they face. The diligent Child of God welcomes each undertaking as a special assignment from God and uses all energies to accomplish it.

As I was writing this talk I looked around at the several projects related to my home, to my office, and to my life that remain incomplete. I must admit that I am not a good example of diligence. I am diligent in the things that I like – music or preparing a talk for church, for instance – and it does not extend into other parts of my life. I may apply diligence selectively, but I would not describe myself as a diligent person. This is an area where I need work.

Civilization is on one long, anxious search for diligent individuals. These types of people are rare; they are wanted in every city, every business, and every endeavor. The world cries out for such people; people who will set themselves to the task or idea at hand and not look up until it is completed to the highest standards.

Yes, the world cries out for these people, and so does God.

Diligence is required to consistently maintain a standard of excellence in who we are, what we think, say, and do. The Christ wants to express through us with our diligent willingness. As our Bible verse states, if we diligently listen to the guidance of God and apply it through our lives we are set ‘high above all nations”. I understand this to mean that we are attuned to Spirit, aligned with the Christ, and have embraced our divinity as a Child of God.

Diligence is a quality held in esteem by humanity. It sets us apart, builds confidence and trust in others. In his autobiography, *Up From Slavery,* Booker T. Washington writes: “…any man, regardless of color, will be recognized and rewarded just in proportion as he learns to do something well – learns to do it better than someone else – however humble the thing may be.”

Abraham Lincoln said this: “The leading rule for the lawyer, as for the man of every other calling, is diligence. Leave nothing for to-morrow which can be done to-day.” Benjamin Franklin observed this: “Diligence overcomes difficulties, sloth makes them.”

The Bible says it plainly in Proverbs 10:4 – *“Lazy people are soon*

*poor; hard workers get rich.”*

Rewards and abundance for diligence are not limited to financial realms. Proverbs 12:24 also teaches, “The hand of the diligent will rule, while the slothful will be put to forced labor.” In other words, work hard and lead; be lazy and be enslaved … enslaved by our thoughts of limitation, bigotry, conceit, and all the other self-centered, whining complaints of the lower ego in general.

Diligence can extend to our thinking and learning. By being diligent in what we put into our minds and hearts, we can more closely attune our action, words, and attitudes to those that allow the free expression of God through us.

Diligence is a spiritual attribute and when extended to our prayer lives results in benefit not only to us but to our families, communities, nation, and the world. Its lesson is to not be stopped by anything: not by what the world offers us, not by what our friends or enemies say, not by the challenges that we face.

The Buddha said this: Chaos is inherent in all compounded things. Strive on with diligence.

Many of us fantasize about being respected, liked, and celebrated, but then we dismiss these thoughts as selfish and immature. Yet on our human journey we want to be appreciated for our strengths and tolerated for our weaknesses. In our dreams we can see ourselves accomplishing, helping, and serving. These dreams are placed there by God. It is where we are being guided; where we belong.

We matter; we make a difference. 1 Corinthians 15:58 says: *Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.*

Our challenge is not to accept less than the highest and best of ourselves and for ourselves. We apply the due diligence and God controls the results. The more of the Christ we allow to express through us and into our lives, the closer we come to achieving our dreams and the intentions of God.

God is asking each of us to diligently maneuver through our individual wilderness of ego to the centermost core of who we truly are. The attitude we carry inward is one of humility, surrender, faith, and willingness. What we are offered in return, to bring back and share with the entire world, is the “all-of-us” as it is expressed through our talents, charitable service, forgiveness, and acceptance, as well as the peace, joy, and love that we find within.

My prayer is that we hear Christ’s appeal to our hearts imploring us to love God … diligently, to love each other and ourselves … diligently; not with a casual attitude or the indifference that satisfies only feeble intentions, but with an exacting regard and meaning. We are asked to diligently obey these whispers of the heart and follow them to their Divine conclusion. It is there that we are met by Spirit, receiving the inner accolades and the hero’s welcome that we so desire, and hear the words of our God whispering to our souls, “Well done, my good and faithful servant.”

Let us pray….