

Relying and Depending on God Alone

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Our opportunities are unlimited. Beyond the challenge to spread the Gospel into developing nations, something else is far more pressing: We are totally dependent on God. If we do not look to Him but rather to ourselves to meet our needs, only disaster can result.

Something wonderful happens, on the other hand, when we regard ourselves as helplessly dependent on the Lord. In our hearts and attitudes, we must remain as children before Him. If we are enabled to accomplish anything, it is because of the Lord and His grace. The secret of His blessing on any work, large or small, is that all the glory goes to Him.

But we are self-willed individuals who live in flesh-and-blood bodies and strive naturally for personal praise. How can we regard ourselves as helplessly dependent on the Lord and give Him all the glory? Look at Psalm 103:14: “He knows how we are formed, he remembers that we are dust.” This verse assures me that the Lord knows the stuff I am made of. The question is, Am I able to remember it? Will I daily recognize that all I am made of is a little handful of dust?

The Lord rescues us repeatedly from our tendency to stop depending on Him and start depending on ourselves. He often keeps us from doing things in our own flesh instead of in His strength. Sometimes, in His mercy, He even causes those things to fail.

Because when all is said and done, when history is sealed up and time runs out, God will make sure that nothing that is a product of the flesh will last for eternity. He has never accepted a work of our flesh and He never will, however good it might look to us. Nothing, not preaching thousands of sermons, not even seeming to turn the world upside-down, will enter eternity if it has been a product of our flesh. Anything lasting for eternity will have been done by Him and Him alone.

We must heed the warning of God to the children of Israel as they were about to pass over the Jordan River into the Promised Land:

When you have eaten and are satisfied, praise the LORD your God for the good land he has given you. . . . Otherwise, when you eat and are satisfied, when you build fine houses and settle down, and when your herds and flocks grow large and your silver and gold increase and all you have is multiplied, then your heart will become proud and you will forget the LORD your God. . . . You may say to yourself, “My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me.” Deuteronomy 8:10, 12-14, 17

We are no different than the children of Israel. Take a look around you at the people and ministries you know God has called to do His heart’s desire. Often flesh gets in the way. People become arrogant and take the glory for themselves. When the Lord uses people for His purposes, He often has to strip away dependence on intelligence, education, abilities, strengths. He has to make them nothing before He can build them back up again for His service.

It is refreshing to see how God carries along a person or ministry that acknowledges dependence on Him. Some things we plan never take place. Other things we never expect may happen in a mighty way. This helps us know beyond a shadow of a doubt that God has accomplished these things.