

August 23, 2020

Concerns

God has them. We have them.

Mark 8:33

33 But when Jesus turned and looked at his disciples, he rebuked Peter. "Get behind me, Satan!" he said. "You do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns."

What do you have in mind? What would you like to see happen?

Let me quote some scripture for you:

"He will give you the desires of your heart."

"Ask whatever you wish and it will be done for you."

These phrases are in the Bible. Do you believe them? Careful, because they are the conclusion to conditional statements. These phrases are part of an "if-then." There is an "if" - the hypothesis - followed by the "then" - the conclusion.

"Delight yourself in the Lord" then "He will give..." Psalm 37:4

"If you abide in me, and my words abide in you...then ask..." John 15:7

In Mark 8 we see Peter having what seems to be good things in mind. He told Jesus, "May it NEVER be that you might suffer and die!" Jesus rebukes him strongly, even calling it out as a temptation from the devil. How could a good hearted intention be labeled as ungodly and evil?

*We can see it now because we have the advantage of fulfilled history. They still did not understand how he would be Messiah. We know what God wanted and ordained to happen to his Son. We can say, "Christ **had** to endure this to fulfill something greater."*

Jesus follows these words in Mark 8 with the commonly known, "Deny yourself, bear your cross and follow me" passage. If we are to follow Christ well, we must find ourselves delighting in him, abiding in him and letting his words abide in us. The risk we run by not diligently doing these things is that we may begin to have in mind, not the concerns of God, but the concerns of men. We could then begin thinking, wanting, and going after things that stand in opposition to what he wants for us and for others. We could begin to stifle God's ability to use us.

Could we adopt a new humility to allow us to be used by God with joy even in the midst of trial? Obedience to God will lead us where he wants us to be. Finding yourself in THAT place will be the most rewarding place, even if it leads you into difficulty.

May we delight and abide in him. May we see ourselves living for God's concerns, not ours.