

“Yielding to the Grace of God” ~ Midweek Reflection # 38. March 4. 2009

“I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me.

The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. I do not set aside the grace of God.” ~ Galatians 2:20, 21 NIV

Emilie Griffin, in a little Lenten devotional, uses the old “Is the glass half empty or half full question to encourage Christians to focus during this season not on our sinfulness, brokenness, emptiness ~ what the mystics of old and contemplatives of today call the “false self, but rather to concentrate on what God has and is doing through His redemptive love to transform us into the likeness of the Risen Christ. “We can use our Lenten time”, writes Griffin, “to shift awareness from sin to reconciliation. Jesus has reconciled us to the Father. Now we can reimagine our own lives in terms of reconciliation.”

~ Emilie Griffin, Small Surrenders A Lenten Journey, Paraclete Press. 2007. Brewster MA , pp 28.29

Without losing a proper sense of repentance and awareness of my need for forgiveness, this way of thinking helps me to be more attentive to God’s grace in my life in the present and encourages me to make use of, to yield to, God’s gentle persistent grace!

Griffin goes on to explain, “ If Jesus Christ has done everything to redeem us, do we have to do anything? Well, yes. We have to accept the possibility of our own transformation. We have to receive the grace, interpret the grace, name the grace. We have to act according to the grace we have received; we have to incarnate the message. We have to let ourselves become surprised by joy.” Ibid, p. 28

Griffin’s “glass half full” approach encourages us to use the Ignation practice of Examen in a refreshingly positive way: examining our days not for the purpose of discovering flaws and missteps but to uncover those events and moments when God’s grace was apparent and “Christ in you, the hope of glory” was made manifest. The extraordinary Kingdom life breaking through into our ordinary existence!

If I am consciously watching for this kind of resurrection life maybe the anticipation will lead to fulfillment more often than not and I will yield my will for God's will more consistently.

May we all learn to yield to God's grace and be surprised by God's joy.

Under the Mercy,

Howie