



Thoughts on the Journey

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1 Kgs 3:5, 7-12

Mt 13:44-52

It was a gray autumn day in the second grade classroom at St. Teresa of Avila Catholic Elementary School. My first class after lunch was with Sr. Marilyn, a young energetic Sister of Mercy. She always made class interesting and did her best to teach on a level we could understand. On this particular day, she began to teach us about prayer and what the bible says about praying to God and going to him for help. I distinctly heard “ask and it will be given to you”. Sister said a lot of other things about prayer, but all I heard that day was, *ask and it will be given to you*. I had never considered prayer as my opportunity to get my heart's desire, but I was willing to give it a try. This could be the only shot at getting what I wanted most at that time. What I wanted was the most beautiful dress I had ever seen and it belonged to The Wizard of Oz's, Glenda the Good Witch.

Going to bed that evening, with sincere belief that my prayer would be answered, I prayed in earnest for that dress. I used every prayer I knew by memory and made up my own begging prayers for good measure. The next morning when I had awoken, I looked everywhere sure that Glenda's dress was in my room. Under the bed, in the closet, behind the chair, it was nowhere to be found. Sorely disappointed, but not giving up, I continued to pray night after night and day after day.

Two months or so had passed and somewhere along the line, I quit praying for Glenda the Good Witch's dress. It wasn't so much that I gave up on asking God for help, it was more that I had lost my interest in the dress. Either way, the dress lost value to me as did my effort to pray for it.

In the scripture passage from 1st Kings, God appeared to Solomon in a dream and said to him, “Ask something of me and I will give it to you.” Solomon didn't ask for treasure or power or riches, or revenge against an enemy, he asked instead for what was needed so that he would be a better servant to God's people. Therefore, God was pleased with Solomon's response and gave him the gifts of wisdom and understanding.

In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus speaks in parables about the kingdom of heaven.

“The Kingdom of heaven is like a treasure buried in a field which a person finds and hides again, and out of joy goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.”

These scripture passages speak to us of the kingdom of God and its value. The kingdom is at hand and how we live and what we value in our lives, makes all the difference in a thriving life with Christ, vs. a relationship with God that is stagnant. Losing everything on earth, but gaining the Kingdom is the greatest of gains. Having the omnipotent, saving reign of Christ in our lives surpasses anything we value of an earthly nature. If we lose everything else in our lives working for the kingdom, it is worth everything we sacrifice.

Looking back at the things I have prayed for over my lifetime and the shallow things I valued, it is good to finally be at a place where I know that my redeemer lives and surrounds me with his infinite love. All the sparkles on Glenda's dress couldn't bring me more joy than this life in Christ. I have learned along the journey that He's all I need!