

Minister's website article August 2020

The African priest, Adrian Mellow, said, *There is never a moment when, consciously or unconsciously, you are not attuned to the reactions of others, marching to the beat of their drum. When you are ignored or disappointed, you experience a loneliness so unbearable that you crawl back to people and beg for the comforting drug of support and encouragement and approval and reassurance. To live with people in this state involves a never-ending uncertainty and addiction.*

I wonder if some people are like that with God. They are uncertain of his love, or even if he likes them. Yet, the bible tells us that's not true. God offers all his love to you in Jesus. And when you accept that, turn to Jesus, and walk with him, you're already approved. Prayer is part of living in that assurance. Real prayer is to get away from being addicted to the approval of other people. It is to hold the hand of your heavenly father, who really likes you. It is to stand before God and know you're accepted and affirmed because of Jesus, not because you say the right words, do proper things or think correct thoughts. It's trusting, like a child.

Of course, this includes telling God where it hurts. The next time you see a child fall and scrape their knee, watch what happens. They get picked up and often will be quiet for a moment before they cry, because they want to make sure they're held safely. Then they can cry.

A lady phoned a chat show and said, 'Sometimes I'm so angry at God for what is happening to me, I want to throw the Bible across the room.' The person taking calls said, 'I understand. And if I can understand, I suspect God can too.' Then he asked, 'Are you going to leave the Faith?' She said, 'Of course not. I don't have any other place to go.' She was right. Some people say things like, 'I never ask God "Why?"' I think, 'Why not?' I get confused, and sometimes I hurt, and I say, 'Why me?' The good thing is, God still loves me. That's being honest about the way I feel, and it would be silly for me to say, 'Why not me?' when I don't feel that way.

Sometimes you hear people say: 'I deserve nothing, and learn to rejoice in my sufferings.' The Apostle Paul said something like that in Philippians. But I want to say, 'Get a life!' Yes, Paul did rejoice in his sufferings, but sometimes he also complained. That's being more real. People who don't tell God when it hurts are in denial. People who like suffering are neurotic. They sound spiritual, but don't understand about prayer.

Just like that child who falls down and scrapes their knee, if you're quiet before you scream, because you want to make sure there's somebody to hear, you're ready for a real prayer life.

They say old age isn't for sissies. True. But life isn't for sissies either. You don't get from the hospital where you are born, to the hospital where you die, without getting hurt, without wounds, without messing it up, without a fall, without pain. And now, without worrying about viruses. Childlike honesty will scream when it is appropriate and necessary. I don't want my grandchildren, when I say, 'Did that hurt?' to say, 'No, Grandad.' I want them to say, 'It hurts here, and I need comfort.' Our Father in heaven feels the same. If anyone tells you that God doesn't care about you, they haven't read the bible properly.

If you want to know more, make contact through this website.

Every blessing

Duncan