

Principle & Practice

Philippians 2:1-11

INTRODUCTION

This past week I was talking to my buddy, and brother from another mother, in Wyoming, and we were talking about his son playing the ukulele. His wife sent me some pics of Shaw and also a video of his little concert which I'll play for you now.

So this kid is 7 years old, cute as button, good-looking kid and fearless, ready to try anything. He just won a saddle from rodeoing this year and is just kicking the lights out of life at a young age. So his daddy was saying how they've had to talk about how to keep our pride in check, keeping a healthy balance between confidence and humility, which lead to parenting which brought up how as teachers of any kind, parents being primary teachers in our life, that all things learn best in principle then in practice. We need things explained to us then we need to see it lived out. Then, and only then, can we make it our own. For example, two major corner-posts of life are Confidence and Humility. If we don't have humility when we are confident it can become a dangerous and off putting pride. If we seek humility without confidence then it can look like self-pity which the end result is another form of pride. So, parents are to teach their kids the principles of life that the kids can then see lived out in their own house through example and experience.

This brought up a recent experience last weekend when Trista and I attended a Buck Brannaman clinic at the Longhorn Arena in Greenville. He is a famous horse trainer that the "Horse Whisperer" movie was based on that Robert Redford starred in several years ago. This is basically his same approach. You got to show the horse an expectation and then through practice allow them to experience what you are asking him to do. In his words, "Teach the mind then the body." So there is a principle of what you are trying to teach him, and then the practice is helping him experience your expectation of it. There is a lot of trial and error involved in this until one day it has become enough of a pattern for the horse to sort of concrete it in his head what you expect.

Well, this got me thinking that really this is the Bible at its simplest, and that is what I want to discuss this morning because it really pivots around the holiday we are all about to celebrate, Christmas.

Philippians 2:1-11

If then there is any encouragement in Christ, if any consolation of love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any affection and mercy, fulfill my joy by thinking the same way, having the same love, sharing the same feelings, focusing on one goal. Do nothing out of rivalry or conceit, but in humility consider others as more important than yourselves. Everyone should look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.

Make your own attitude that of Christ Jesus,
who, existing in the form of God,
did not consider equality with God
as something to be used for His own advantage.
Instead He emptied Himself
by assuming the form of a slave,
taking on the likeness of men.
And when He had come as a man

in His external form,
He humbled Himself by becoming obedient
to the point of death—
even to death on a cross.
For this reason God highly exalted Him
and gave Him the name
that is above every name,
so that at the name of Jesus
every knee will bow —
of those who are in heaven and on earth
and under the earth —
and every tongue should confess
that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.¹

I. The Principles of the Kingdom

Jeremiah 17:9-10

The heart is more deceitful than anything else,
and incurable—who can understand it?
I, Yahweh, examine the mind,
I test the heart
to give to each according to his way,
according to what his actions deserve.

Galatians 3:19

Why then was the law given? It was added because of transgressions until the Seed to whom the promise was made would come.

Margaret Weston

Man has to start with something and then develop it - he cannot ever make anything from nothing, only God can do that and call forth the creation.

II. The Person of God Living It Out

Michael Garland, *The Lifted Veil*

"The 'otherness' of God is mind boggling. It is incomprehensible for us. He is so unlike us that it should inspire wonder and awe - and yet He became like us to rescue our souls. It is good for us to meditate on His greatness, knowing that we will never fully understand Him."

III. The Participation of Experience

1 Corinthians 6: 19-20

Don't you know that your body is a sanctuary of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought at a price. Therefore glorify God in your body.

Galatians 2:19-20

I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

CONCLUSION



"For a lot of people it's about self-discovery, finding things you need to adjust, change, or improve. When you find that the horse is compelled and interested in you, something in you changes. That can be healing or move you deeply. There's a difference between mastering something physical and working with an animal. There's a spiritual component to working with a horse. You're dealing with the spirit of a live animal that thinks and makes decisions. In nature this animal would have nothing to do with you. 'NATURAL HORSEMANSHIP' is just words. It's not natural at all. There's an abundance of trust that must be developed for you [by the horse]. Imagine if humans were that pliable." - Buck Brannaman.

FACEBOOK/Buck Brannaman, Horseman



I've often told people who ask if there is a God: Get around enough people with horses and see what happens. See how they survive in spite of all the things they do, and you'll become a believer!

— Buck Brannaman —

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