

LAMPLIGHTER

MARCH 2009

THEME: “Under God’s Watchful Eye-Living with Dependence” LUKE 12:6-9

*From birth I have relied on you; you brought me forth from my mother's womb.
I will ever praise you. (Ps 71:6 NIV)*

My Fellow Dependants,

Throughout our lives we struggle between dependence verses independence. During the period of infancy, we are totally dependant upon our parents or caregivers. They feed us. They prepare our meals. They change our diapers. They provide everything that makes us comfortable. As toddlers we begin the struggle toward more independent living. We insist on tying our own shoes and zipping our own coats. The phrase commonly spoken at this age is: “I can do it myself.” As teenagers we can’t wait to get our driver’s license, so that we can drive ourselves to practice, go on dates without our parents chauffeuring us around. As adults, in the words of one commercial, we bring home the bacon, fry it up in a pan, with the understanding that we provided for our own family. As married couples we learn the art of being interdependent. We have someone to share life’s ups and downs. Unfortunately, for most people, we will have to learn to live without that significant person. What is it like to surrender your car keys, sell your house, and move into a care facility?

We raise our children to leave the nest. At the time of their departure we trust them to make their own way in life. They will be responsible to pay their own bills, prepare their own meals, and provide for themselves. Are we ever truly and completely independent people? (Ps 145:13-16 NIV) “Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and your dominion endures through all generations. The LORD is faithful to all his promises and loving toward all he has made. {14} The LORD upholds all those who fall and lifts up all who are bowed down. {15} The eyes of all look to you, and you give them their food at the proper time. {16} You open your hand and satisfy the desires of every living thing.” Out of His goodness and mercy our heavenly Father provides everything necessary to sustain my body and life. All I have is a gift from Him!

Somehow the gift mentality is lost. It even grinds against every fiber of our being. We have been ingrained that if you want anything done right then one must do it himself/herself. In other words the toddler in us all comes to the front and says: “I can do it myself!”

Can we really “do it” ourselves? (Prov 14:12 NIV) “There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death.” (Prov 16:25 NIV) “There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death.” (Gal 3:18 NIV) “For if the inheritance depends on the law, then it no longer depends on a promise; but God in his grace gave it to Abraham through a promise.” (Jer 17:5 NIV) “This is what the LORD says: ‘Cursed is the one who trusts in man, who depends on flesh for his strength and whose heart turns away from the LORD.’” (Col 2:8 NIV) “See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ.”

While it is not possible to depend on others or even oneself, we have One upon whom we can depend. He is faithful to His promises. (Gen 3:15-16 NIV) “And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.” We see its fulfillment in Jesus. He will never abandon us in time of trouble. (2 Cor 4:7-

12 NIV) “But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us. {8} We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; {9} persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. {10} We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body. {11} For we who are alive are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that his life may be revealed in our mortal body. {12} So then, death is at work in us, but life is at work in you.” The Almighty One is on our side. (Rom 8:31,32) “What, then, shall we say in response to this? If God is for us, who can be against us? {32} He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all--how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?”

For this reason we reiterate the words of the Psalm above. “From birth I have relied on you; you brought me forth from my mother's womb. I will ever praise you.” (Ps 71:6 NIV) We are dependant upon the grace and mercy of our Heavenly Father for our salvation. Upon that same grace and mercy we can depend because He is faithful and His watchful eye is always upon us!

Close with prayer, the Lord's Prayer, Benediction, and Song – #101 “Abide, O Dearest Jesus”