

Daily Devotional

April 14, 2005

(Contributed by Dave Vilhauer)

Theme: What Being Self-Made Really Means

Text: Romans 8:5-10

Those who think they can do it on their own end up obsessed with measuring their own moral muscle but never get around to exercising it in real life. Those who trust God's action in them find that God's Spirit is in them - living and breathing God! Obsession with self in these matters is a dead end; attention to God leads us out into the open, into a spacious, free life. Focusing on the self is the opposite of focusing on God. Anyone completely absorbed in self ignores God, ends up thinking more about self than God. That person ignores who God is and what he is doing. And God isn't pleased at being ignored.

But if God himself has taken up residence in your life, you can hardly be thinking more of yourself than of him. Anyone, of course, who has not welcomed this invisible but clearly present God, the Spirit of Christ, won't know what we're talking about. But for you who welcome him, in whom he dwells - even though you still experience all the limitations of sin - you yourself experience life on God's terms.

(from THE MESSAGE)

Thought: The world and especially America admires the so-called self-made person. Our natural inclinations are so inferior to the level on which God operates that it is no wonder that we cannot discover the open free and spacious life we desire by looking inward.

Prayer: My God I beg forgiveness for being so self-absorbed. Give me courage to put you first in my life so that I can experience life on your terms.

Reflections:

When faced with my next significant dilemma, what will be different if I ask myself first, "What decision would please God most?"

Why is pleasing myself so important when I know that surrendering self to God is the only way to experience my full potential?

What is more frustrating?

- A. Turning loose of things in my life that usually end up frustrating me anyway?
- B. Pursuing God who challenges me to surrender comfortable inferior living for a dangerous self-sacrificing union with him?