



Georg Christoph Lichtenberg

*"Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate.
Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure.*

These following words were recorded in a devotional in one of my early journals:

All God's children have power, and no one has special power.

Sandy and I shared Youth Department leadership in the first Church to hire me as the Youth Director. The line you just read was in a devotional I wrote for a group of teenagers at Community United Methodist Church in Casselberry Florida...45 plus years ago. Sandy, the boys, and I took a few dozen high school adolescents to Cor-Meth House, a large United Methodist facility on the beach in New Smyrna Florida.

My intent was to discuss their fears to deal with problems in life. The weekend adventure was long before "Our deepest fear" was published. Roughly 20 years in fact. Yet the issues were no different on that summer beach outing, or when Marianne Williamson published her best seller, "A Return to Love" in 1992, or than what we face today.

The directive in the devotional encouraged the future leaders to avoid asking God to provide a "dazzling life" but to ask God to "show the dazzle within them." When satisfaction comes in knowing that there is value in who they are, they're more likely to rise above the obstacles. People who overwhelmingly reach their goals aren't necessarily people who do so much, but they are people around whom things get done.

As you know, I am gaining inspiration for this series from reading and sometimes rereading books by Gandhi, Mandela, King, Kennedy, Frankl, and others. They were leaders who laid out the objectives, lived the life they believed should be, and led others to fulfill their dreams. They never thought of themselves as inadequate, but each expressed some fear of the calling God was asking them to accomplish.

You and I shouldn't fear we are inadequate. According to Williamson, inadequacy is not the deepest fear. Rather we fear being "powerful beyond measure." When the realization hits that you and I are in a position to change the world, and that we possess the ability to make the change is when self-doubt slips in. It doesn't have to be.

In our traditional Christian setting, there is a concept called “the gifts of the Holy Spirit.” By recognizing that engaging the Holy Spirit, or as I like to say, “the divine presence within me,” we realize that we are capable of achieving great and meaningful life enrichments. When we recognize that we don’t get our lives together and then give them to God, but rather we give our lives to God and then things start coming together.

Several of the kids in that youth group went on to be great contributors for the United Methodist Church. I will always believe it was because they didn’t have to fear how powerful they were. Like those seekers of wisdom on the beach, we can learn and believe all children of God have power—yet no one has special power. I believe all of us are special, and yet none of us are special.

Not one of us has more potential than anyone else to spread the love and light of God. There have been few greater times than now to believe we have it within us to go into the world to do just that—spread love and light.

I have a best friend who some of you know. His name is Miguel Galaviz. His wife Sarah was on the Wm. C. Martin staff. Often I get a call from Miguel telling me he wants to give “something you might be able to use.” It is always short quotes or phrases in Spanish.

Recently, he called and wanted to tell me something. As usual, he has to pause a little to be certain he is translating the phrase correctly in English. The same occurred on his call last Tuesday morning at 7:15 am. With his usual exuberance, he said the following...I think...in Spanish.

“Le pedí a Dios todo para poder disfrutar de la vida. Dios me dio la vida para que pudiera disfrutar de todo.”

Translated, he said:

“I asked God to give me everything so I could enjoy life.” Miguel finished by saying: “God gave me life so I could enjoy everything.”

When we are totally aware of the Divine presence of God in our lives, we can achieve great things. Then we can enjoy everything because of the unlimited life we have as a gift from God.

Peace always

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