

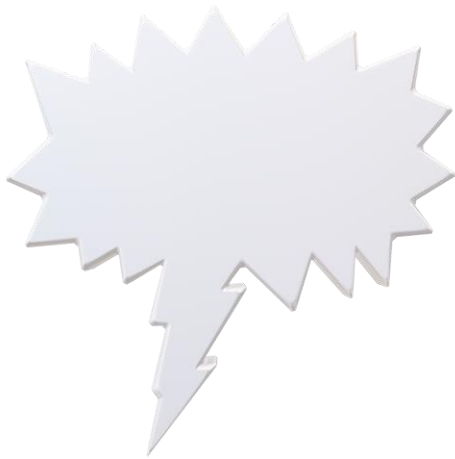


The Newsletter of the
Diocese of the East
EMC
servitium per sacrificium



DOE TRACTS

FEBRUARY, 2024



SAVE THE DATE

FEBRUARY 13 – SHROVE TUESDAY

FEBRUARY 14 – ASH WEDNESDAY

FEBRUARY 18 – FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT

FEBRUARY 25 – SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT



BISHOP'S CORNER

This past Sunday we taught about the Holy Word of God as Seed and our human hearts as Soil types. Yeshua noted the heart types as hard or callused or shallow not much depth of nutrient soil for growth or crowded with the things of the world and culture and then finally good soil prepared to receive the Holy Seed and ready to produce a bountiful harvest.

We noted that even in good soil there may be characteristics of the obstacles to grow like a hard and callous heart, or a heart that is shallow, or a heart crowded with the cares and desires of this life. We also pointed out that the preparation of the soil to be good and receptive to the divine seed requires a cooperation of activity not only of the Almighty God but ourselves.

We know that the Almighty God gives us His strength to live in holiness and righteousness of a good soil heart type. St. Paul states in Philippians 2:13,

“For God is continually working in you, giving you the consuming desire and the divine power to do what pleases Him.”

It is clear from the Holy Scriptures that the disciples of Adonai Yeshua are not required or even told that we should do everything in our own strength and power. Instead, we are told as His disciples that the Almighty God will do certain things and we are required to respond to those divine things. The *dunamis* (divine power) and His divine resources are there and ever present but we must know, recognize and appropriate them to our lives.

We are not doing them in our own strength but “For I can do everything through Christ, who gives me continual strength” (Philippians 4:13).

Beloveds of God, there is an awesome divine life balance here that is crucial to know. We are not alone in this holy endeavor for there is an Almighty God divine part and our human part. It is not a matter of us doing everything alone within ourselves, but we can do everything through Christ Who gives us strength and power to do His will in all things.

We must know it, recognize it, and apply it to our disciple's walk.

There are some things that only the Almighty God can sovereignly do and some things that only we can do. Let me give you example, only the Almighty God can enable, but only we can yield. Only the Almighty God can guide, but only we can follow. And only the Almighty God can convict us of our sin, but only we can repent of it.

The Almighty God created us with free will and He will not step over the boundary of our free will and make us do what He wants us to do as if we are mere recreated robots. The Almighty God seeks for us to act out of our own free will from a resource of our love and adoration of Him for the these He initiates in our lives. He seeks for us to respond to His divine doings as the result of our love for Him and obedience to Him.

This is the same principle we find in Philippians 2, where St. Paul wrote, "*Work hard to show the results of your redemptive salvation, obeying the Almighty God with deep reverence and fear. For the Almighty God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases Him*" (vv12–13).

It is the Almighty God who is divinely working, but we must be yielding. It is true that we can do everything required through Christ who gives each one of us the strength to do it. Apart from Christ, we can do nothing.

It is important to note here that if we move forward in our own strength, trying to make things happen in our own strength, the likelihood of failure is high. I have noted in over 50 years of ministry that includes failures and successes that when I undertake a ministry with my own wisdom and resources failure is a reality.

I have experientially learned the reality that what I/we cannot do in our own strength and power, we can do (all things) through Adonai Yeshua, Who gives us strength so that divine success is certain. Purposeful yielding to the power of the Holy Spirit and taking steps of practical obedience to do it God's way will result in everything works to the divine good.

The resources of the Almighty God are there for us. Let us this year commit to stop trying to do all things in our own strength but instead do all things through Christ who strengthens us. Amen

CLERICUS 2024

DATE: JULY 8-10

PLACE: ST. LUKE'S ANGLICAN CHURCH, BLUE RIDGE, GA.

THEME: CLERGY CARE

GUEST SPEAKERS: DR. BILL BAKER, REV. FRANCINE SCHMITT

The Clericus will begin with Evening Prayer on Monday, July 8, and conclude with a banquet on Wednesday, July 10. Registration form is attached.

I may not be perfect, but Jesus thinks I'm to die for.

Without Jesus, it's hell!

Ketchup with Jesus and relish his love.

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