

Mother of God Community
Sunday Night Praise & Worship
Exhortation
July 26, 2020
Nancy McCambridge

Every day we have an opportunity to advance the Kingdom of God, to live for God's purposes or our own. The world says you must be someone, be successful in the world, grasp the good life. Seek worldly gain, wealth, power, pleasure and honor. These things in and of themselves are good, but when we seek them as the other treasures in our lives, then we are enslaved by them and not living in the freedom of the sons of God.

But living the Christian life is completely the opposite. Our true home and citizenship is in heaven. Our identity is now in being sons of God and living like Christ. It says in **2 Cor. 4:** We have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us. The mysteries of the Kingdom of God have been revealed in us. But we must become childlike in order to receive them. We must live the Beatitudes (**Matthew 5:3-11**) Blessed are the poor in Spirit, the meek, to hunger and thirst, be merciful, be pure in heart, be peacemakers. The kingdom of God is within you. It is the hidden life! I think of those who are suffering and offering up their suffering to God, like Alice and Bill Garvey, or Ana Ramos. They are living saints.

In **Rev. 2:5** it says remember the height from which you have fallen. I have the capacity of committing grave sin. I can easily destroy in my mind the goodness in another person by my judgments or sin patterns. I offer every day the misery and nothingness of my soul. My sinfulness reminds me of the great price that Jesus paid for me on the cross and the Father's great mercy to save me from myself. Christ power is made manifest through our weakness. In **Rev. 2:4** it says remember your first love. The Beatitudes remind me of my total dependence on God. To be meek and merciful – how can I show gentleness and mercy to this person whom I find annoying. The world is full of hatred and animosity and we must react the opposite - to hunger for God's righteousness and not my own; to avoid being double minded in living the faith, but pure of heart; and to bring peace where there is strife. We can do great things through small acts of love. This will change the world.

It says in **Romans 6:13** – do not offer your bodies as instruments of wickedness, but offer yourself as someone who has come back from death to life. This pandemic can make people so fearful and self-centered. I am sure you get people on YouTube or the internet scaring everyone --the world is ending or scaring people into thinking down the road things do not look too good for America. This gets people living in fear and missing what God wants to speak to them in their hearts and to live prophetically. I have no idea what is going to come in the future, but I don't live in the future nor do I want to live in the past.

Our Blessed Mother lived prophetically and was always looking for God's promises to be fulfilled in her day and age. I love the passage from **Eph 1:18** that says "I pray that the eyes

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of your heart would be enlightened that you would know this great hope to which you have been called, the glorious inheritance in the saints and the incomparable power for us who believe.” The same power that raised Jesus from the dead is living in us. That means that we can rise above the circumstances that are happening in the world. We have no control over what is happening in the world, but what we DO have control over is our thoughts and actions.

As I already stated, when we are living the Beatitudes we will be blessed and we will know this treasure that we have in jars of clay. When we proclaim the gospel or give our witness, God’s power is also poured out. When God speaks through us, His word changes and transforms. God acts because he is living in the Word. God makes things happen as He did when he spoke “Let there be light” and there was light. It is creative and transformative. When God says pick up your mat – he acts. When the priest speaks the words “this is my body – it changes the reality of matter and we receive the very life of God in us. We must give away what we have received and bear fruit for God.

There is also tremendous power in intercessory prayer. When we pray according to God’s will, we can transform the world. When we give ourselves unreservedly to seeking God’s heart and praying, God will respond and do what He is committed to do. When we pray and fast, God responds to the prayer of the one who casts himself on the mercy of God, identifying himself with the needs of God’s people. “If my people humble themselves and pray, He will heal their land.” **(2 Chronicles 7:14)**

And finally there is power in the Body of Christ. We are part of the church triumphant, the church militant and the church suffering, this great communion of saints. **Ephesians 2:**
¹⁹Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God’s people and also members of his household, ²⁰built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. ²¹In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. ²²And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit. When we come together and worship as the Body of Christ or at Mass powerful grace is poured out from heaven.

God’s desire is to build His kingdom on earth, his church. So we can make a difference in the world by living His eternal purposes here on earth and being a prophetic and victorious people in Christ!