

Carrying out God's mission

Epiphany 5: February 8 Feb, 2009

Corinthians 9: 16-23

The Rev. Richard Nelson

Bp Philip Wright of Belize (2009 Diocesan Convention): *God does not give a mission to the Church; God gives a Church to carry out God's mission.*

PL: *I am entrusted with a commission...that in my proclamation I may make the Gospel free of charge...for though I am free with respect to all, I have made myself a servant to all, so that I might win more of them.*

The Church and every Christian is "free" = our 'commission to proclaim' impels us to be servants of others for their sake. In the world: everyone for him/herself; in the Church, everyone for someone else, in imitation of Jesus.

What motivates us to live like this?

The Christian faith is beautiful:

- it is the Truth, towards which all other truths labor;
- it bestows beauty on those who believe – harmony, peace, meaning, etc.
- it 'makes sense' of the universe

All people are worthy

- we live and put into practice John 3:16
- "throw-away people" is a secular notion
- we spread respect: generate life, and shun de-humanization, death, etc.

How do we live like this?

One's own life is important

- get a grip you're important
- everything you do matters
- you can make a difference

Live the cardinal virtues

- faith, hope and love are not theoretical
- practice patience, forbearance, forgiveness
- live in hope

The Church is a corporate reality

- if you don't "practice" here, you'll never succeed "out there"
- corporate witness is more powerful than individual witness
- building up is a more mature way of living than tearing down

All problems in the Church are solved by "making the Gospel free of charge"

Last most important factor: be filled with the Holy Spirit.