

THERE WAS A TIME WHEN I WAS A VERY ACTIVE LECTOR IN MY CHURCH. WE WERE INSTRUCTED CAREFULLY AS TO OUR PREPARATION TO DO THAT. OVER TIME I LEARNED THAT THE PASSAGE I WAS TO READ ALWAYS WAS A PERFECT FIT FOR ME – TO READ, STUDY, THINK ABOUT, MEDITATE OVER AND THEN TO PROCLAIM. I ONLY SHARE THAT BECAUSE AGAIN IT HAS HAPPENED.

WHEN I VOLUNTEERED TO PREPARE THE CONFERENCE FOR TODAY AND WAS TOLD THAT I SHOULD SELECT A TOPIC _ I WONDERED, WHAT ON EARTH SHOULD I SELECT. AND THEN SUE REMINDED ME THAT THE TOPIC FOR TONIGHT WAS OBEDIENCE. YES, SUE – AFTER THAT I DO REMEMBER SEEING A LISTING OF TOPICS. OBEDIENCE THAT WOULD HAVE BEEN THE LAST TOPIC I WOULD HAVE CHOSEN. IT WOULD HAVE BEEN AVOIDED.

AS MUCH AS I MAY HAVE READ (OBVIOUSLY NOT ABSORBED) , WHEN I HEAR THE WORD – OBEDIENCE, I IMMEDIATELY GO BACK TO SOME CHILDHOOD TIME WHEN I WAS TAUGHT . I WAS TO BE OBEDIENT TO MY PARENTS, POLICE, TEACHERS, - YOU KNOW, THE AUTHORITY FIGURES. IT IS NOT STRANGE THAT THOSE EARLY LESSONS STAY IN OUR MEMORY AND RESPONSE. OVER TIME MY OWN REBELLIOUS SELF STARTED STRUGGLING FOR INDEPENDENCE. SOME PLACE ALONG THAT JOURNEY MIGHT COME A TIME WHERE INTER-DEPENDENCE, HONORING OTHERS, HONORING THE SELF MET IN OTHERS, RESPECTING AND GROWING THROUGH THE MIRRORS OF OURSELVES WHICH CONFRONT US.

IT HAS BEEN A MOST INTERESTING, WELL CHALLENGING TIME, FOR ME TO COME, LIVE NEAR MY FIRST DAUGHTER, JANET (WHOM I HAD NOT LIVED NEAR FOR OVER 25 YEARS). PROBABLY IT NEVER WOULD HAVE HAPPENED EXCEPT MY SON IN LAW CAME UP TO ME AS^{VP}TOLD ME THAT HE WOULD LOVE TO HAVE ME LIVE NEAR THEM. I DO REMEMBER THINKING THAT IT WOULD ALSO BE A WONDERFUL OPPORTUNITY FOR US TO HEAL ANYTHING BETWEEN US – AS MOTHER AND DAUGHTER. OK !!!? TWO STRONG MINDED PEOPLE - - BE CAREFUL WHAT YOU WISH FOR! I DID NOT WANT TO BE A BOTHER, INTERFERE IN HER LIFE – AND LEAST OF ALL IN THE LIVES OF MY DAUGHTER AND SON IN LAW. OBEDIENCE WAS FAR FROM MY MIND.

JANET WANTED ME TO DO THINGS – REALLY THE WAY SHE THOUGHT WAS THE RIGHT/GOOD WAY. WHOA!!!!!!! I CAN PROCRASTINATE, SMILE, NOT DO, SMILE – AND ACT OBLIVIOUS OF THE RESULTS. YOU CAN PROBABLY IMAGINE SOME OF THE RESULTS. I WAS ALONE – WITH A LITTLE DOG – WHOM I CONSIDERED A GIFT FROM GOD - GOD IS DOG SPELLED BACKWARDS. THANK HEAVENS FOR SOME KIND MID-WESTERN NEIGHBORS WHO STARTED UP A BOOK CLUB AND INCLUDED ME.

HOW YOU ARE AT ONE TIME – YOU ARE AT ALL TIMES UNLESS YOU ARE A SCHIZOPHRENIC - OR MAYBE CONSTANTLY SWITCH MASKS WHICH

ULTIMATELY DOES NOT WORK. SO I STRUGGLED. I JUST PRAYED TO GOD TO GUIDE ME – AS I HAVE DONE FOR YEARS. I WILL NOT TAKE ALL YOUR TIME ON “STORY”, BUT BELIEVE ME, I CERTAINLY FOUGHT AGAINST. I STARTED SOMETHING AND DID NOT FOLLOW THROUGH, DID THE MONTH OF GUIDED PRAYER & FOUGHT THAT, TOLD JACK I DID NOT PRAY & ACTED OUT COMPLETELY.

I HAD BEEN A SCIENCE TEACHER IN A WONDERFUL SCHOOL, AS WELL AS THE DCE IN MY CHURCH, A EUCHARISTIC MINISTER & LECTOR, A DAILY COMMUNICANT FOR A LONG TIME. I’LL JUST TELL YOU, GOD DOES NOT GIVE UP.

YES, OBEDIENCE , OR THE REBELLION AGAINST , IS ME. FOR THIS CONFERENCE I READ, AND READ – THEN I LOOKED AT SOME OF THE BOOKS I OWN. THERE WAS ONE TIME WHEN I LOOKED UP BENEDICTINE AND OBEDIENCE AND UP CAME A NEWSLETTER WRITTEN TO BENEDICTINE OBLATES. THESE WERE PEOPLE WHO STRUGGLE TO DO GOD’S WILL . SOMEHOW, PROBABLY IT IS CALLED GRACE OF GOD – ALL THAT I WAS DOING HELPED OPEN DOORS AND CHANGE THINGS FOR ME. WHENEVER I HAVE READ SCRIPTURE OR THE BOOKS RELATED, IF IT TRULY ENTERS MY BEING, IT USUALLY OPENS UP IN A SLIGHTLY DIFFERENT WAY – IT BECOMES SOMETHING FOR ME. SOMETHING CHANGES, REBELLION STOPS, AND UNDERSTANDING REALLY BEGINS.

OBEDIENCE SUDDENLY BECAME VERY CLEAR – TO ME. TO ME, ^{IT} BECAME ALL ABOUT HONORING ANOTHER, AND LISTENING – TRULY LISTENING TO THE OTHER. IT HAS HORRIFIED ME TO REALIZE HOW I HAD BEEN TREATING MY DAUGHTER - AND OTHERS ----- . STRANGELY, FOR THE FIRST TIME IN HER LIFE MY DAUGHTER WAS INVITED TO JOIN A 6:30 AM BIBLE STUDY COURSE – WHICH SHE EAGERLY ACCEPTED. GOD WAS IN THAT BEGINNING ALSO. JANET HAS ALWAYS BEEN CONNECTED TO HER CHURCH – AND MAINLY THROUGH MUSIC AS SHE SINGS IN THE CHOIR. SHE THEN BECAME PART OF THIS GROUP⁹ WHICH SHE FAITHFULLY ATTENDS AND IN WHICH SHE PARTICIPATES IN THE BIBLE STUDY, THE DISCUSSION AND THE SHARING. BELIEVE ME, FROM TWO DIFFERENT PLACES THINGS ARE CHANGING SLOWLY. MY MIND AND PROBABLY MY ATTITUDE IS IN A DIFFERENT PLACE. YOU TOO HERE ARE PART OF THAT TOO. OF COURSE, NON OF THIS MEANS THAT THE STRUGGLE IS OVER.

BENEDICT INCLUDES SECTION IN HIS RULE BOTH NEAR THE BEGINNING (5,7) AND RIGHT NEAR THE END (71,72.) IN A CERTAIN WAY OBEDIENCE IS THE CORNERSTONE OF RULES - AND REMINDING AGAIN THAT YOU COME TO THE END AND THEN TO THE BEGINNING. ANOTHER WAY TO THINK OF THAT WOULD BE COMPARING IT TO AN ONION. YOU PEEL IT, AND THEN THERE IS MORE – ANOTHER LAYER IN WHICH TO LEARN FROM GOD THROUGH LISTENING, AWARENESS, AND BEING OBEDIENT TO OTHERS. IF YOU HAVE NOT REREAD THE PARTS OF THE RULE ON

OBEDIENCE FOR TONIGHT, DO IT. THIS TIME YOU ARE IN A DIFFERENT PLACE THAN WHEN YOU FIRST READ IT.

SHARE PAGES

MARJORIE

TWO POEMS WRITTEN AS MEDITATIONS ON OBEDIENCE FROM THE NEWSLETTER

AN ARTICLE WRITTEN BY AN OBLATE IN LONG TERM PRISON

ALL TO BE TAKEN HOME

NOW READ FEAR OR FREEDOM REFLECT ON QUESTIONS

WONDER IF THIS BRINGS TO MIND ANYTHING WE MIGHT ALSO INCORPORATE IN SOME OF OUR MEETINGS HER. IDEAS

LECTIO, CONTEMPLATIVE PRAYER - THINK ABOUT A BUDDY IN THIS GROUP. WE MEET EVERY TWO WEEKS IF WE ARE LUCKY. GOD SUPPORTS US DAILY – COULD WE SUPPORT EACH OTHER MORE FREQUENTLY IN SOME WAY ?