
Easter Meditation 2007

The Rev. Canon George M. Maxwell, Jr.
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It is necessary to obey God rather than humans. ”” Acts 5:29

Yes. Yes. We are to look to God for guidance, and not to humans.

We are to imitate the example of Christ, and not be led astray by our own rivalrous desire. But, how do we know? How will we know when it is really God's voice we hear?

I recently heard a wonderful answer to this question. One afternoon, a woman in Charlotte, NC, took her kids to hear an African boys' choir that had come to town. She wanted her children to have a cultural experience. The boys in the choir were all teenagers and they were all orphans. They came from an orphanage in Liberia, where they lived without running water.

As she listened to the harmony of their voices, she began to realize that she was also hearing the voice of God. She says she felt an impression on her heart, and she heard God telling her that two of those boys were hers.

She wanted those boys to have a home. She wanted them to be loved by parents who also loved each other. She wanted them to go to sleep at night without worrying about whether men with guns would break into their room, and steal their future.

So, she called her husband, and they prayed. They gathered their family together, and they prayed. They talked to their friends, and they prayed.

Then, they adopted the boys. All of the boys! The woman and her husband adopted two of them. Another couple adopted one of the boys, and his sister. Another couple (who already had four children of their own) adopted six of the boys. When all the forms had been filed, 14 families had adopted 31 children from the orphanage.

How did they know? How did they know that imitating Christ meant taking these boys into their homes? How did they know that the voice they heard was from God?

I suspect they didn't really know. At some point, they just had to do it. They heard a voice calling them to reach out to people that others had ignored. They saw a vision of a life that they could not have imagined by themselves. They felt a sense of joy that came from realizing that their lives belonged to others just as much as they belonged to themselves.

It's not easy””this practice of discernment. Praying helps. Listening to friends helps. But, in the end, we often just have to take a leap of faith.

The only thing I'm sure of is that God intends for our family albums to be a lot more interesting than we ever anticipated.

”The Rev. Canon George M. Maxwell Jr.

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