

ALL IN ALL

“When he has done this, then the Son himself will be made subject to him who put everything under him, so that God may be all in all.” (1 Cor 15:28)

- Originally God was “all in all”.
- With creation came rebellion.
- Ultimately, God will again be “all in all”.

Jesus, as you know, did not come to earth to do His own will, He came to do the will of the Father who sent Him (John 6:38). It is the plan of God to reconcile the world unto Himself by Jesus Christ. The fact that every knee will bow and every tongue confess that Jesus is Lord is only a means to an end. Ultimately, Jesus will surrender everything to God and the Sovereign of the Universe will again be “all in all”. Any deviation from this eternal plan is rebellion. Jesus, for example, could not turn stones into bread, leap from the Temple, or fall down and worship Satan, for to do so would have led Him to think of Himself more highly than he ought to think. It would have been a deviation from God’s eternal plan and purpose for His life.

The importance of this truth cannot be emphasized too strongly. Men and movements achieve significance only as they relate to the eternal purpose of God. Abraham, for example, became important because Jesus would someday be a part of his family. The sufferings of Joseph were important because God used them to save the family of Jesus (Gen. 45:5). The life of Esther became important for the same reason. She too was used by God to save the family of Jesus. It is the plan of God to bring all of heaven and earth under one head, even Christ (Eph. 1:10). Everything that contributes to this is good and everything that detracts from this is evil. When the whole universe is under the dominion of Christ He will surrender it all to God so that He may again be “all in all”.

The disciples of John the Baptist became concerned because everyone was following Jesus. John was happy to hear this and said: “A man can receive only what is given him from heaven” (John 3:27). It was the plan of God for Jesus to increase and John to decrease. How can true worshipers think otherwise?

The future of “our lives” and “our movement” needs to be seen in this context. Earthly kingdoms and human achievement will ultimately disappear like the chaff of the summer threshing floor. Christ will ultimately triumph over everyone and everything. Every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of the Father. We are laborers together with God achieving this grand purpose. If, and when, we cease to work for this noble goal we become enemies of the cross, and are destined for destruction. Paul considered such people as worshipping their own appetite, glorying in their own shame, and minding earthly things (Phil. 3:18, 19).

What is there about “death” that is so difficult to understand? We are commanded to take up our cross and die in order to follow Christ (Matt. 16:24, 25) The key to saving our life is losing it! We are buried with Him by baptism into death (Rom. 6:4). We are “dead and our life is hidden with Christ in God (Col. 3:3). How can people who are “crucified with Christ” think of a future apart from Him?

The famous martyr Jim Elliot pondered the words of the Psalmist “Zeal for your house will consume me” (Ps. 69:9, Jn. 2:17). These prophetic words, as you know, described the reckless abandon of Christ in cleansing the Temple. Jim then reflected on his own future and dared to pray “make me thy fuel O flame of God”. He was willing to die without complaint if only his death would glorify Christ. He did die, along with four other martyrs, in the jungles of Ecuador. Unquestionably, their deaths have brought glory to Christ. Can we pray that same prayer? Can we place our all on the altar if it means the exaltation of Christ?

Please prayerfully consider this great concern of Paul: **“But I am afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent’s cunning, your minds may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ.” (2 Cor 11:3)** May His zeal also consume us, that God may again be “all in all”.