

Covenant of Love

Group Outlines from Schoenstatt

Ready for a Covenant Life? # 17

Ready for a Covenant Life?

Practical Faith in Divine Providence is at the heart of our life in the Covenant of Love. Out of love, we seek to discover the paths of the Lord in our lives. We require courage and we need a lot of determination to give ourselves to God's Plan. Discovering God's Will and actually doing it always leads, one way or another, into the dark and the unknown. That's why practical faith in Divine Providence will always have a constant element of taking a risk. Making God's Will for us the "North star" of our entire lives involves a "leap in the dark" – and this "leap" is a leap that can only be realized in faith. It is never knowledge, it is faith.

Jesus stressed the reality of the unknown in doing God's Will often with his disciples. He spoke to them about courage and the need to take risks. Once he commented: *"You do not know what you are asking.. Are you prepared to drink the cup that I drink?" (Matthew 20:22f)* In other words, he is explaining to them that they don't yet know everything that their request involves. There is an element of darkness, even of insecurity. The "cup that I drink" will involve a great deal of courage and inner strength. The apostles immediately answer that they are willing to drink his cup; they are aware that following Jesus includes accepting the risk of not knowing the outcome.

Peter also is made aware of the "risk-character" of faith. Jesus says to him: *"Amen, amen, I say to you, when you were younger, you used to dress yourself and go where you wanted; but when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go."* (John 21:18). Practical faith in Divine Providence is always a mixture of light and darkness, of clarity and vagueness, of certainty and insecurity. The bottom line: *Practical Faith in Divine Providence is doing without human security and completely trusting in the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is totally wise, almighty and who will never give up loving us.*

Covenant life means asking every day: *"Father, what do you want from me today?"* God wants me to make the mission of Jesus, my personal mission. But each of us will achieve this in an individual way. We are all original members of the Body of Christ. How can we find then God's Will for us personally? We can ask three simple questions: *What is God saying to me through the present times? What is God saying to me in my soul? What is God saying to me through the way He made me?*

What is God saying to me through the present times? God talks to us and guides us through what is happening around us. Our experiences and the happenings and hurts of our lives all have a deeper meaning. We need to be able to tell the difference between the Holy Spirit of God active in the present times, and the "spirit of the times".

What is God saying to me in my soul? The Spirit of God whispers in our own souls. The "breath of the Spirit" is God's way of inspiring us. He leads us through our feelings and thoughts.

What is God saying to me through the way He made me? Our structure and personality, our temperament and talents – simply the way God made us – is a source of discovering God's Will. He made us in a certain way for a purpose.

The key thing is *to do* God's Will. Jesus says to us: *"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven."* (Matthew 7:21) Are you ready for the Covenant life?

Questions for Reflection

1. Take a look at the three questions in order to understand God's Will in our own lives. Could you include these in your daily prayer life?

If you wish to subscribe, comment on the text or give a testimony, write to: fr.duncan@schoenstatt.org.uk

Group Outline Text: Father Duncan McVicar, Schoenstatt Fathers, Kearsley, Bolton.