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"God plants and replants me in circumstances that need my presence just as I need them for my full growth in God." (Lissy Maruthanakuzhy)



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"Go" and "God." Only the difference of a letter "d" and yet the difference of a lifetime.

In this difficult period, we hear many people asking "where is our God?" It is a cry of desperation. The fact is that God is with us ever since he became "Emmanuel" through the surrender of a young woman (Luke 1:38).

God does everything for the good of his creatures. Our pride to become like "god" (Genesis 3:6) continues to reign over us, and we fail to recognize the gentle hand that guides us through new discoveries. God never stops us in our obsession with development. God leaves us free. Where does the freedom take us?

Is our choice always, right? Sometimes I wonder.

For example, I was quite sure of myself that every choice made and every new step I took in life was based on "allowing God's will to happen in my life." Was it so?

I realized the depth of "letting go and letting God" last January when my superior sent me a message about my new posting. I remained silent for some time until she reminded me. Then like a docile lamb I wrote, "I believe whatever you decide is for my good. It is fine with me" — though I reeled with anger inside. Suddenly I was reminded: "God's will." Well, God's will ought to satisfy me, but this has not evoked any joy within me, I reasoned.

Then came the next issue — the journey to my new destination. At her suggestion, I organized it with two stops (that included my annual holiday!) before arrival at the new destination. But she replied with a rearranged travel route that she considered good and practical. "God's will?" This time I sat in my room and literally spoke to God: "Is this your will? Let it be." And I replied positively to the superior. This time I had surrendered to God and felt relieved, happy and at peace, as if I had achieved something unattainable in life. Two days later came her reply — to my delight — with my originally proposed travel route. "God's will!"

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I realized that for me God's will resided between two emotions — deep down anger and resentment on one side and an inexplicable joy, peace and contentment on the

other.

Since then I have conversed with God through his representatives, and things go well, even though it first looks unpleasant. Inexplicable joy and inner freedom are the outcome of doing God's will.

A seed is planted or sown by the sower in a land which is deemed fit for him. After the planting, the plant is nurtured with water, manure and regular weeding of unwanted elements. The seed does not express its choice of mud or space. It decides to stay, grow and bloom where it is planted.

Likewise, God plants and replants me in circumstances that need my presence just as I need them for my full growth in God. Having placed me in a situation, he bestows his blessings that I need to grow with vigor, courage and joy against all odds. Sometimes obstacles come my way, and I have to seek a better path more appropriate for my life and mission. Obstacles indeed become stepping stones to a new area of my life.



"Trapeze artists soar so high, with such grace and dignity. A very dangerous performance indeed, requiring great courage and precision." (Pixabay/Wikimedia Images)

God has created me to live for him and for his people. So my joy comes in doing so, following his will moment by moment, day after day.

At the circus I have watched — with bated breath — trapeze artists flying through the air. They soar so high, with such grace and dignity. A very dangerous performance indeed, requiring great courage and precision. They allow themselves to let go, trusting that their leap is in the right moment and will reach the grip of their partner at the right time. There are two things taking place: They need to "let go" the comfort and security of the present, and they need to "trust" that they will land securely in safe hands. Indeed it is a leap in the dark.

Living with this kind of willingness to "let go" is one of the greatest challenges we all face in life. We hold onto many things: a person dear to us, our accumulated insignificant possessions, or our own fame. It's difficult to let go of them. We forget that it is in "letting go" that we receive in abundance. It requires courage. So much courage.

Those who place their trust in God and face challenges in life, set out on a road "less travelled by." They become real heroes in the world, touching people's lives with their confidence in God.

That is what our father Abraham did when God asked him to leave his family and go to a new land (Genesis 12:1), and when he was asked to sacrifice his only son Isaac (Genesis 22:2). This is what Mary, our Blessed Mother did (Luke 1:38). That is what St. Paul did (Acts 9:4). They let their past security go, for a future rich in God. They made constant choices to listen and obey God's will.



"The Lord will protect and guide us even at this moment of uncertainty, sending light on our path … light sufficient for one step at a time." (Lissy Maruthanakuzhy)

I have been listening to many people, in our present time, who have achieved success braving obstacles in life. Some of them were economically poor, others were handicapped or victims of rare illness, rejected by their family — yet they were able to reach their goal of becoming doctors, teachers, dancers or even entrepreneurs — because they believed in themselves. They believed that the creator who had brought them into being had a purpose for them.

Life brings us tough situations. That is the way God strengthens our talents and capacities. Only when I trust completely in God's plans can I surrender to him totally. When I trust God, I find a new meaning in my existence. Signs of new life begin to emerge. Trusting in God brings in peace and grace in my life.

When I experience comfort and security in my life, I also get the strength to let go. Only when I am able to let go of my security can I embrace another area of life which will be enriching and uplifting. A gut-level trust helps me believe that I will end up in a secure place.

As a 9-year-old I climbed the mobile bamboo ladder to the attic where my mother was doing some work. When she finished, she climbed down. Realizing I was left alone, I was terrified. I could not reach the step of the ladder. In desperation I called out to my mother, telling her I was afraid to look down — in trying to reach the ladder my eyes naturally went to the floor. She gave me an idea: On reaching the step keep your eyes on the top of the ladder. Do not look down until you reach half way. It worked. And I was on the floor in time to run to school.

Let us keep gazing at the Lord. He will protect and guide us even at this moment of uncertainty, sending light on our path … light sufficient for one step at a time.

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