

“I Do It Myself”

A favorite phrase of my 2 ½ year old granddaughter is, “I do it myself.” Miss Independent wants to grow up and be like her older sister. She doesn't want you doing things for her – she would rather do things herself. She is only willing to compromise when she has had a bad experience trying to do something. Here is an example of her independence: She will let you pour juice from a full pitcher into her cup, but only if she can at least hold the cup. If I both hold the cup and pour it for her she will refuse to drink it at all, sometimes dropping the “sippy cup” onto the floor. Recently she wanted to play with a large Fisher-Price cut-away doll house. Batteries power many of the features of the doll house, such as the miniature piano and fireplace, making it very authentic. It was breakfast time and Belle insisted on taking her cereal bowl over to the doll house. When I told her I was concerned that she might spill it she assured me that she would “hold it with both hands.” She set the bowl on the floor next to the doll house. OK so far. Minutes later I looked up to see that she had moved her full sized cereal bowl onto the little kitchen table of the doll house. The miniature table is smaller than the cereal bowl so I could see a potential disaster in the making. My fears became reality as the cereal bowl tipped over, spilling its contents onto the floor. “It spilled,” she confessed as I rushed for something to scoop up the mess on the floor. She will learn from the experience but, if she had listened, it could have been prevented in the first place.



I can relate to the goal of doing things myself. Perhaps you can, too. We think we have it all covered. “We can do this,” is our thought process. Meanwhile, we often don't allow God into some of the decisions of our life. As Belle did with her assurance of using two hands, we rationalize that we will be OK as we have planned for the possible problems. And, often like Belle, the bowl gets overturned and we make a mess of things.

During good times and bad God is willing to be by our side. We may call on Him during the tough times but often play Mr. Independent when we think things are running smoothly and under control. After all, who needs God during the good times? How quickly things can deteriorate when we go it alone. Belle willingly let me fill the cereal bowl with two of her favorite cereals and held it for me to add the milk. It was a happy time. But not more than three minutes later, disaster struck – a disaster that could have been avoided if she had listened to her grandfather's advice.

Are we open to God's advice? While God encourages us to “pray without ceasing”, we tend to pray only when we think we are in trouble. We don't foresee what is ahead and fail to ask what God wants us to do before we act. We ignore the opportunity to listen for God's direction and then we ask God to bless our choices. Our good intentions are often our own will instead of God's Will. *Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight (Proverbs 3:5-6).*

We can accomplish a great deal if we follow God's chosen path. With Him leading the way there is no limit to what we can do (see Philippians 4:13). He is our counselor, pointing the way for us. He can help us to grow and be more capable than if we are only relying on our own limited abilities. Belle is pleased with each new skill she has mastered in her journey to grow up. We can be happy with our growth if we and the Lord work together. If we continually ask God for guidance there won't be any spilled milk. Listen for God's direction. Let Thy Will be Done. We don't have to “do it ourselves.”

Question: Name a time when you asked God for direction and He carried you through what would have been a difficult time.

The Bible Says: *The LORD makes firm the steps of the one who delights in him; though he may stumble, he will not fall, for the LORD upholds him with his hand (Psalm 37:23).*

Prayer: Dear Lord. At times we think we know the best way to do things. We pray that at all times we will ask You for direction. Amen.