

Michaelangelo's Workshop

August 10, 2014

Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, **but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us** with groanings which cannot be uttered.

Romans 8:26

The Intercession of Christ

It is Christ . . . who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes **intercession** for us.

Romans 8:34

Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make **intercession** for them.

Hebrews 7:25

Entygchanō - En-tün-khä'-nō

to pray, to entreat, to make intercession for another

Hyperentygchanō - Hü-per-en-tün-khä'-nō

The shadowing, super-intending, paternal intercession of a stronger party for a weaker party

Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes **Hyperentygchanō** for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

Romans 8:26

The Hyper Work of the Spirit

on behalf of, for the sake of, over, beyond, more than, more, beyond, over - one who does a thing for another, is conceived of as standing or bending “over” the one whom he would shield or defend - to be for one, to be on one’s side, to favor and further one’s cause

The Shadow of the Superintending Father

He that dwells in the secret place of the most High shall abide **under the shadow of the Almighty**. I will say of the LORD, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust.

Psalm 91:1-2

Bending the Bow of Steel

Suppose it to be a time of war centuries back. Old English warfare was then conducted by bowmen to a great extent. Here is a youth who is to be initiated in the art of archery, and therefore he carries a bow. It is a strong bow, and therefore very hard to draw; indeed, it requires more strength than the urchin can summon to bend it. See how his father teaches him. "Put your right hand here, my boy, and place your left hand so. Now pull"; and as the youth pulls, his father's hands are on his hands, and the bow is drawn. The lad draws the bow: ay, but it is quite as much his father, too. We cannot draw the bow of prayer alone. Sometimes a bow of steel is not

broken by our hands, for we cannot even bend it; and then the Holy Ghost puts his mighty hand over ours, and covers our weakness so that we draw; and lo, what splendid drawing of the bow it is them! The bow bends so easily we wonder how it is; away flies the arrow, and it pierces the very centre of the target, for he who giveth has won the day, but it was his secret might that made us strong, and to him be the glory of it.

Charles Spurgeon

Sermon #1532

The Impossible Commission

Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.

Matthew 5:48

You, and Your Humble Workshop in Florence, Italy

- The Massive Block of Imperfect Marble
- The Young Sculptor
- The Commission



A Tour of Your Workshop

- The 20 foot “Giant” is set up in the midst of the workshop.
- Two different master artisans before you have failed to transform this slab of marble; it remains the “Giant” - haunting the Florentine government, mocking it for nearly 100 years with its size and its daunting imperfections.
- Now it is your turn. The sculptor that knows nothing of the craft of sculpting is commissioned to do the greatest work ever in the history of the world.

A Masterpiece is Required

Do you have the ability in your own pockets?

Introducing The Master Artisan

Paraklētōs - Pah-rah-clay-toss - the advocate, the intercessor, the rescuer, the helper, the counselor, the comfort-bringer . . . The Holy Spirit

And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that **He may abide with you forever**-- the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for **He dwells with you and will be in you**. I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you . . . These things I have spoken to you while being present with you. But the *Paraklētōs*, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, **He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you** . . . But when the *Paraklētōs* is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceeds from the Father, **He shall testify of me** . . . Nevertheless I

tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the *Paraklētōs* will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you. And when He is come, **He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:** Of sin, because they believe not on me; Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged. I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, **He will guide you into all truth: for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak: and He will show you things to come. He shall glorify Me: for He shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you.** All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that **He shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you.**

John 14:16-18, 26; 15:26; 16:7-15

The Holy Spirit

The Paraklētōs that Hyperentygchanōs

The Master Artisan that Holds my Hands to Direct the Hammer and the Chisel

The Confession of the Young Sculptor

- I don't know what I'm doing
- I don't know a thing about sculpting
- I don't even know what I'm trying to sculpt

The Promise of the Master Artisan

- I know what I'm doing
- I know everything about sculpting
- I know precisely what it is you need to sculpt
- I will be a very present help in your time of need
- When you don't know what to do, know that I will hold the chisel, and I will direct you with the delicacy and the exactitude of a master artisan, in order that you may sculpt as you must, and in order that the world may see the glory and perfection of the Son of David in and through this block of imperfect marble

Becoming Michaelangelo's Workshop

Entrusting the Imperfect Slab and the Impossible Commission to Someone Greater

Michael - Who is Like God?

Angelo - the one who serves, bears witness, carries the message

Michaelangelo - The One Who Bears Witness To What God is Like and Serves to See that the Imperfect Slab of Marble Reveals the Perfect Image

The Letter to Michaelangelo

Dear Michaelangelo,

I know you are a busy man. But I wondered if you might be interested in taking charge of a project that is currently sitting in my workshop. It's a 20 foot tall slab of marble. Somehow out of this slab (which is marred by the faulty attempts of two different prior artisans giving it a go) I have been commissioned by the Heavenly government to sculpt the image of

the Son of David (a.k.a. - Jesus Christ). Word on the street is you are the only artist in the world capable of such a feat. I am ready to give you the deed to my workshop. I am ready to give you all my tools, from my head to my toes. I am ready to become your servant and be at your beck and call. But please consider this. I am quite desperate.

I await your reply,
The Struggling Artist

The Answer from Michaelangelo

Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you . . .

John 15:16

Dear Struggling Artist,

I write this to you long before you will read it, and long before you will even realize your need of my help. I've taped this note to the slab of marble before you were born and this day I have seen fit to direct your attention to it. For you are now ready to allow me to take the helm. I desire you to know that I am inclined to your benefit, and have always been postured as your advocate, and have positioned myself (long before you ever asked for my assistance) to say "yes" to assisting you in fulfilling your impossible commission. Even as you were writing your letter to me, I was entering your workshop and consecrating your tools for my use. I am here now. I accept the deed to your workshop on behalf of Jesus Christ, the rightful possessor of this establishment. And I accept the offering of your tools, your body, and your life. For I will certainly use them. And I am here to do nothing more than point you to a clear picture of Him. Out of this imperfect slab, I promise to reveal His Glory. So, take up the hammer and the chisel and let's go to work and together sculpt a Masterpiece.

Your Heavenly Helper,
Michaelangelo

The Conundrum

I Must Sculpt, But I Don't Know How to Sculpt

I Must Pray, But I Don't Know How to Pray

For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now. Not only that, but we also who have the first fruits of the Spirit, **even we ourselves groan within ourselves**, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body. For we were saved in this hope, but hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one still hope for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for it with perseverance. Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. **For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.** Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God. And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.

Romans 8:22-28

The Groaning of the Saint

The Plea of Soul. The Unutterable Grief of the Inner Man. The Wordless Cry. The Sighing Prayer.

The Groaning of the Apprentice

The Desperate Swing of the Hammer upon the Marble - the agony of the young sculptor to see evidence of Christ out of this imperfect marble slab

The Master Artistry of the Holy Spirit

The Chisel of Spirit-Governed Prayer

The Holy Spirit Directs our Chisel

Moses prayed that he might enter the land of Canaan, but God denied him, and instead led him to Mount Pisgah.

The man set free by Jesus requested to go with Jesus, but Jesus did not permit him, but said to him, “Go home to your friends, and tell them what great things the Lord has done for you.”

Paul intended to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit did not permit it, and instead he heard in a dream the cries of the man from Macedonia saying, “Come over and help us.”

And, of course, Jesus in the Garden physically yearned to have this cup pass, but He submitted to the will of the Spirit, leading Him to the Cross.

The Holy Spirit Reveals to us the Outline, the Shape, The Features, and the Loveliness of the Son of David

And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper . . . the *Paraklētos*, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you . . . He shall testify of me . . . He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment . . . He will guide you into all truth: for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall

He speak: and He will show you things to come. He shall glorify Me: for He shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you . . . He shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you.

John 14:16-18, 26; 15:26; 16:7-15

The Holy Spirit Shows us How we ought to Chisel, and with how much force we ought to Swing our Hammer - He leads us with perfect exactitude, with precision and beautiful artistry.

the *Paraklētos*, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name,
He will teach you all things . . .

John 14:26

The Holy Spirit leads us to the workshop, and even when our eyes are clouded with tears, our hands are weakened with trembling, and our vision for the finished work is marred - He leads us to swing with “groaning” hammer blows, sighs of the soul upon the marble - and He takes these most precious moments of weakness to reveal the most beautiful attributes of our David’s Glory. It’s in and through our weakness that He reveals most powerfully His sovereign artistry.

Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us **with groanings which cannot be uttered.**

Romans 8:26

That which is thrown up from the depth of the soul, when it is stirred with a terrible tempest, is more precious than pearl or coral, for it is the intercession of the Holy Spirit.

Charles Spurgeon

Sermon #1532

What is the Holy Spirit Doing?

- He's Forming the Divine Nature Within
- He's Conforming us into the Image of Jesus
- And, He's Revealing the Manifold Wisdom of God unto all the Heavenly Realms in and through our lives

Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

2 Peter 1:4

But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

2 Corinthians 3:18

Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power. Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God . . .

Ephesians 3:7-10

Seeing the Giant Turned into the Man of Triumph

- He Always Leads us in Triumph
- He Always Reveals Jesus through the Marred Marble
- He Takes All the Shrapnel and Rock dings and turns them into the intricate loveliness of Jesus Christ
- He Turns our Life of Sin into a Picture of His Grace and Glory

Three Options of the Chiseling Saint

Two of the Three Options Stink

1. Don't swing the hammer lest you mar the marble
2. Swing the hammer softly and delicately, so that if you are incorrect in your chisel position, the damage will be limited
3. Swing the hammer and trust that He will direct the chisel, and take our groaning swings and work in and through them a picture of glory and majesty

The Strong but Submitted Swing of the Hammer

God, I trust that as I swing imperfectly, you will direct the chisel perfectly

- I may think you are doing the cheekbones, but if you are carving the earlobe out of my swing, then I say, "Amen!"
- I may groan for the chin to finally be revealed, but if you are still crafting the neck in and through my sighing strokes, I will declare, "Not my will, but Thine!" This one thing I know,

when Your Almighty Hand rests upon the chisel, my swinging will always bring about your Glory. Therefore, I will swing, though it be imperfectly, I will swing. And You, oh Master Intercessor, You are the One who is building this Image of the Dear Son out of this imperfect slab of marble.

The Burden

The Prayer of the Spirit

- Sickness
- Lostness
- Need of any kind

For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but . . .

Romans 8:26

We May Not Know What to Pray, But We Know to Pray

a.k.a. - we may not know what God is carving, but we know we must swing the hammer

So, How Should We Swing that Hammer?

With all our might!

The Lesson of Joash

Now Elisha was fallen sick of his sickness whereof he died. And Joash the king of Israel came down unto him, and wept over his face, and said, O my father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof. And

Elisha said unto him, Take bow and arrows. And he took unto him bow and arrows. And he said to the king of Israel, Put thine hand upon the bow. And he put his hand upon it: and Elisha put his hands upon the king's hands. And he said, Open the window eastward. And he opened it. Then Elisha said, Shoot. And he shot. And he said, The arrow of the LORD'S deliverance, and the arrow of deliverance from Syria: for thou shalt smite the Syrians in Aphek, till thou have consumed them. And he said, Take the arrows. And he took them. And he said unto the king of Israel, Smite upon the ground. And he smote three times, and stayed. And the man of God was wroth with him, and said, Thou shouldest have smitten five or six times; then hadst thou smitten Syria till thou hadst consumed it: whereas now thou shalt smite Syria but three times. And Elisha died, and they buried him.

2 Kings 13:14-23

Take the Arrows and Strike the Ground

a.k.a. - Take the Hammer and Strike the Chisel

When asked to swing the hammer, don't swing it weakly, don't swing it hesitantly, but swing it decidedly, and swing it until the burden to swing is relieved, and the Master Artisan says, "That is enough, dear apprentice!"

For His Maximum Glory

Submitted to the Greater Answer in Every Situation

Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above **all that we ask** or think, according to the power that worketh in us . . .

Ephesians 3:20