

The word of the LORD came to me thus: Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I dedicated you, a prophet to the nations I appointed you. "Ah, Lord GOD!" I said, "I know not how to speak; I am too young." But the LORD answered me, Say not, "I am too young." To whomever I send you, you shall go; whatever I command you, you shall speak. Have no fear before them, because I am with you to deliver you, says the LORD. ...For it is I this day who have made you a fortified city, A pillar of iron, a wall of brass.

Jeremiah 1:4-8, 18

Whoever has ears ought to hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the victor I shall give some of the hidden manna; I shall also give a white amulet upon which is inscribed a new name, which no one knows except the one who receives it.

Revelation 2:17

The victor I will make into a pillar in the temple of my God, and he will never leave it again. On him I will inscribe the name of my God and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from my God, as well as my new name.

Revelation 3:12

No gift is more precious than respect for the inner dimension of man, no favor can compensate for its disregard. It is in those secret depths that silent dialogue gives life to the word, and makes a real presence flow through human relationships.... The sense of incomparable authority that emanated from the Person of Jesus was undoubtedly based on the unique power he had to touch his listeners at the very root of their being, eliciting from them a new vision of themselves.

Father Maurice Zundel,

The Inner Person, Finding God Within. © 1996, Editions Mediaspaul, Sherbrooke, QC.

The Personal Ideal has three perspectives

1. The Philosophical Explanation

The personal ideal is the idea which exists in the eternal plans of God; for everything that has being in this world – and not only physical tangible being – was thought by God before it came into existence. It is the original idea of every person, already thought by the Divine Creator Spirit from all eternity, which is the original and decisive norm for his or her being and action. God created every person with precisely the talents, abilities and limitations of my being and my person. Become who you are.

2. The Theological Explanation

God has through of each of us in connection with Christ. We are unique members of the Mystical Body of Christ. Therefore, our personal ideal is the imitation of Christ according our given individuality, the original Christ-like realization of my life. It is the task of the baptized to imitate Christ as perfectly as possible within themselves, distinct from each other. Think of the saints who all imitate Christ but each with a special emphasis and mission.

3. The Psychological Explanation

Looked at from the life of the soul of a person, the personal ideal is “the God-willed fundamental tenor of the soul in the state of grace which, when faithfully maintained, gradually becomes the fundamental attitude of the souls and has no rest until its organic development reaches the heights of the perfect freedom of the children of God.” *Father Joseph Kentenich 1966*

Why in the state of grace? A person without grace lacks the fullness of personhood. According to the idea of God, the human person needs grace. It is not enough for us to see ourselves only as a natural individual. Whoever denies the supernatural world, whoever therefore interiorly disconnects the supernatural from his life, disconnects himself and the whole of human society from true life.

The fundamental temper of the soul is the atmosphere of the soul in which I live, the individuality of my soul, my mentality, my unique way of living. This fundamental determination of the spirit, this person ideal is precisely what allows all the individual actions of human life to revolve around a central value, a central through and a central attitude. In human life it is that which makes someone great, a person who stands out.

The fundamental tenor is what uniquely motivates me in a way all my own, - in my mind, will, emotions, drives (what urges me on), actions and thinking. The most basic inclination at the root of all our striving and actions is therefore called the personal ideal.

Finding the Personal Ideal

1. The objective way

Ask yourself: what kind of a person can I, should I, and do I want to be? What kind of a man or woman? What is my ideal image of a Catholic? What is the ideal image of a person in my profession?

2. The subjective way

What is my image of God?

What is my favorite Bible story?

What is my favorite short prayer?

What is my favorite activity?

What is my favorite motto?

What is my main passion (personal self-giving or achievement)

What is my favorite title of Jesus or Mary?

Who is my hero or favorite saint?

What are my talents?

What qualities do I admire?

What do I need from God to be completed as a person?

-Excerpts from *My Covenant Way Workbook*