Enclosed is Elder Enrique Alleyne’s message to the Iglesia Bautista Batesda.

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“God Thinks Differently”

1 Corinthians 1:27-29

27: Instead, God chose things the world considers foolish in order to shame those who think they are wise. And he chose things that are powerless to shame those who are powerful.

28: God chose things despised by the world; things counted as nothing at all, and used them to bring to not hing what the world considers important.

29: As a result, no one can ever boast in the presence of God.

Before the concert began, the internationally renowned violinist announced to the concert hall that on that night he had the privilege of playing one of the most prestigious and expensive violins in the world.

The first piece he played flawlessly, and the audience was absolutely thrilled.

After acknowledging the applause and standing ovation, he broke the violin leaving it in pieces.

The members of the audience were horrified.

After pushing the pieces aside, the violinist explained that the violin he had just played was an ordinary violin that he had just bought that morning.

Picking up the prestigious violin, he passed the bow over the strings.

The sound was beautiful, but people could not distinguish between the music of the famous violin and the ordinary one. The quality of the instrument compared to the skill of the violinist was unimportant.

This is the way our life is with God. The Grand Master can take ordinary instruments like us and produce beautiful music. The results of our service depend not so much on us as it is on Him.

The apostle Paul said that God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise. (See 1 Corinthians 1:27.) God did it so that no one can boast in his presence. (See v.29.)

Our God is a God of those who are physically strong and mentally strong.

But he is also the God of those who are physically weak and mentally weak.

I know we like to compare what we have with what others have. Judge if our situation is better than the neighbor and decide if we are more blessed than the brother or sister next to us.

Maybe and maybe not. Each of us has advantages in certain areas and disadvantages in others.

Each one of us is blessed according to the will of God.

I have had many people who have felt pity and even sadness because of my blindness. I have been accused of having a lack of faith, because of course, if I had the faith, God would have healed me.

When I was young, on one of those occasions, an internationally known evangelist came to my brother's church. He invited the people to come forward for prayer and receive healing. I was one of those who went forward. He slapped his hand on my forehead. Squeezing and pushing. I almost fell. I struggled to stay on my feet and he is praying, "ARREBARRARRARA ARREBARRRERRARA! Finally he passes to the next person".

When he finished praying, he comes back and asks me. "What is your illness?" I said, "My eyes, I'm going blind." His response was, "You do not have faith, if you had it, and you would have taken off your glasses."

He turned his back on me and returned to the pulpit. And all that time with the microphone on.

Almost fifteen years passed before I went back to a church. And it was not so long after I started going to church that a preacher tells a story of a pastor of a church in North Carolina.

He said that the pastor had a son whom he adored. At around 8 years old, the child was in a car accident. The doctors said he was not going to survive. The pastor prayed to God asking to allow his son to live. He reminded God that he promised to give his faithful what they asked of him. Pressing, demanding, the pastor insisted that God fulfill his promise. God healed the child.

The boy grew up, and became a known hit man for organized crime groups.

Because we do not have the wisdom of God, we never know the long-term result of our petition to God.

You know what Jesus prayed in his moment of great despair the night they came to arrest him? The day before he was crucified? He prayed, "Father, if you are willing, please take this cup of suffering away from me. Yet I want your will to be done, not mine." (Luke 22:42.)

Even in his despair, Jesus deferred to God's will.

Recognizing the power and position of God, we cannot manipulate and presume to demand from God and try to force him to do something. The preacher told God, "You promised that if we ask you, you will give it to us." The end. He did not allow the possibility that the situation could be part of God's plan.

In his teachings, Jesus told us that things happen for the glory of the Lord. Good or bad, for the glory of the Lord.

I remember once I was talking to a couple-well, they were not a couple-they were a man and a woman. They commented on how well I was doing despite being blind. When I was going to leave, I said I had to go to work, they asked me what kind of work I did. I explained to them and the girl became depressed. She said something like, "See, how he has a better job than me and he is blind."

We have certain ideas of how things are to be and how they are not to be. For this girl, a blind man does not have to have a good job or a good life. Or at least, not better than her.

The values of this world tell us that if you have a disability, you should not have the same opportunities. The values of this world tell us that if you were born with this skin color or ethnicity, you should not have the opportunity to achieve this or that. That if you were born a male or a female, this is what you can do, but this other thing will be denied.

The prejudices imposed on us by the values of the world, those notions with which we define our life and the society in which we live, are not values of God, but human values. The truth is that human values are full of selfishness and arrogance. Any decision based on these values can easily be corrupt if they do not align with God's values.

Yes, it is true that we live in a fallen world. And therefore, without exception, each one of us bears the stain of sin. And with that stain, our life cannot be perfect. One way or another, we have, we had, and we will have disabilities.

You have diabetes, you have a disability. To see clearly you have to wear glasses, you have a disability. You have back pain, you have a disability. Heart problems, arthritis, depression, you have a disability.

Weaknesses acquired from the womb or during life, are a normal part of the world and part of God's plan.

The Bible tells us that every man and woman, every human being is a special creation of God. A unique work from the womb with a unique destiny to render glory to God. "You made all the delicate, inner parts of my body and knit me together in my mother's womb. Thank you for making me so wonderfully complex! Your workmanship is marvelous-how well I know it. ... You saw me before I was born. Every day of my life was recorded in your book. Every moment was laid out before a single day had passed." (Psalms 139:13, 14, 16).

Many ask why God allows so many to be born with disabilities or suffer an accident that leaves them disabled. It is natural to ask the question. "What did he do to deserve that?" "Why me? "

There is an old Arab adage, "If you see a beggar, kick him. If Ala is not good to him, why should you?" That is, to whom God punishes, do the same.

There is nothing biblical about that. I imagine there are similar sayings in many cultures. But those teachings and those attitudes come from non-godly human values. The thoughts of God are different from the thoughts of man. It is not the situation that decides what you deserve, that defines your relationship with God, but your reaction. Your response to the situation is what will bring you the blessing and glory of God.

In Second Corinthians, the Apostle Paul tells us of a thorn in his body.

A weakness, a disability that brought discomfort and limitations in his life. He says, "Three different times I begged the Lord to take it away.

Each time he said, "My grace is all you need. My power works best in weakness." So now I am glad to boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ can work through me." (2 Corinthians 12:8-9).

This world tells us that we have bad fortune if we have disabilities that limit us in what we can do. I am here today to tell you not to be defeated by those non-godly ideas. Like Paul, it is for the glory of God. The way you respond will be the way he will bless you.

When God told Moses to go to Egypt to convince Pharaoh to let Israel go, Moses refused because of his limitations.

'But Moses pleaded with the Lord, "O Lord, I'm not very good with words.

I never have been, and I'm not now, even though you have spoken to me. I get tongue-tied, and my words get tangled." Then the Lord asked Moses, "Who makes a person's mouth? Who decides whether people speak or do not speak, hear or do not hear, see or do not see? Is it not I, the Lord?

Now go! I will be with you as you speak, and I will instruct you in what to say."' (Exodus 4:10-12).

Listen, God does not send the one who is prepared, but prepares the one who he sends. It does not matter the limitation or disability because he prepares the one.

Perhaps you are bothered by your limitations, but know that God never abandons you. Like Moses, if you allow God to help you, He will give you strength, He will give you the means, and He will give you the victory.

The only thing you have to do is accept that he is the owner of your destiny, and live attached to the godly values.

Jesus told us, "...Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows.

But take heart, because I have overcome the world." (John 16:33).

The values of man are not what will deliver you. Human values are what bind you to this world. And they keep you bound to sin. Discard those values that are not of God. Those attitudes that make you feel good, as part of the group. Comfortable in ignorance. Reject them! Dare to step away from what you are accustom to. And without reserve follow the wisdom of God. Reject the world. Live with God's values. Dare live with a godly attitude!

Extend the respect and exemplary dignity of God. Enjoy that relationship with God and celebrate love, support, and respect and value the brotherhood of God with one another.

Like the cheap violin, we can be instruments in the Master's hands to declare the beauty of the Lord and to bless others. But when we live with human prejudice, we deny God the opportunity to show us the beauty of his work around us, in us, and in others.