



*<sup>16</sup> Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein. (Jer 6:16)*

*<sup>21</sup> And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word. (1 Kings 18:21 (KJV))*

*<sup>13</sup> Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: <sup>14</sup> Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it. (Matt 7:13-14)*

A good and wonderful friend recently posted to me a quote from Mr. Christopher Morley who, presumably, lived life “his own way:” *“There is only one success - to be able to spend your life in your own way.”* Though, at first glance, the quote seems witty, I believe Mr. Morley makes a serious mistake in leaving out the most important success of life – finding favor with the Lord. The ways of man are not God’s ways, and God’s ways are not ours. The only true success in life is to live life in the way of God and not of our own choosing. Of course, if we have taken the will and Mind of Christ upon us, we will enjoy the only freedom that counts since all that we desire for ourselves will be what the Lord desires. *“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD.”* (Isaiah 55:8)

There remains only the choice to live life MY WAY as did Adam, Cain, Lot, Pharaoh, King Saul, Judas, and a host of others; or to live life according to the WAY of God since there are only two WAYS – that of lowly man, and that of the Lord God Almighty. The will and way of man cannot gain the favor of God – only by accepting the will of God in place of our own can we please Him. We surrender our ‘free’ wills that are in bondage to the Prince of this World to the Will of the King of Kings instead.

Please observe the following select lines of a most proud and irreverent song recorded by Frank Sinatra (a popular American vocalist) not long before his departure

from this life:

### I Did It My Way

And now, the end is near;  
And so I face the final curtain.  
My friend, I'll say it clear,  
I'll state my case, of which I'm certain.  
I've lived a life that's full.  
I've traveled each and every highway;  
And more, much more than this,  
I did it my way.

Note the self-pride and rebellion in the words of Sinatra. He is approaching the last curtain of his life, yet, he irreverently boasts of doing all in his life "His Way!" He claims to have lived a full life, and that without the Lord. Even the life that he did live was given him by God; but he fails, even in his last days, to acknowledge that. He did not travel the Narrow Way mentioned by our Lord, but a diversity of roads (all of which lead down the Broad Way – a term with which he was quite familiar) to Hell.

Throughout this song, Sinatra asserts over and over again that he "did it my way." Too late, but now Sinatra knows better. Too late to renounce HIS WAY and to do it God's Way. Too late to live the back roads and byways of life for the Narrow Way....for, you see, the final curtain of which Sinatra sang has fallen. The act is over, and the drama of the eternal night begins for this wretched soul.

No, I believe Mr. Morley, a secular playwright, poet and essayist left much out of his quote. I rather agree with another poet, author, and clergyman named George MacDonald: *"The one principle of Hell is – 'I am my own!'"* Even if we have "done it our way" we are not our own – we belong to God, but God will not accept those who do it their way in His Heaven; for you see, all of our best works and ways are as filthy rags before the Lord. *But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.* (Isaiah 64:6)

It is interesting to note that Mr. Morley has many things in common with George Mac Donald. Both were poets. Both were notable writers. Both were well respected in their fields. But while Morley produced Broad Way plays and wrote novels, MacDonald preached and wrote of the Gospel. He was a great writer of children's fantasies which had biblical intimations. CS Lewis called MacDonald his Master. He was highly favored, too, by such literary giants as Mark Twain, G.K. Chesterton (who claims the reading of *The Princess and the Goblin* by MacDonald changed his life), and the great devotional writer, Oswald Chambers. Sadly, I could not find any such admirable comments about Morley by contemporaries. He doesn't seem to have "changed anyone's life" as MacDonald did.

If we are fixed on doing things our way, we are traveling apart from God. Our way is a way of continual death. We are unable to help ourselves, and even our lives are sustained, moment by moment, by the Mercy and Grace of God. He may allow us many days to awaken to His love and leading, but one day, just as in the life of Sinatra, the final curtain falls. We are then left without hope or the Mercy that we so oft rejected while given the living opportunity. Another one of my favorite writers, and also a playwright from southern California, is William Saroyan. He wrote wonderfully touching accounts of the Armenian immigrants who came to California and planted vineyards there. He seems to have been an agnostic (whatever that is), and passed a note to Walter Cronkite of CBS News just prior to his passing in 1981. Cronkite was not to open the note until Saroyan's death. Well, as it always does for each of us, death came to William Saroyan on the morning of 18 May 1981. In accordance to Saroyan's

orders, Cronkite read the note on the evening news of 18<sup>th</sup> May. The note read as follows: *"I have always known that we all have to die at some point in time, but I felt in my case that there might be an exception. Now what?"* Well, it is true that there are no exceptions, and the big question for Saroyan, Morley and all others is "NOW WHAT?"

I realize that I run the risk of offending my good and precious friend in writing a Gospel rebuttal to her quote of Mr. Morley, but I also run the risk of opening her eyes to what God has said regarding the matter – and that is worth the risk if anything is. If my friend can see through the modern glitter of mere words and look through the veiled curtain of God's Word to the brilliance and gleam of god's Truth, my objective shall have been achieved – or I should say, the will of the Lord is accomplished through my unworthy and inept hands.

Via Con Dios