Written by Chiara Lubich
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“Do not conform yourself to this age but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and pleasing and perfect.”
(Rm 12:2)

This word of life is found in the second part of Saint Paul’s letter to the Romans. The apostle is describing the actions of a Christian as the expression of the new life — real love, real joy and real freedom — that God has given to us. It is Christian life understood as a new way of facing the various situations and problems encountered in everyday life with the light and the strength of the Holy Spirit.In this verse, which is closely connected to the preceding one, the apostle describes the goal and underlying attitude that should characterize our behavior, that is, to make of our lives a song of praise to God, an act of love carried out across time in the constant quest of his will, of what is most pleasing to him.

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It is clear, of course, that in order to carry out the will of God we need to know it. Saint Paul infers, however, that is not always easy. It is not possible to fully grasp the will of God without a special insight to help us discern what God wants from us and avoid the illusions and errors that we could easily fall into.This particular gift of the Holy Spirit is called “discernment.” It is indispensable to us if we want to acquire an authentic Christian mentality.

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How can we acquire and allow this important gift to mature in us? Undoubtedly we need to know the tenets of our faith well. But that is not enough. Saint Paul affirms that it is above all a matter of living in a certain way, that is, it is a question of generosity, of determination in living the Scriptures, because it implies setting aside one’s fears, uncertainties and mediocrity. It is a question of availability and readiness to carry out the will of God. This is the way to acquire the light of the Holy Spirit and achieve the new mentality asked of us here.

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How then can we live this month’s word of life? By trying to merit that light that is so necessary for carrying out the will of God well.Let us resolve, then, to know his will as it is expressed in his Word, in the teachings of the Church, in the duties required by our state of life and so on.Let us remember, however, the great importance of living our faith. As we have just seen, true light comes from living as we should and from loving. Jesus manifests himself to those who love him by putting his commandments into practice (cf Jn 14:21).We will then be able to do the will of God and, by doing so, offer him the most beautiful gift we can. It will be pleasing to him not only because of the love that it expresses, but also because it will spread around us much light and a spirit of Christian renewal.

Chiara Lubich

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Read more on this topic:

- Chiara Lubich, Rays , New City Press, 2011. newcitypress.com

- “Key Points of the Spirituality of Unity,” in Chiara Lubich, A New Way , New City Press, 2006

- Audio CD, Rays , Luminosa Audiovisual Center, livingcitymagazine.com/store

Next month’s Word:

“Watch and pray that you may not undergo the test. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.” (Mt 26:41)