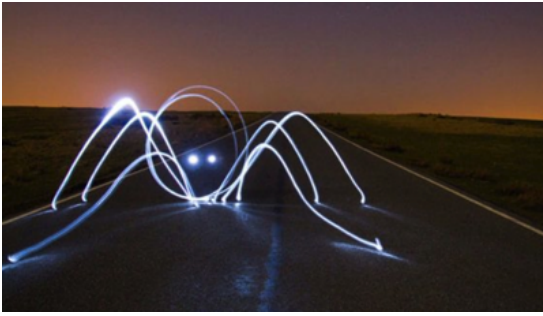


Your Worst Enemy



November 23, 2015

The Lord's wisdom and blessing is with us, Heartdwellers.

It's interesting. As I entered into worship today, I spent a long time in worship and just was not connecting with the Lord. I know you guys can relate to that - it can be so frustrating.

So, when I finally knew it was time to stop and listen for the message, even though I didn't feel that special anointing, I just stopped anyway and listened, and sure enough - He was there. As He taught us in yesterday's teaching, He said "Just expect Me to be there, because I'm there. It doesn't depend on whether you've been good or bad, I'm still there."

"So, here I am Lord, it's been really hard without being able to feel you deeply. You know I cannot live without you from day to day. I know You are here, I've seen and felt You, and I know by faith. But nothing, nothing in this world can replace Your embrace and the infilling of Your Spirit in my heart each morning."

"Can you accept and receive by faith, that although you don't feel it, I am nonetheless infusing you with Myself?"

"With your help, I can...but still, it is hard, Lord."

Then I had a thought, when He mentioned "infusing with Himself." I thought, 'You know - I should receive Communion,' because that's one time when I really feel that infusion of grace.

I had meant to receive communion hours ago during worship and prayer, but kept forgetting. So, I did receive communion, and spent some time thanking Him for His graces - and He was right there, His chin on my forehead. He was holding me to His heart, and He drew away and He began, "*You see, you've been thinking about everyone else but Me this morning...your mind has drifted to umpteen different places.*"

Lord, I can't control my mind - it's like a runaway car with no brakes, careening down the mountainside with no way to stop! Even with the binding prayer.

"My love, the more you isolate yourself from the concerns of the world, the less your brain will have opportunity to call up images, memories, and the like. Little desires, like little foxes can also impede your concentration. The less you have to do with the world, the clearer your mind, Clare."

"It is true, Lord."

I've had to find winter boots and a lightweight coat for the mornings here, which are so cold when I go into prayer. That put me shopping on the net for the appropriate item. Which is always dangerous,

because when I get a certain idea in my head, I look until I find it. Avarice, the Black Panther who stalks me makes his presence known. For those of you who are new on our channel, I came from a very artistic, acquisitive and materialistic environment. I was constantly courting beautiful things, to the point where the Lord was on the perimeter of my life, not in the center.

The best thing that ever happened to me was when we sold everything and went to live in a cabin in the Pocono Mountains in Pennsylvania. I was never freer, happier or closer to the Lord in my life. That experience set a precedent that helped me overcome this panther. But he's still alive in my flesh and makes his presence known when I begin to do foolish things for me, like shop. Other souls could do it and lay it down, but not me.

Tracing back to the source of that panther, I had a dream when I first became a Christian. I was swimming in the lake at our summerhouse and all of a sudden a large, muscular black panther came swimming towards me and tried to drown me. I fought him with all my might. He would go under and I would think, "He's dead." Then he would come up and pull me under and I would think, "I'm going to die." Back and forth, back and forth. The dream ended before I could tell who won. I thought I had made an end to him before I awoke, but could I really be sure?

I didn't know what the dream was about at that time - I really had no clue. Then it was revealed to me: a demon of Avarice was assigned to lure me away from the Lord. And it did, for many years until the Poconos. But it's still lurking in the shadows.

Can any of you relate? Do you have a black panther? Maybe it's popularity, power, money, drugs, alcohol, sex, or food? Whatever it is, it pulls you away from Jesus with desires that are fruitless in eternity and could easily lead to damnation.

But the thoughts I was barraged with were not so much about shopping, they were more about past failures in my life, foolish mistakes I made that hurt others. Well, we all know who accuses the brethren day and night.

Several times in the past few minutes I keep seeing a man who is rather stocky with a broad forehead and very intense eyes who appears to be opposing me, sitting squarely opposite me and trying to scramble my thoughts by getting my mind on other things.

"Lord is that real... or imagined?"

"It's imagined, but a good representation of your fleshly nature, an opponent intent on getting his own way. Yes, it is an embodiment of your flesh. It's stature is stubborn, bullish, squat and firmly planted in opposition to your spirit which is like an innocent little child. This is your greatest enemy, Clare. No one can do greater harm to yourself than you. No one. But I thought that perhaps by revealing it to you, what it looks like, you will understand what we must defeat together.

This scripture came to mind from Galatians 5:

"Walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. 17For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other. Galatians 5:16

And here I like the New Living Translation: The sinful nature likes to do evil, which is just the opposite of what the spirit desires. And the spirit gives us just the opposite of what the sinful nature desires. These two forces are constantly fighting each other, so you are not free to carry out your good intentions.

Well that's no contest with You on board, Lord?

"Not so quick My love, not so quick. Your flesh has been with you since conception and has a will to survive of its own. It has its own knee jerk reactions to perceived threats. Hunger, cold, violence, criticism. Oh, there is no way to explain to you the power the flesh has over your members.

The Spirit has a much different agenda: seeking love, affirmation and a purpose. It's when the two get mixed up or one overpowers the other that the trouble begins. There is a constant struggle for supremacy as long as one is not dominated by the other. Once a soul settles into their flesh, well, the battle is over. The flesh has won. From time to time, glimpses of what could have been bubble up into your consciousness but are quickly put down by the pleasures of the moment and the perceived inconvenience of reaching for your dreams.

"When a soul is born again, and I am given complete access to the desire nature, I begin to turn that arrangement upside down. By My Spirit you become aware of something greater than survival and pleasures of the moment, you begin to long for your Heavenly homeland and the freedom you will have there. You begin to remember key moments when I presented you with a dream or vision or even a word of prophecy. And something within stirs. At that point, I begin to take your hand and lift you up from your bed of indifference and failure, lost purposes, and impossible dreams.

"Then the struggle is on. There are some so self-disciplined that this seems a very little issue to them. On the other hand, much of what motivated them before their conversion has to do with the world, power, influence, fame and glory. Yes, there is still corruption in those who are converted who seem to show remarkable self-control and accomplishment. There are still things that are there, deep down, almost unrecognizable, that tend to influence their decisions. That, too, is the flesh. Although it seems not to be carnal, it's just as carnal as gluttony.

"All of you are still a work under construction. None has arrived. And the moment you perceive that about yourself, I will quickly come to your rescue with a lesson in humility, lest you perish through pride and presumption.

"It is a very rare soul that immediately puts to death all of their flesh and empties themselves to give Me supremacy in their lives. And to this I say, even you who have done this thing, still have only Me to thank, for I gave you that disposition and grace.

"In the end Clare, all have fallen short of the glory and perfection of God."

So, why did you bring this up Lord?

"I want all of you to know that each of you are on the very same rungs of the ladder as the soul next to you. Forget this idea of being ahead of anyone in sanctity, it is a false notion all together. You see, what gives the appearance of a soul being ahead of others is pure grace - and grace is My possession not theirs. So, were I to remove all grace, you would fall back to the bottom rung again.

Grace allows you to cooperate, grace strengthens you in perseverance, grace holds you in place when you would have collapsed and run away. Grace fills you with understanding, grace instructs you about the outcome of your decisions. Grace moves your conscience to behave in obedience to My known will. Remove grace, and you have nothing of any value left. Period. Because then the flesh takes over. Then that squat, determined, self-willed flesh begins to make your decisions.

"You see, this perspective is sadly lacking from ministers who are trained and graduate seminaries. They learn to conquer the world, not conquer themselves. I would rather have one raw diamond that is onto his flesh, than ten finely faceted gems that don't have a clue.

"This is another reason why people are leaving the churches - they are not being taught how to conquer their flesh. In fact, they are being taught how to have the appearance of holiness on the outside without having the capability to conquer their own particular passions.

"My People, as you rise up to serve Me, be particularly careful about the inner man. Know yourself well and rely totally on My all sufficient grace, or you will fail. If you lift yourself up above others, you are still lacking in understanding. When you see that all that is good comes from My grace, you will walk humbly before Me and before men and seek Me everyday for the way to go and the power to accomplish it."

Oh Lord, forgive me, I feel like I am putting these thoughts in my head, not You.

"Perhaps you feel that way because I am continually feeding these thoughts to you, Clare. Truly, each day, your mind gets filled with more and more of My thinking, that's just natural by association. That's normal. You begin to act, look and think like the one you spend the most time with. Do not fear, Clare, you are not making this up. Look at Me."

I changed my focus from the computer to Him, and His face became ever so clear and tender. He looks so much like Ray Downing's paintings of Jesus. So much. His expression was tender and almost plaintive...are **you** going to doubt Me, too?

I'm sorry Lord, I am my own worst enemy, as You said.

"Well, to your credit, if you didn't test the spirits you would not be a good example to others. You do have to be careful. But understand, when the gate of virtue has been abandoned, that is when the devils enter.

"Meekness, humility, awareness of your frailty and complete dependence on Me: those are the hinges on the gate of virtue that will protect you - even from yourself, the worst adversary.

"But do not fear. With each new day, as you grow in awareness and obedience, it becomes easier and easier to know without a doubt I am your source of strength, your One and Only Source."