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Encouragement for Today

"Beloved"

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Key Verse:

Romans 9:25, "... I will call them My people, who were not my people, And her beloved, who was not beloved." (NKJ)

Devotion:

"Beloved." That is what the Lord calls you and I, in today's key verse. This term takes my breath away... to know that God not just loves me, but really LOVES me, just blows me away.

You know the difference: I love chocolate ice cream (a lot, actually), but I really LOVE my husband. I love our pediatrician, but I LOVE my two children so much more. While the Lord loves the sweet-songed sparrows He created, He really LOVES you and me. Matthew 10:29-31 explains, "Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your heavenly Parent. And even the hairs of your head are all counted. So do not be afraid; you are of more value than many sparrows." (NRSV)

As an adjective, "beloved" conveys "to a great extent." Do you realize the great extent to which the Holy One loves you? It was demonstrated on the cross where God sacrificed His only, perfect Son in order to gain you and I as daughters. Romans 5:8, "But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners." (NLT)

I know that I am a flawed and selfish human being, so I can't fully comprehend why God loved me so dearly that He wanted to draw me to Him and cleanse me of my sin. Though we may have a hard time understanding how God could love us despite our flaws, our inability to comprehend that makes it no less true.

Some synonyms for the term "beloved" are "much-loved," "dearly loved," "adored," "favorite," "darling" and "highly thought of." This is the image God holds of you. Is this the image you hold of yourself? Say this out loud: "I am wholly and dearly loved by the Holy and Almighty God." Do you experience any hesitation or doubt saying or believing that?

Henri Nouwen said, "Self-rejection is the greatest enemy of the spiritual life because it contradicts the sacred voice that calls us the 'Beloved.' Being beloved constitutes the truth of our existence." How different could our lives be if we agreed with the Sacred voice, rather than the condemning voice? We have to choose each day, sometimes hour by hour or minute by minute, which voice we will listen to: the Sacred Voice of God, or the lying, condemning voice of Satan. Romans 8:1 assures, "There is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus." (NLT)

Paul says in Romans 8:38, "And I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from his love." (NLT) You, my friend, are beloved – highly thought of and adored. Rejoice today, beloved, because you will always hold that status in your Heavenly Father's heart.

My Prayer for Today:

Thank You, Lord, for Your love. May I listen to Your sacred Voice today and always. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Application Steps:

Read Psalm 103:11 and Romans 8:38-39 and take a few minutes to contemplate the heights and depths of God's love for you. Go ahead and wallow in it!

Reflection Points:

Whose voice do you typically hear in your head?

Do you obey it?

How might your life be different today if you accepted your beloved status, listened to the Sacred voice of God, and ignored the lies of Satan?

Power Verses:

Nehemiah 9:17, "You are a forgiving God, gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love." (NIV)

1 John 4:16, "God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him."
(NIV)

Psalm 103:17, "From everlasting to everlasting the LORD's love is with those who fear him, and his righteousness with their children's children." (NIV)

1 Thessalonians 3:12, "And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love to one another and to all, just as we do to you."(NKJ)

Additional Resources:

Captivating, by John and Stasi Eldridge

http://proverbs31.gospelcom.net/newresources_captivating.htm

Who Holds the Key to Your Heart, by Lysa TerKeurst

http://proverbs31.gospelcom.net/newresources_whoHoldsKey.htm

Living Life on Purpose, by Lysa TerKeurst

http://proverbs31.gospelcom.net/newresources_livingLife.htm