

August 4, 2006

Encouragement for Today

“Thrown Out and Left Behind”

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Key Verse:

Hebrews 12:1, “Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us.” (NIV)

Devotional:

As I left the grocery store yesterday I noticed a small girl holding onto her mother’s hand as they entered the store. While I’ve watched this scene countless times before there was something unusual that caught my attention. In her free hand, the tiny girl held onto a large stuffed animal that appeared to be as big as she was. As the mom took one step forward her tiny daughter stepped on and tripped over her beloved toy. Step trip, step trip step trip; this awkward rhythm continued as they made their way into the store.

I couldn’t help but think about the self-control this mom was exercising with her daughter as she tripped and stumbled along. I thought about how much easier it would have been to leave the dirty and tattered toy behind in order to get on with her day. Wow! This mom deserves the gold star award for patience. As we passed one another in the doorway, I noticed the determination of this angelic child and realized that no amount of tripping or stumbling was ever going to persuade her to part with her beloved dirty, ragged, toy.

Making my way to the car I thought about what I had just seen, and the Lord whispered into my ear, “Zoe, you are just like that little girl.” “You cling to Me with one hand, yet your other hand is full of old, dirty, ragged things, causing you to trip and stumble.” As I drove home I asked the Lord to open my eyes to those things that entangle me and hinder my walk with Him.

One by one the Lord revealed those things I must throw off and leave behind: old insecurities, ragged motives and worn out behaviors. These are things that cause me to stumble in my relationship with the Lord. I’ve held onto these things for many years with the same intensity that the little girl clung to her toy. Now that these have been revealed I must choose to leave them behind. I must continue to cling to the Lord with one hand while keeping the other hand free in order to share His goodness with others.

My Prayer for Today:

Dear Lord, forgive me for clinging to things that impede my walk with You. Enable me, through the power of Your Holy Spirit, to throw off and leave those things behind that cause me to stumble. I want to cling to You only in order to share Your goodness; unencumbered by the things of this world. In Jesus' Name. Amen.

Application Steps:

Ask the Lord to reveal the things you drag that trip you up. Then ask the Holy Spirit to empower you to throw them off and leave them behind!

Find an accountability partner who will lovingly hold you accountable as you throw off and leave behind those things that have kept you entangled.

Reflection Points:

What is consistently tripping you up?

Why are you holding onto these ragged things that cause you to stumble?

Is fear keeping you entangled and tripping up your spiritual life? Begin a courage journal and record verses that tell of God's delivering power and abiding presence.

Power Verses:

2 Timothy 1:7, "For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline." (NIV)

Psalms 25:15, "My eyes are ever on the Lord, for only he will release my feet from the snare." (NIV)

2 Corinthians 3:17, "Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom." (NIV)

Additional Resources:

A Woman's Secret to a Balanced Life, Lysa TerKeurst and Sharon Jaynes

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

Get Over it and On With It by Michelle McKinney

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

Healing the Wounds of Abuse, ETC Corner

<http://proverbs31.gospelcom.net/etcJul04.htm>