

Dangling the Carrot

Rachael Martin 3,24,2016

So I was thinking (I know... I know...) about the effort that I put into my relationships. (or the lack of in some cases... I'm not gonna lie) I started to wonder about how Jesus gave of Himself everywhere He went. There were times when His physical and mental state needed a rest and even then, it was hard to find peace, but aside from the resting from time to time, He was constantly pouring out to those around Him.

I know we are not built to "do it all" and/or have an answer for everyone we know and love, that's why Jesus had 12 disciples! But how many times do I say "I'm good" simply to get by instead of taking the time to give a thought-filled response? I've found myself, at times, giving a response that I know will get a person "off my back" so to speak instead of taking the time to peel off a layer of myself and let them see what I've really been up to.

Thus the dangling of the carrot... I give just a little bit of myself to make sure that someone understands I have something to offer that may be worth something to them but will get them to lay off so I don't have to expose everything.

What if the Lord wants me to pour out all of me because He wants to pour new things in me and He can't because I'm only pouring out just enough so that He "top me off" occasionally?

I hope this is making sense because in dangling the carrot, we aren't allowing ourselves to be used fully – we are in a way – controlling what we want to give and the root – would be? Fear, control, selfishness?

What we are really saying is that we don't want to waste our time, or that we have more important things to do, or that we don't want to expose ourselves, and that we don't want to let anyone in too deep, or that others don't need to know anything more than what we want them to know and the list keeps going.

Paul gave us an example even as a leader that he was transparent with his brothers and sisters in Christ –

2 Corinthians 1:8-11 - ⁸ We think you ought to know, dear brothers and sisters, about the trouble we went through in the province of Asia. We were crushed and overwhelmed beyond our ability to endure, and we thought we would never live through it. ⁹ In fact, we expected to die. But as a result, we stopped relying on ourselves and learned to rely only on God, who raises the dead. ¹⁰ And he did rescue us from mortal danger, and he will rescue us again. We have placed our confidence in him, and he will continue to rescue us. ¹¹ And you are helping us by praying for us. Then many people will give thanks because God has graciously answered so many prayers for our safety.

He lets the saints know exactly what he is going through and thanks them for their prayers because he KNOWS they are helping! We are not called to walk this walk alone.

Without a willingness to be transparent, we cannot bear each other's burdens (**Galatians 6:2**); comfort one another (**2 Corinthians 1:4-7**); encourage each other (**1 Thessalonians 5:11**); forgive one another (**Ephesians 4:32**); care for one another (**1 Corinthians 12:25**); nor weep or rejoice with each other (**Romans 12:15**).

We should start letting people in and be ready to take some helpful criticism once in a while – no it doesn't mean to let people abuse us in word or in action – but it does mean to let God sort that out – to trust Him enough to protect us – even Jesus had a betrayer in his inner circle, but it didn't stop Him from being transparent and sharing all of His love and all of His ways.

We can dangle the carrot and reel it back in every time we feel the need to control it or we can take it off the hook and throw it out there and allow others to benefit from what we have – it's all for God's glory! It's all for Him – He gets the praise and He gets the honor! It's because of Him that we have what we have – our carrot – is His making – and it's good! Let's allow others the opportunity to know about His goodness in us as well!

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