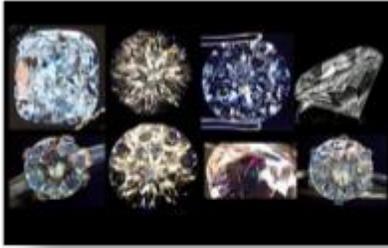


There is Freedom in Being Authentic, It Reveals My Mercy

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May we find His Love and Mercy sufficient for our every need, dear Heartdwellers.

Well, the panther got loose again and took me down. One of my blatant faults is that when I do something, I like to go all the way with it and do it 'to the nines' so to speak. One reason being a lay Franciscan was so healthy for me was the stripping away of all my significance through what I wore and owned. In this I discovered amazing freedom from my nasty fault of acquisition.

Living back in the secular world has been very challenging and I am much more vulnerable now than I was then. So when it came time to reorganize the music studio and office (mind you they are just two small bedrooms in the house) I went overboard. When Jesus convicted me, I discovered new levels of what it means to belong to the Holy God.

This preoccupation with aesthetics, has plagued me all my life and it consumed my mother's life as well. She was a makeup artist and in fashion, and sold art at Marshall Fields in Chicago. Although I never knew my father, I knew one thing about him. When he did something he went overboard and all the way. For instance when he was courting my mother, he took her by train in a luxurious coach to New York City, wining and dining her, first class.

I want to have that kind of love for Jesus, spending my all on Him...but there's still a strong part of my flesh that likes to do it up right for myself. Not with money so much but with time spent. So you see, I deserved a correction. Of course, the devil jumps in with truckloads of condemnation. Aside from that, the vision of God's holiness was enough to convict me to death...were it not His mercy.

You know, one of the things He's dealing with, with me is it's the interior that counts, the interior man. The disposition of the interior. I was trying to make the studio a place that felt sweet, to set a certain feeling about it. But I've been praying in the store room. That room has a sweet feeling about it and that room is anything but aesthetic. So, I should know better! I really should know better. But the Lord allowed it. And one of the reasons He allowed it was to humble me, which He has to do a LOT. I'm beginning to think it's His favorite pastime.

You see what might be ok for one person to spend time on, is not ok for another. It all depends on God's will and when an occasion comes up where I might be able to slip into acquisition, and He's trying to humble me, He allows that panther to get out of its cage. If He weren't dealing with my pride, this might never have happened. I am standing before One who thinks of nothing but bringing souls into the kingdom and I'm spending time arranging a studio to my fancy? Nonetheless, if God's mirror could kill, I wouldn't be here with you now.

It's taken days to recover from this humiliation which also exposed my double-mindedness, and I was beginning to feel it was hopeless when He apprehended me just before prayer.

He held my face in His hands, which He does when He really wants to stop me in my tracks and get my attention.

He said, *"I want to talk with you."*

"How can I use you if you do not have faults? How can I bridge the common ground with My unconditional love if the common ground is faultless? Yes, it is a truth that when you judge, you'd better judge yourself - because it's coming. Even if it is your job to help expose sin, still you must be exposed as well. As they say, when you point your finger, three are turned back pointing to you and one to your brother. That is why the monks preferred to remain silent; they saw themselves so clearly.

"Yet you cannot remain silent, you are a watchman and a shepherd. You must call out and expose those things that hinder humankind from walking in Heaven on Earth. Therefore, you must be especially vigilant and strict with those faults I point out to you.

"I know you are shaking inside, Clare. I know how you feel.

"Sometimes these lessons in humility have to go deep and deeper yet. No one will know the extent of their sins until Heaven, that fateful moment when it's all exposed. Yet, the confessed sins will not be found there. It is the unconfessed, unrepentant sins that will emerge to convict you. Isn't it better to be convicted now, Dearest...than then?"

"How I hate to see you suffer this way, yet it is necessary for purging. The refiners fire, smelting the gold, which shall be fashioned into vessels on the King's table.

"Well, you truly must deal with these things and share them publicly so I can heal even the most wretched cases...of whom you closely approximate. You know well that what I say is true, because had these graces given to you been given to the worst sinner, they would by now be a saint. Yet you are still struggling. Why is this? Is it not because you have not totally abandoned yourself? Is it not that your flesh stubbornly clings to old ways? No matter, you have plenty of company and that is why I am using you.

"Yet the more you love others, the more mercy will cleanse you and protect you. Do not let your guard down on love, ever. When this happens a huge door swings open and in comes the devils that torment you with those things you hate about yourself and are fighting against. It is because you have loved, forgiven and cried out that I rush to embrace you all covered in mud, which is cleansed when I hold you in My arms.

"Clare, do not let this sadness over your sins overtake you. Your ministry is so important to Me, because others need to see how fragile and corrupt you can be. How prone to distraction and self-indulgence. All these faults are common to mankind, yet My Christian people put up a shiny penny front, hiding it all beneath that acceptable facade.

"That's not what I want, My people. Did I not say, 'Confess your sins one to another?'" Yet you keep so much hidden, you cover so much with an outer layer of piety. Why don't you just be real with your brothers and sisters? Why don't you allow them to see this unacceptable interior? Don't you know they are struggling to keep their fronts up with you? They suffer from this disease, just as you do. But when you confess, I heal you. When you share with others your weaknesses, I run to reinstate you.

"That is My entire purpose: to save sinners from themselves and make them ready for Heaven. We may not have perfected you on Earth, but if I can bring you to the point of contrition for wrongdoing, we are well on our way. The rest shall await you in Heaven.

"I am not saying these things to discourage you, My People, rather to encourage you. Isn't it labor intensive and tedious to constantly present a squeaky clean front? Doesn't the devil discourage you by accusing you of being a hypocrite because you are just as guilty as others? I am trying to free you from that cycle of self-righteousness that has you bound, so others will love and accept you.

"On the outside, people will accept and honor you, but inside they are envious because they are not as holy as you appear to be. Doesn't that disturb you, My precious ones? It should, it should disturb you very much. Come down off your ivory tower and let people get a look at the dirt beneath your fingernails. Not so they will think less of you, but to set them free that they are no worse off than you. You see, when you live that transparently, you seed people's lives with HOPE.

"The accuser of the brethren never sleeps. Twenty four/seven he is at work sending his demons to demean, demote and demolish men's hopes. I want you to bring light into the world. Not by revealing all your dirt, but by acknowledging who you truly are before men. That you are no better, that it cost Me the same price to redeem you as it did the lowliest beggar on the street. It is when you stand in this place and see yourself that you will see Me clearly. Your vision shall become crystal clear and your life will begin to change, because you put more effort into loving Me than in loving yourself and presenting that self-righteous image.

"I am not chastising you. I am asking you to reconsider who you are before man and God. This is how the poor and broken will discover Me. Your littleness, like the hand of a little child reaching out as she says, 'Look, the Master is calling you. Don't be afraid, He came to rescue us. We are His little ones and He is ever so gentle, loving, and forgiving. Don't despair over your sins. Take my hand, let us go to the well-springs of love, healing and life everlasting. Come, don't be afraid, He awaits you.'"

And at this point I just had to ask the Lord, How do we do this? Practically speaking.

"Clare, when you stand before Me acknowledging who you are, then you will stand before men and reveal to them who I am. It's that simple, a little child can do this. It is the adults who have spent their lives proving their worth to others that hinder Me.

"This is not accomplished by words alone. You can't just say, 'God did it all.' Or, 'He's the one who did it, not me.' This is an interior demeanor crafted by selected encounters with yourself, which I provide at the most critical times. These encounters, though very humiliating, transform a soul in such a way that this goodness of Mine radiates from them. They're gone from inside themselves, and I am shining out from them.

"They've given up proving themselves, defending themselves, and let go of all the facades. Now they stand before Me and men in clean robes, washed in My blood. Words are not necessary or convincing when they attribute all to Me, unless it is accompanied by that very real and raw conviction. Men and women are sensitive beyond what you comprehend; they have a sense about a soul and My spirit bears witness, 'This one has met the Master. This one has been on the potter's wheel. This one has been ground to fine dust and risen again in the waters of new life. This one knows Him.'"

"So, why have I taken this topic up? Because you, My people must let go of the old ways, the old masks and cover-ups you've used on men all these years. You are standing before Me now. You are My ambassadors of Love to mankind, and you must reflect by your authenticity and humility that you have been in My presence. That you know the way to My chambers, and what awaits all who come there is unconditional love, healing and cleansing.

"Be not afraid My people, be not afraid to lead others to Me by being who you truly are before Me. Do this and they will come running. They will see something different about you, something real, something not of this world, you have mined the gold and been in the refiner's fire. And you know Him. When you are faithful to do this they will rush to know Me."

You know, I just felt I needed a confirmation for this teaching. And I opened to Loving God. "Know then, that the Lord your God is faithful. He keeps His promises and shows His loving kindness to those who love Him. The one who loves Me is the one who has My teaching and obeys it. I am in them and you are in Me, so they may be one and made perfect. Then the world will know that You sent Me and that You love them as You love Me."

And a very sweet word from the Lord personally for me, which I also opened to: "For a little while our father's on Earth punished us when they thought they should. But God punishes us for our good, so we will be holy as He is holy. There's no joy while we're being punished, it's hard to take. But later we can see that good came from it and it gives us the peace of being right with God. So, wait for the Lord. Let your heart be strong. Yes, wait for the Lord. This is the reason we don't give up. Our human body is wearing out, but our spirits are getting stronger every day. The little troubles we suffer now, for a short time, are making us ready for the great things God is going to give us forever."

And I'd like to add, for the things the Lord is going to do by touching other souls and bringing them to Heaven through our witness.

So, the Lord bless you, Heartdwellers. And be encouraged to be yourself, encouraged to be transparent. Make it safe for people to be themselves and to be transparent around you. We all suffer from self-condemnation more than you ever imagine. We ALL suffer from it and the only One who can make it right is the Lord Jesus. He's the only One who can save us, cleanse and sanctify us.

So, let us take this to heart and stand before men. The same way, we stand before God and His mercy and love will be glorified.