

Here Comes the Judge – ME!

It has been a tough week of ministry, a very tough week, in regards to the spiritual battle that some refer to as “Recovery.” We praise God on a daily basis for the battles that are hard fought resulting in incredible victories. But in every war there are casualties, and this one is not exempt. Sometimes the battle rages on, not exclusively in the lives of those in spiritual infancy, but in the seasoned veterans that are leading the charge. Watching a comrade go down is tough for everyone concerned, including the veteran who has personally experienced freedom in Christ from life dominating sin.

And apart from the main battle that rages on every day, there are the skirmishes that rise up behind the front lines. One such skirmish is the tendency to fall prey to a critical spirit. Dealing with emotions, because when God uses us in another person’s life we can never remain emotionally detached, it is just plain tough. Disappointment, shock, sadness, anger, resentment and a critical judgmental spirit are like snipers in the bushes waiting to pick us off unaware.

As I rallied against these snipers last night, I must confess, I was not winning this battle. What can we say to those who knowing full well the crux of the issue at hand, refuse to surrender? We have seen the outcome all too often and we watch helplessly as the consequences inevitably unfold. But as faithful soldiers we must not be deterred from our mission. The Apostle Paul put it this way; *“As a good soldier of Christ Jesus accept your share of suffering. Everyone who serves as a soldier keeps himself from becoming entangled in the world’s business--so that he may satisfy the officer who enlisted him.”* (2 Timothy 2:3-4 WNT)

So our motivation cannot be to fix those who are broken, seemingly beyond repair, but to satisfy the One who enlisted us. That won’t occur if we usurp His authority and place ourselves in the Judgment Seat which is too often our tendency. I was reminded of this in a timely manner this morning as I read one of my daily devotionals: MY CHILDREN make a pastime of judging one another— and themselves. But I am the only capable Judge, and I have acquitted you through My own blood. Your acquittal came at the price of My unparalleled sacrifice. That is why I am highly offended when I hear My children judge one another or indulge in self-hatred. If you live close to Me and absorb My Word, the Holy Spirit will guide and correct you as needed. There is no condemnation for those who belong to Me.

Young, Sarah (2012-10-09). Jesus Calling: Enjoy Peace in His Presence (p. 194). Thomas Nelson. Kindle Edition.

We tend to judge others as we are judging ourselves in our own hearts. When that happens, as it all too frequently does, we have to remind ourselves that we am not the Assistant Holy Spirit! There are no job openings for the fourth person of the Trinity! The Apostle Paul spoke these words about himself and fellow believers; *“So whether we are here in this body or away from this body, our goal is to please Him. For we must all stand before Christ to be judged. We will each receive whatever we deserve for the good or evil we have done in this earthly body.”* (2 Corinthians 5:9-10 NLT)

Knowing these things I will resume my battle stance and go on engaging in spiritual warfare, confident that He is far more capable of judging others than I. *“Therefore, since we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we do not lose heart.”* (2 Corinthians 4:1 NKJV)

And instead of judgment I will extend mercy to myself and my fallen comrades, because according to His Word; *“For he who shows no mercy will have judgment given against him without mercy; but mercy triumphs over judgment.”* (James 2:13 WNT)

Jim Freed