

Gospel Reflections | February 2012

2-5-12

“Jesus, the good news is you’ve come to destroy hostilities; to tear down walls of division; to make peace and be our peace. You reconcile enemies to God and to one another, so I am confident you are faithfully at work in these tense and complicated situations. But my confidence doesn’t mask my weariness. How long, O Lord? How long before the Day when we no longer misrepresent you to our watching world? How long before the Day of no more bitterness or brokenness? It took time plus grace for Paul and Barnabas to get back together. I don’t know what “time plus grace” will look like in each of these painful stories. To the extent you would have me get involved, help me listen from the heart and offer a nonanxious presence. Help me pray in the Spirit, reason from the Scriptures, and love by the gospel. Help me to wait upon you, Lord, and not just weigh my options.”

-Scotty Smith

2-12-12

“Wretched sinner. Filthy mess. Constant failure. These were the thoughts I had about myself when I first started following Jesus six years ago. After all, in Christ, we are all simply sinners saved by grace, right? After growing to understand the power of God’s redeeming love more and more, I now see that He makes us much more than sinners holding tickets to heaven. In Romans 8:15, Paul writes, “For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, “Abba! Father!” In other words, God’s love penetrates our hearts so deeply that it makes us His own sons and daughters. We now have His very nature within us. If God’s spirit dwells inside of us, what sin is too strong to overcome? What sacrifice is too great to make? An earthly judge may be able to keep a criminal out of prison, but the judge could never transform the criminal into a brand new person. This is the unique power of God’s redeeming love. It transforms us so that our names are now saint not sinner, holy not failure, beautiful not broken.”

-Curt Devine

2-19-12

“When God asks you to wait, what happens to your spiritual muscles? While you wait, do your spiritual muscles grow bigger and stronger, or do they become flaccid and atrophied? Waiting for the Lord isn't about God forgetting you, forsaking you, abandoning the ministry he's called you to, or being unfaithful to his promises. It's actually God giving you time to consider his glory, grow stronger in faith, and grow in courage for ministry. Remember, waiting isn't just about what you're hoping for at the end of the wait, but also about what you'll become as you wait.”

-Paul Tripp

2-26-12

“So as I reflect on Satan’s accusation today, it’s not with a chip on my shoulder, gritted teeth or clenched fists. But the question always remains current: Why do we revere and love you? What’s our motivation for worshiping you and living in awe of you? How will I think about you the next time I suffer loss, betrayal, and pain? That, no doubt, *will* happen.

Father, I want to be one of your children who loves and worships you simply because you are God. There is no other god besides you, and there is certainly no other god *like* you. I’m grateful for your gifts—especially the gift of Jesus; but you would be worthy of praise, glory and honor even if you had *never* chosen to redeem a people to love and cherish forever. But I am glad you *did*, I am eternally thankful you chose to do so! So very Amen I pray, in Jesus’ holy and loving name.”

-Scotty Smith