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Weekly Encourager – 1 August 2010

(from James Stacey: scriptural advice and insight on how to be set free from schizophrenia)

HOW TO FIND A RESTING PLACE WITH GOD IN PRAYER AS YOU FIGHT TO BECOME FREE

THIS WEEK'S SELECTED BIBLE READING IS MATTHEW'S GOSPEL CHAPTER 11: Key Verses 25-30 *Rest for the Weary*: At that time Jesus said, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for this was your good pleasure. All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him. Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

It is possible to enjoy spiritual rest while fighting to be free of schizophrenia!! Jesus Christ can impart heart-rest on the road to securing lasting freedom. While the battle is on to drive out the demonic bondage wrapped around your mind, the KING of kings and LORD of lords has power to pour his Presence into your chaotic situation bringing an abiding rest. The struggle out of schizophrenia is often longer, though, where there is no sense of Jesus ruling and residing in the citadel of your spirit.

That Jesus can produce and provide such a victory in the midst of living in a mental prison displays his awesome power. It's a foretaste of freedom on the way to full freedom. To be able to pull aside and sit at the feet of Jesus in the heat of the battle and rest as faith fills your heart shows you are trusting him for greater deliverances in your life. Confidence to continue fighting to secure your freedom is imparted in such times of meeting God.

Such encounters with the LORD in prayer have a powerful effect on your life. They dispel thoughts suggesting that freedom from schizophrenia is a million miles away and will never happen to you. Such discouragement can steal over you from time to time. But the strength given in times of prayer with Jesus turns the tables on such thoughts. A fear like: "I might as well settle for life as it is because the struggle is just too much" is transformed into "I'm holding on to you Lord and will battle on in faith until you break the power of this bondage within me." You'll find yourself possessing a stronger will determined not to give up because there is already a foretaste of rest resident in your heart NOW bolstering your desire for the full freedom and its permanent rest to come.

I can only speak from experience. Before deliverance and healing, I encountered seasons of what I thought was total abandonment with no sensation of the Presence of God with me; at times, silences in which I felt He was doing nothing; intense struggles in months and years of jogging along in a sort of existence. I ran often to God, my Strong Tower, because I knew there was no help anywhere else. Believing in it all that "He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him", Jesus eventually drew near - even in periods of total weariness - and began imparting his comfort and strength. As I found renewal, I became fired up to seek more freedom, because those real joyous times of refreshing and rest from God encouraged me on!!

If you came to know Christ before the dawning of schizophrenia on your life, you will know the experience of sins forgiven and the heart-rest through having a relationship with the Saviour of the world. To have that rest stolen from you when your mind is thrown into confusion and bondage is a loss you can't afford. You must retrieve it at all costs. You may well know the reality of running into the Presence of God as a refuge when the onslaught of turmoil hits your mind. Your only lifeline at times is to hold on in faith to the One who has promised never to leave you or forsake you.

May I point out the importance and value of early morning prayer in your fight to be free of schizophrenia. Read Psalm 63 and you will discover the benefits of seeking God and seeking him early in particular. The Psalmist, David, sought and possessed a real desire for God created by the Holy Spirit – a desire which moved him to seek God early. In spite of his sin and shortcomings we readily admit that he was always a man “after God’s own heart.” Bound together with his desire for God was a determination of heart which we sense in his words: “Early will I seek thee” (see verse one).

Because he began seeking God early in the day, David’s firmness of purpose of seeking God at other times of the day was both advanced and strengthened. Scripture would suggest that it was a pattern of David’s devotional life to seek God early and, as he kept the habit established, he enjoyed numerous benefits through seeking the face of God in this way.

The main benefit he obtained through his determined desire to seek God early was that HE FOUND GOD and entered into real, vital fellowship with him; such a start to the day had the potential of taking him through the day victoriously. Psalm 63 shows very clearly the certainty of David’s faith in expecting God to visit his soul as he sought him early. He proved the reality of the promises we have in the Word of God that “those who seek God shall find him.” David got out of bed early for nothing else, but to meet God Himself. He realised that every new day must know the touch of God on it – and so it was for an encounter with the Almighty that he cut short his sleep. It’s a hard discipline for a Christian schizophrenic to learn, but so very rewarding!!

This raises the question of an early morning quiet time. How many Christians – schizophrenic or otherwise – have established such a meeting place with God as a regular habit of their devotional life? It is one thing to agree that you glorify God in your life more and would be better equipped as a soldier of Jesus Christ if you met him in this way, but that thought should move you to seek God in reality. For there is a world of a difference between the person who “rises and shines” to meet His Maker and the person who crawls out of bed with no desire at all.

The early morning encounter with God is a must for every Christian. We are not the same without it. Regular contact with God through early morning prayer has the power to revolutionise your Christian life and to accelerate your freedom from schizophrenia. When that happens, you will possess the key to having a closer walk with God!! No longer will you be defeated, but fully surrendered and following Christ knowing his truly victorious life.

If you need a greater Pattern of early morning prayer than David, you see it in Jesus himself. If there was anyone who could dispense with prayer first thing in the morning it was our wonderful Saviour, but He rated it of such importance that we find him praying regularly. Well before the day’s activities and needy souls were enlisting his help, Jesus could be found in communion with his Heavenly Father. If Jesus needed fresh contact with God his Father each day how much more ourselves as his disciples. If early morning prayer strengthened him in the eternal purpose of going to the Cross and finishing the work, as it most certainly did, then a glorious daily encounter with God will enable us to fight the good fight of faith. As there is no way to learn to pray but by praying, so there is no way of making strides in a disciplined prayer life than by desiring it at the hand of God. And the way to start is by meeting God early.

Over the years, David had desired such discipline as he determined to be a man after God’s own heart. I believe the Holy Spirit taught and guided him in life generally and in such a matter as rising early to pray. The same Holy Spirit confirmed in his heart after he had begun the habit that it was a good thing to keep doing – and it became second nature to him.

Remember, David was subject to the same body as you and I but the discipline of the Holy Spirit taught him mastery over his body. It was built into this thought-life that he would rise early in the morning – otherwise he would miss his time of fellowship with God and the vital strengthening touch on his life that early morning prayer brings. If he missed God through not rising early – and that hour or so can never be made up – his heart mourned.

I encourage you with all my heart to make the effort to sit at the feet of Jesus at the start of the day, and, as the discipline is established, you will discover the amazing transformation of his power released into your life. It could well be the door you ought to pass through to secure your freedom from schizophrenia!!

IF YOU WISH TO INVITE JESUS CHRIST INTO YOUR LIFE, DO PRAY THE FOLLOWING PRAYER: “Lord God Almighty, I approach you in the Name of your Son, Jesus Christ. I know I have sinned in my thoughts, words and actions. There are so many good things I have not done. There are so many sinful things I have done. I am truly sorry most of all for the sin that separates me from you and acknowledge the death of Jesus on the Cross to redeem me. Gratefully, I give my life back to you as I now ask you to come into my life. Come in as my Saviour and Lord and cleanse me. Come in as my Lord to control me. Come with the strength of your grace and the power of your Spirit to defeat the evil spirit of schizophrenia that troubles me. Now you have set my spirit free enable me to know your power as I believe that my mind too can also be completely set free. Amen.

PROCLAMATION FOR GOD’S PROTECTION

NO WEAPON that is formed against me shall prosper and every tongue which rises against me in judgement I do condemn. This is my heritage as a servant of the Lord and my righteousness is from You, O Lord of Hosts. If there are those who have been speaking or praying against me, or seeking harm or evil to me, or who have rejected me, I forgive them. Having forgiven them, I bless them in the name of the Lord.” *

NOW I DECLARE, O Lord, that You and You alone are my God, and besides You there is no other – a just God and a Saviour, the Father, the Son and the Spirit – and I worship You!

I SUBMIT myself afresh to You in unreserved obedience. Having submitted to You, Lord, I do as Your Word directs. I resist the devil: all his pressures, his attacks, his deceptions, every instrument or agent he would seek to use against me. I do not submit! I resist him, drive him from me and exclude him from me in the Name of Jesus. Specifically I reject and repel: infirmity, pain, infection, inflammation, malignancies, allergies, viruses, and every form of witchcraft.

FINALLY, LORD, I thank You that through the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross, I have passed out from under the curse and entered into the blessing of Abraham whom You blessed in all things:** exaltation, health, reproductiveness, prosperity, victory and God’s favour. AMEN

*see Matthew 5: 43-45; Romans 12:14

**see Galatians 3:13-14; Genesis 24:1

We are continuing to insert at the bottom of the Weekly Encourager, some powerful Scriptures for you to learn and commit to memory and USE in your prayer battle to drive out the demon of schizophrenia. By so doing your confidence in the Lord will grow because the words will impart “spirit and life” into your spirit, and so equip you in your fight to know the deliverance and freedom of Jesus.

(the LORD said to Joshua son of Nun, Moses’ assistant) “... No-one will be able to stand up against you all the days of your life. As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will never leave you or forsake you. Be strong and courageous, because you will lead these people to inherit the land I swore to their forefathers to give them. Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the law my servant Moses gave you, do not turn from it to the right or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you go. Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth, meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.” Joshua 1: 6-8

Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers

throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings. And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast. To him be the power for ever and ever. Amen. 1 Peter 5 8-11

And they sang a new song: "You are worthy to take the scroll and to open the seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation. You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth... In a loud voice they sang: "Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honour and glory and praise!" Revelation 5: 9-10 & 12

The Weekly Encourager:

8th August: Overcoming fear in the church about Schizophrenia.

15th August: I Had a Dream by Peter Laue (Guest Contributor)

You maybe reading the Weekly Encourager for the first time and have stumbled across our website in a desperate search to break free of schizophrenia. Or every week you visit the W.E. for encouragement and help to overcome this "monster" of mental illnesses and receive REAL HOPE in knowing that the Lord Jesus is the only One who can open the prison door to freedom in your life once and for all time. We encourage you to keep logging into the site as often as you can for scriptural advice as we continue to point to Jesus who is well-trying and tested in the area of setting captives free from a bondage that no-one else can conquer. Our website www.schizophreniadefeated.com seeks to magnify the dear Son of God who left the courts of heaven to come to our world and die for you and me on the Cross at a place called Calvary just outside Jerusalem over 2,000 years ago. In that sacrifice, he paid the punishment and penalty of your sin and mine and on the third day rose again as "The Resurrection and the Life". He releases TODAY in your life and mine, the same victorious life that brought him back from the dead, in the person of the Holy Spirit, to everyone accepting his sacrifice. Why not invite him into your life right now? It's a life-transforming experience that you CAN REALLY KNOW – which is well able to defeat and conquer the hell of schizophrenia you struggle with, for good!!



*James Stacey
Pray Until Schizophrenia Heals*

"I will proclaim your mighty acts,
O sovereign Lord" Psalm 71: 16