

jun 8

dangerous prayers

"I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh." eze 36:26 that's a prayer i prayed long ago and persistently. a fellow believer recently told me how they had prayed to allow their life to be a living sacrifice. that may not have been their exact words, but that was the essence of it.

of course the devil is always ready to test our commitment. i think my friend is now experiencing some of the trials of job. "but He knows the way that i take; when He has tested me, i shall come forth as gold." job 23:10 and we shall come forth as gold, but the process means going through the fire to burn off all the dross. i think we all see God as love, and He is love. but He is also holy.

the blessed apostle paul, he knew the cost of intimacy and he gladly gave it all. "my little children, for whom i labor in birth again until Christ is formed in you." gal 4:19 as a friend reminded me yesterday, after paul described all the trials he had endured, he said: "but none of these things move me". whatever the cost, whatever the loss, he wanted others to know the Lord he did. "for i could wish that i myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my countrymen according to the flesh." rom 9:3

a favorite i have quoted often before, leonard ravenhill once wrote, "five minutes inside eternity and

we will wish that we had sacrificed more, wept more, grieved more, loved and prayed more, and given more."

yes, the moment we step into eternity, we will see the unveiled glory of God, the fullness of the beauty of Jesus, the immensity of the grace that was poured out on us, the massive debt that was paid on our behalf, the endless splendor of the world to come and the horrors of judgment that we have escaped. yes, at that very moment, just "five minutes inside eternity," we will wish that we had been more devoted to the Lord. my prayers have been many and frequent. the one that persisted though, create in me a clean heart. give me a heart of flesh, that i may know You. now i often think the prophet jeremiah might have been among my ancestry. he was known as the "weeping prophet". often i will cry at a television show, even when it isn't particularly sad. so often my eyes fill up with tears while reading my bible; so much so i can hardly focus. the depth and beauty of it just has more meaning to me now.

i haven't tested that yet while reading from leviticus. not to disparage anything from the word of God. "all scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." 2 tim 3:16 but let's face it, the psalms draw me much quicker than leviticus.

i am in no way saying that tears indicate one's spirituality. it's just that i prayed for this. there are frequently tears of sharing the burdens of fellow believers. there are intercession for those lost in

the darkness. while some willingly entered that realm, others were brought in against their will. whether they were enticed or forced, they all are captives now. there are moments i feel it is the sorrow of God's heart i have touched. "let the priests, who minister to the Lord, weep between the porch and the altar; let them say, 'spare Your people, O Lord.'" joel 2:17

of course, our Lord would not lay on us continually the tears of grief. often my tears are those of thankfulness and joy. tears of knowing the goodness of our God and delighting in His mercy. "i was so foolish and ignorant; i was like a beast before You. nevertheless i am continually with You; You hold me by my right hand. You will guide me with Your counsel, and afterward receive me to glory." psa 73:22-25

and now, "deep calls unto deep at the noise of Your waterfalls; all Your waves and billows have gone over me." psa 42:7 "my beloved is mine, and I am his." song of solomon 2:16 one day i hope the Lord will allow me to open up the beauty and passion of that book to some. it has been ignored by too many.

my main complaint at this time is that my face always precedes my tears into His presence. i am not a simple cryer. facial distortions quickly precede the stream to come. as much as i treasure sharing the burdens of His heart, i often look at those who come to the Lord with such a happy face for Him to look at. in His presence is fullness of joy and i know joy when i am in His presence. i just wish He had a better view of me to behold. 😊 instead of 😞 but i am content in the vessel He has formed me to be. i would gladly function

as an old fashioned western spittoon should it suit His desire.

then yesterday morning in my prayer time, again as i wept before Him, pitiful, anguished face and all. again i apologized for my tears and countenance. it was then i heard the Lord speak to my spirit. He said, "these are tears of oil". i suppose meaning they come from the Holy Spirit. He's the only oil i know.

they were prayers for the needs of the body. they were prayers for the lost. they were prayers for grace to withstand the darkness rising. they were prayers for His beloved Jerusalem. prayers for revival. prayers for boldness. prayers for the later rain and glory. they were prayers "for the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." hab 2:14 prayers, prayers, prayers.

"therefore most gladly i will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." 2 cor 12:9 "and i will very gladly spend and be spent for your souls." 1 cor 12:15

"what will a man give in exchange for his soul?" mark 8:37 what will you give for your brother? a tear? what about a tear of oil?

yes, there are dangerous prayers to pray. we must count the cost of what we are asking for. are we willing to be crucified with Christ? each nail will be painful, coming often from someone most dear. are we willing to die that He might live more fully in us?

we all know the joy awaiting us, but if one desires to taste of that joy now, there is only one way. that is through the cross; His and ours. yes, salvation is free, but intimacy will cost you everything!