

may 16

whosoever will

"on the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "if anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink." john 7:37

you know the saying: "you can lead a horse to water but you can't make him drink." that's exactly the way it is with salvation. i can't begin to tell you the number of tears i have cried over people; people i know and those i will never know.

for some reason unknown to me, God has had me reach out and attempt to minister to a few incarcerated people. i have gone online before and searched through the rosters that are maintained of prisoners. once in a while i will scroll through them all. unknown faces and yet all of them with a familiar faces. some of their mug shots show contempt and anger, but on the whole they just show scared, hopeless, lost people.

people look on others and say, "there but for the grace of God go i." believe me when i say i know how important grace is. if i ever make it to heaven there will be nothing but grace that gets me there. there have been so many stumbles, falls and regrets in my life.

the thing is - there had to be an initial decision. that's what free will is all about; making our own decisions. i don't know why some seem to be called from birth and have their lives orchestrated by God,

but that is not the case for most of us.

there has to be a turning to Jesus; a time we acknowledge there is God; a creator. a time when we say, "i don't know if Jesus is the way or not, but i want to know. i am willing to invest time and effort to find out." i liken this walk of faith to the allegory in ezekiel 47. first the water extends only to the ankles, then the knees, then the loins and finally, when you can no longer touch bottom, one has to swim. when we lose contact with the ground beneath us; when we realize we can no longer depend on this world, it's swim or drown.

do you know how a callus is made? a callus is a thick patch of skin that develops as a result of repetitive rubbing, friction, or pressure. it's your body's way of protecting underlying skin from irritation, potentially preventing a blisters or wound from forming.

our hearts can suffer from calluses much as our skin. "for this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them." matt 13:15

hurts and disappointments can form a callus around our heart. it becomes hardened to protect it from being wounded again. but love has to take that risk. love has to surrender itself. the defenses that have been built are not only keeping others out, they are holding

it captive as well. and love, help captive, quickly dies.

God wants us to turn. He is waiting for that prodigal son to return and He will run out to greet him. but there has to be a returning. even if your heart has grown callused, soaking in water will soften a callus. the water of the word can do that if you will just allow it to soak for awhile. let your callused heart soften that it may escape the hardened shell.