

Love Letter from Lisa

8-2-17

I'm baaaaaack!

It was worth waiting on a letter just to open with that. LOL. Seriously I have had quite the whirlwind of a summer and I am longing to share how the Lord has worked on me.

Life took a powerful turn in late spring where I found myself in a supporting role to a mentor under attack. I was amazed at how I saw the enemy so skillfully divide Christians. The pain it must cause our Savior, after all He has sacrificed in the name of LOVE and Unity to see backs turned and slander spewed. I could not understand.

Then just like that, life took another turn and I felt a personal hit that I believe was meant to help me understand and take me to a new level. Please do not see this as a plea for sympathy. I truly do not want that. This is more of a testimony.

It was one of those things where you legitimately gave your very best to a relationship only to have the other half declare it meaningless in one quick statement of "I am moving on and by the way, all the good you have done is completely erased". (I generalize here because I believe you will better be able to relate).

This was a case of an enemy speaking lies that seemed more believable than all the actual good works that had preceded. My heart was broken and I flailed about in prayer trying to understand. Then I saw the face of Jesus and felt His arms come to comfort me and I realized, sanctification can pack a punch.

Quick review : Sanctification is the process of becoming more like Jesus. At first glance, we see this as a way to make the world a better place by being His hands and feet. That good works in His name would move people to find Him for themselves. But it goes deeper and if we don't turn back ... well I don't want to get ahead of myself.

When I think about the Gospel, I try to imagine myself right there walking with the disciples. Glomming onto this teacher and watching Him preach profound words and do the seemingly impossible. He proved over and over that He LOVED in a way that no one else did and that He was blessed with a power no one else had. AND yet, as quickly as they moved on the next village, these disciples would forget what they just witnessed. The Gospel of Mark illustrates this amazingly as Jesus performs miracle after miracle and then in Mark 8:21 Jesus says "Do you still not understand?"

Apparently not. Jesus had to go on and do more only to have it questioned and forgotten. Is that not just how this world functions? Good does and does then gets forgotten or completely dismissed and eventually good gives up. Sanctification is halted. And as I write this I think "THIS IS TRAGIC!" I'll tell you why.

I was sitting with one of our many wise Diamonds talking about who we are called to be as Christians. We speak of discipleship often: sharing our faith- the clear calling. But there is more. God's followers of the Old Testament were held to the ritual seasons of atonement and pilgrimages to the temple where they could experience the presence of God through the Holy few. Clearly this was not a system that was seeing widespread success. The church of the New Testament is scaffolded by the hearts of saved believers not brick and mortar or sacred leadership. We ARE temples.

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As Christians, baptized by the Holy Spirit, we are called to BE the presence of God to others. But for that to really play out?.... Yep, sanctification. The more we become like Jesus, the more those around us will feel the presence of He who saves. It's very attractive. Does that sound self-glorifying? Gosh I hope not. Jesus wasn't - all glory went to the Father in heaven. And that is what we are called to. Why? Because this world needs Him desperately.

But make no mistake, the more we allow the Holy Spirit to transform us, the more satan will come for us. he will use people to break our hearts and make us ask "what's the point?". he will convince us that it is safer to live for our own selves rather than for HIS Glory. he wants us to give up, retreat, and isolate. he wants The Spirit in us crushed. he wants us to give up. And if we let him win, that is TRAGIC!.

This world needs LIGHT. JESUS LIGHT. He needs bold, resilient lamps of LOVE. No matter what is thrown at us we need to keep His presence strong within us so others will know Him. The space all around us is filled with the prince of this world. his presence felt in every bitter act, complaining comment, and dismissive glance. It gets really hard.

And that is what I discovered. My Jesus legs were swept right out from under and I felt the Spirit rush out of me like a deflated balloon. It was days of doubts. Going back to the existence of TV and isolation seemed well... very appealing. Have you ever been there? Then Psalm 34:18 came to the rescue.

Today, I have licked my wounds and am determined to stay exactly where the Lord has placed me and I am gonna keep loving; enemies included. With every moment, I will ask what Jesus would do so I could try to do that.

To satan I say... it's on. God is going to fill this space. you can't have it. And I can handle whatever you have planned. I serve a God that already defeated you. I will not let my heart grow hard and I will not retreat. So bring it.

Love Lisa

P.S. No those are not typos above. I refuse to provide an upper case to any reference of satan. Only the Lord gets my capitalization.