

THIS MONTH'S MEDITATION SCRIPTURE: *Brethren, even if a man is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, lest you too be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and thus fulfill the law of Christ. Gal.6:1,2*

## So, Who Have You Shot Lately?

It is almost seventeen years now since I decided that I would no longer engage in homosexual sin. I was miserable in the life I was leading, and quite tired of the lies and secrecy I had let become such a major part of my life. My conscience couldn't take anymore, my spirit was sorely wounded, and my soul was in great turmoil. I had made that decision before—many times; even vowed to Father that the last time would **be** the last time. I was tired of saying it, and I just knew He was tired of hearing it.

But then, it finally took. It wasn't until several years later that I came to realize why that last time actually **was** the last time. On the way home from a business trip where I had acted out yet again, with my ritualized cry-out to the Lord to forgive me and my "take this away" plea, I heard Father's response to my cry as He said, "Daniel, it's time to tell Fran." Well, that certainly wasn't what I expected to hear!!!! A well-aimed lightning bolt would have been more welcomed. At the time, I thought, "What could being honest and truthful have to do with leaving sin behind?" Why couldn't I just stop? Why did anyone have to know about the shameful things I'd been giving myself to for so many years?

But the fact is, I couldn't begin to get the liberating healing I needed until I was willing to confess my sin, and receive intercessory prayer for my condition, and that meant telling people, not just God. (Jas.5:16)

Years before, I had chosen to take the occasional step to be vulnerable with some men whom I respected spiritually, and to share my sexual history. It didn't always go so well. Most times, I was left feeling empty, uncared for, not encouraged, as if they didn't know what to do with someone like me. I found that not everyone I entrusted with this side of me was enthused with the idea of hearing about someone's messed up sexual identity and exploits. It wasn't that I spilled revealing details; it was more that men (especially) just didn't talk about sexual sin much then. Sometimes, it seemed like the ones I shared with were not able to get away far enough and fast enough, and once again I would feel abandoned. Unfortunately, we haven't come a whole lot farther in some respects. Even in "accountability groups," much of what is shared is superficial, the conversation is fumbled when it comes to sexual integrity matters, and root issues are really not resolved. Often times, men will just out and out lie when it comes to their sexual integrity for fear of being what I'll call "Phariseed".

Today, there are still churches that will not address sexual addiction and/or homosexuality from the pulpit in any kind of way that is redemptive to those who are suffering in silence. Kyle Foster of Mastering Life Ministries, states, "In the average pew of 15 people, 5 will have been sexually abused, 2 will have gender identity confusion/homosexual orientation, 3 will struggle with pornography." I first heard these statistics in 2003, and I'm not certain how old they were at the time. I can only imagine how much higher those figures are now in 2009.

Pastors are usually not afraid to offer general condemnation of such behavior, but addressing these matters as an actual problem in the lives of their congregants is rare. Many pastors will not

publicly address Internet porn issues with their congregations, as in many instances the topic may hit too close to home.

Fortunately, after several years of recovery and healing from the Lord, most of whatever concerns I had in the past about sharing my sexual history have been alleviated. The more comfortable I have become telling my story, the easier it has become handling the responses of people who hear--- whatever they may be. Also, Father has blessed me with numerous men and women in my life who love and support me, and the direction the Lord has taken me, including my pastor and his wife, as well as my church family. But I consider myself blessed in that respect. Many are not so fortunate.

Many men and women who have already come out of or are attempting to leave homosexuality do not have the luxury of being members of congregations where they feel safe sharing their histories with the pastor, let alone others in the congregation with whom they may become friends. It is not uncommon to hear tales of church-going, Bible-believing men and women of God spouting tired clichés such as, “There are no homos in our church,” or “God hates fags!” or “God tells us to love the sinner, but hate the sin.” The sad fact is that most Christians have not known how to love the homosexual sinner in a way that will turn their lives to the Lord. And those who are already believers, who desire to leave homosexuality behind, often fear the ramifications of sharing their story. I personally have met ones over the years who were asked to leave churches they were a part of when it became known that they were homosexual strugglers.

Singling out their homosexuality is not the answer. These wounded ones need care, compassion and understanding. We can't keep shooting our wounded ones over and over again. These are individual souls in need of a Savior and Healer just like the liar, the swindler, or the thief. None is any worse than the next. Homosexual strugglers in our midst need to be included and incorporated into our church families. They need to be invited to dinner in our homes, to hang out at the malls or to go for coffee. They need to build relationships, getting to know fellow believers, and in the process have modeled for them Father's intended masculinity and femininity by brothers and sisters in the Body of Christ who are healthy and mature. They need the exact same things every one of Father's children needs to be influenced toward the Lord, and for others to forget about the fact that they struggle with homosexuality. That is not who they are. Their homosexual sin does not define them, or their worth to Father's kingdom purposes.

One problem here, though, is that this concept often presents uncomfortability for those who do not struggle with this same sin. Homosexual strugglers need to be able to come into a church family and know no one will roll their eyes at them when they sit next to someone, or speak to someone. The male overcomer needs to be free to be himself, even if that includes his as-of-yet unchanged feminine mannerisms, or lispy, soft voice, or less than John Wayne saunter. The woman who yet displays masculine appearance, dress and mannerisms needs to know that she is loved and accepted for who she is in Christ, not what she looks like or how she acts. Overcomers need to know we are working to get past ourselves and listen for the Spirit's direction to love them, encourage them, and bless them. They need to know they are safe in our congregations from being shot and wounded again by their well-meaning but missing-the-mark brothers and sisters. We need to follow Jesus' example and serve those who need His saving grace. We need to extend loving support to them so they can grow in Him. And we need to pray consistently that Father will restore what the enemy has stolen from these casualties of life who will turn into overcomers because of the prayers of the saints who love them as they cooperate with God's plan for their lives.

Let's examine ourselves to see if we are part of Father's redemptive plan, or if we are among those who have their guns drawn, ready to fire on the already wounded.

### Responses From You

From a brother in IN (in response to September's Newsletter on Love): Loved it!

And from Louisville: Thank you for your monthly newsletter.

From a dear sister in CA: Thanks for bringing the APA reversal to light. For as much fanfare as the original claim received, it's interesting to see how little (if any) publicity was given to the reversal. I am also glad to hear you have a group of people involved with those who do not wish to leave the lifestyle...Certainly no one can be forced to make a choice against their will, and whatever they choose, they still need the love of those around them. But how to express it in day-to-day relationships is not always easy to discern.

### Ministry Goals

Father continues to add to our numbers of ministry participants and Family & Friends Support Group members. Please continue to pray for even more to be added as He wills. There are so many hurting saints who need Father's touch, and Abba's Delight ministry desires to be available to serve.

We are still seeking the Lord for His will with regards to an inexpensive yet quality website for the ministry. Please pray that His direction and provision will be evident.

We are still available for speaking engagements at churches, clubs, youth groups, Sunday school classes, Christian schools, etc. We believe Father has specifics in mind where Abba's Delight can minister and bring hope where there is little or none. If you are in a position to recommend our ministry to one who has the ability to schedule an engagement, please do so, then make me aware of how I might contact that individual.

There are two conferences this coming year that we would like to attend, and that are important for our continuing education. Please pray that the Lord will provide the means to participate.

### Year-End Contributions

Please prayerfully consider Abba's Delight when determining where your final year-end ministry gift dollars will be sent. Of course, your contribution is tax-deductible, and whatever you send will go a long way to accomplish all the goals that Father has put in our heart to reach as many as possible with the message of hope for freedom from homosexuality and its effects. Thank you for your consideration, and your generosity. And **THANK YOU** to those who have contributed already; you're a huge blessing.

**If you do not wish to receive the Abba's Delight ministry Newsletter any longer, please let me know. If you wish to continue to receive it, please be certain to put our email address into your address book, so that this mailing does not go to your spam file and report to your carrier. Thank you.**

*Now unto Him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy, to the only God our Savior through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen. Jude 24, 25*