

# "A Chill Runs Through Me..."

"I cry out to God; yes, I shout. Oh, that God would listen to me! When I was in deep trouble, I searched for the Lord. All night long I prayed, with hands lifted toward heaven, but my soul was not comforted. I think of God, and I moan, overwhelmed with longing for his help. You don't let me sleep. I am too distressed even to pray!"

Asaph | Psalm 77 (NLT)

It's become pattern... awash with challenges, I wake in the night to solve them. I've come to believe that the Lord wakes me to spur solutions. (Can you relate?) The quiet of the night proves a special time to think and commune with God as he helps me. Indeed, fresh, out of the box ideas often drop in from nowhere. I've relished these nighttime encounters with God... until recently.

My awake times have grown longer and less "productive." Overtired, dialogs have shifted to monologs... me silently shouting my "requests" to the Lord. Like the psalmist, my soul has not been comforted. Longing for help, my mind has raced... "Oh that God would listen to me!"

A few nights ago, King David came to mind. He routinely asked the Lord for direction and received a reply. "Why not ask?" So, I did... "What do you want me to do?" ... and waited and waited. Fighting discouragement, I acknowledged, "God, I know I've only heard you speak to me as I've read scripture..."

The next morning during my devotional time I read:

I heard an unknown voice say, "Now I will take the load from your shoulders; I will free your hands from their heavy tasks. You cried to me in trouble, and I saved you..." Asaph (Psalm 81)

Immediately, a chill ran through me... I shook my head and yielded... "Lord, you **do** have me!"

Reflect: What have my nighttime encounters with the Lord been like?

During this stretch, my arms and shoulders tightened as if holding a heavy box. I struggled to relax only to feel them tighten again, defiant. No wonder it felt as if I'd been working the night shift at FedEx when I woke in the morning! The Lord pointed out that I'd been attempting to carry a heavy load that was not mine. I'm amazed I hadn't seen this... pride blinded me.

"So humble yourselves under the mighty power of God, and at the right time he will lift you up in honor. Give all your worries and cares to God, for he cares about you." The Apostle Peter (1 Peter 5:6-7)

The "unknown voice" made it clear that the late-night wrestling match between my conscious and subconscious was futile. No amount of discipline or effort would prevail over my deeply entrenched independence and sense of responsibility. I felt helpless, incapable. Pride had its death grip on me and was squeezing like a boa coiled around its prey. I surrendered and the Lord saved me from trouble I didn't even know I was in!

Immediately, a chill ran through me... I shook my head and yielded... "Lord, you <u>do</u> have me!"

Consider: Pride... it blinds and, left unchecked, kills.

How long might I have struggled if I hadn't switched from telling to asking God? What if I lacked a regular devotional time to hear his reply? Had I not asked in prayer, would the morning scripture have spoken to me? Indeed, I've read Psalm 81 countless times; that verse always went unnoticed.

"The Lord says, "I will guide you along the best pathway for your life. I will advise you and watch over you. Do not be like a senseless horse or mule that needs a bit and bridle to keep it under control." King David (Psalm 32:8-9)

It's so easy to be a senseless mule, right?! How many times must the Lord affirm that he really does have me (and you)? As I write this, I realize... countless times!

A chill runs through me right now... I shake my head and yield... "Lord, you **do** have me!"

Imagine: My Mission advancing the Lord's Mission in me.

As much as I'd like never to find myself bound in that prideful constrictor's death grip again, I've come to realize there's no escaping it. In fact, working to advance my Mission leads me directly into it. I consider it a beautiful refining furnace, where God makes me more and more like Jesus – his Mission in me.

"And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them. For God knew his people in advance, and he chose them to become like his Son, so that his Son would be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters." The Apostle Paul (Romans 8:28-29)

As I realize that advancing my Mission advances the Lord's Mission in me...

### "A Chill Runs Through Me..."

Go off the grid and ask these questions:

#### **Coach's Questions**

- How will I shift from "telling" to "asking" God? How will I put myself in place to hear his response?
- How did my last round with the prideful constrictor change me?
- Knowing that the Lord "has me," what must I yield to him right now?

# Spirit Talk

Post this where you will see it regularly.

#### "Lord, you do have me!"

"My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish. No one can snatch them away from me, for my Father has given them to me, and he is more powerful than anyone else. No one can snatch them from the Father's hand. The Father and I are one."

Jesus Christ | John 10:27-30 (NLT)









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