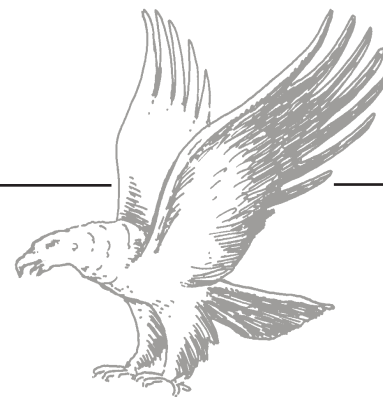


Wings

*"Those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength;
they shall mount up with wings like eagles."
Isaiah 40:31*



January 3, 2016

Forgetting God

Few people consciously decide that they do not believe in God and refuse to serve Him.

The far more common problem is the vast number of those who simply forget Him.

"Thus says the Lord: 'I remember you, the kindness of your youth, the love of your betrothal, when you went after Me in the wilderness, in a land not sown. Israel was holiness to the Lord, the first-fruits of His increase. All that devour him will offend; disaster will come upon them,' says the Lord.' . . . Can a virgin forget her ornaments, or a bride her attire? Yet My people have forgotten Me days without number" (Jer. 2:2-3, 32).



Few metaphors in the Bible are as touching—and heart-breaking—as the one God uses here. He describes His earlier relationship with Israel as that of two young people madly in love. Like the young bride who is willing to follow her husband wherever he goes, Israel “went after Me in the wilderness.” As long as she had Him, she didn’t care how little or how much she had. For His part, God jealously protected the love of His life; no one dared touch His girl, or “disaster will come upon them.”

But over time, the passion of those early years faded, at least on Israel’s part. The excitement of the marriage ceremony

was long gone, and her affections were now directed elsewhere. No bride can forget her wedding dress; yet Israel “has forgotten Me days without number.” God’s heart was crushed.

This poignant picture teaches us a great deal about God and our relationship with Him.

First, it reveals that God is not a harsh taskmaster. He is the perfect husband: always faithful, always protective, always sacrificing for the one he loves. His bride can always trust Him to do what is best for her. His guidance is not for the purpose of suppressing our fun, but for enhancing our quality of life. If we will commit to following Him wherever He leads us—even through a wilderness—He will take care of us and we’ll be happier for the experience.

Second, it exposes our unfaithfulness to God for the treachery it is. The wife who dumps her committed husband to chase after lesser men is despised by everyone. Is it any different when we abandon God in favor of our idols of career, money, possessions, or trivial pursuits? While we are living it up and

having a good time, God is sitting in heaven alone, grieving at the pain of being rejected by the one He loves. It takes a special kind of ingratitude to inflict that kind of hurt upon another. Yet that is what we do to God routinely.

But this story also informs us of a key factor behind our failure to remain true to God. Notice that God says, “My people have *forgotten* Me.” Rarely do people study themselves to a conviction of rejecting God. Instead, the usual process is one of a creeping casual indifference. Oh, we still believe in God, but it is a shallow, insincere faith that holds little influence over our lives. Whatever passion we once may have had in pursuing God is gradually replaced by an indifferent boredom. We no longer consult God about the decisions we make; we fail to thank Him for the good things that come our way or seek His strength when bad things intrude into our lives.

The great tragedy of our time is not that so many curse God to His face, but that great numbers have simply forgotten Him. It is a mistake they will come to regret some day. Don’t let it be you!

– David King