**Walking Alone**

In the Bible, men and women of God often had to walk alone. Though it is certainly true that God will not leave or forsake his people (Joshua 1:5), and his children can in all confidence say with Paul, “…but the Lord stood by me,” this does not mean that their loneliness in this world is not real and painful. Think of Noah, Job, Moses, Ruth, David, Abigail, Jeremiah, Jesus’ mother, Paul, and so many others. And think of the Savior himself, who took the form of a man, identified with us completely, walked and talked among men, and yet he had to face so much of his work in loneliness. Even in the face of teeming crowds of people he was really very much alone - because his mission set him apart, his consciousness of sin and righteousness weighed heavily on him, and NO MAN COULD REALLY SENSE THAT AS WELL AS HE COULD!

If you follow our Lord, it will at times be so with you. Hopefully you will have some brothers and sisters with whom you can enjoy fellowship in the congregation, and that is so important and can be so precious. But IF you really battle in the depths of our own spiritual struggles in Christ, trying sincerely to grow to what he wants you to be, you will at times be all alone. It will be just you and your conscience before God, and you will have to sort through things in a way that others do not understand and may not support. You will have to think in solitude in your heart, and will have to find your consolation in Him alone and in His word. But when it is just you and Him, then you will GROW in spirit, strengthened in your trial.

“The truly spiritual man is indeed something of an oddity. He lives not for himself but to promote the interests of Another. He seeks to persuade people to give all to His Lord and asks no portion or share for himself. He delights not to be honored but to see his Savior glorified in the eyes of men. His joy is to see His Lord promoted and himself neglected. He finds few who care to talk about that which is the supreme object of his interest, so he is often silent and preoccupied in the midst of noisy religious shoptalk. For this he earns the reputation of being dull and over-serious, and the gulf between him and society widens. He searches for friends upon whose garments he can detect the smell of myrrh and aloes and cassias out of the ivory palaces (Ps. 45:8), and finding few or none, he, like Mary of old, keeps these things in his heart.” [A.W. Tozer, *The Radical Cross*]

The lonely saint is not a proud, “holier-than-thou” snob, as portrayed often in the popular media. He is humble, compassionate, and attuned to the needs of those around him, especially their spiritual plight. He is sensitive to others and wants to share his heart with like-minded souls, but the climate around him may not be very receptive, so often he must be silent and commune with God. He is IN the world, but not really OF the world.

But so many Christians today simply feel at home as part of the world. They have lost their sense of being strangers and pilgrims. They are not really lonely. They fit well in the community, respectable good neighbors. They have a comfortable church-life – brothers and sisters who reinforce their spiritual contentment. They will let you know they are doing very well, thank you. Just so the preacher is not too fanatical and the elders are not too nosy about their personal lives. **They are not lonely, but neither are they the saints of God!**

**So if you find in some ways you are walking alone in trying to serve Him, take heart. It is a mark of maturing in Christ. Don’t grow weary and quit. Stand up like a man or woman of God and keep walking. If all others are faithless, HE is faithful. By His providence He will guard your way.**

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