



she loves

Devotional
January 11, 2010

PRECIOUS

Dear Friends,

To stay on the theme of perspective from last week's devotional, I want us to consider how words are used. Not only do the meanings we project on words change throughout history but one word can mean very different things within the same time frame. Take for instance the Word "bad". I, being 50 years old, would immediately think something was awful, terrible, and wrong. Someone much younger (or perhaps in this too I'm outdated) might think it refers to something good or even great. And I really don't know what they are trying to say then the comment is made "me bad". If they are really sorry for what they did, why do I always end up feeling guilty????

Anyways, no matter what words mean they have the ability to stick with us, to communicate something real about life.

During my sabbatical I took the time to watch the whole Lord of the Rings (no, not all in one sitting but in three days and yes I fast-forwarded some parts). What shouted out at me over and over was the word "PRECIOUS".

Often that word is used to describe a new-born baby or an act of love. Our voices get softer and our hearts seem to melt: "Oh, how PRECIOUS!" But in Lord of the Rings, when Gollum calls the ring "PRECIOUS" his eyes are glazed with desire, his body is taunt with anticipation, and his heart is filled with obsession. He must have it. It fills his every waking thought. It represented evil and in the movie whenever anyone put it on it drew them to more and greater evil.

How "PRECIOUS" is our sin to us?... To what lengths have we gone to possess it and act on it? ...

I'm sitting comfortably in my arm chair, laptop in reach, the sun setting, the birds fluttering in the trees, and all I can think about is how angry I am at someone. For a moment my anger feels good, I feel energized, vindicated, and strong. But then I hear Jesus asking me through his Holy Spirit, "How PRECIOUS is your anger to you? Are you willing for it to rule and destroy your life?" I see a picture of myself with the body of Gollum (Google it for yourself). That is what evil looks like on. Is that really who I want to be?

No, in my good moments, definitely not!!! But like Pastor Tim said on the weekend, we are powerless against our sinful nature. Only by the Holy Spirit's power can we overcome our

desire for “PRECIOUS”. Consider memorizing the following verses. God reminded me of them just now. It’s his way of helping me let go of evil and grab hold of him.

Romans 8:5-13 Those who are dominated by the sinful nature think about sinful things, but those who are controlled by the Holy Spirit think about things that please the Spirit. So letting your sinful nature control your mind leads to death. But letting the Spirit control your mind leads to life and peace. For the sinful nature is always hostile to God. It never did obey God’s laws, and it never will. That’s why those who are still under the control of their sinful nature can never please God.

But you are not controlled by your sinful nature. You are controlled by the Spirit if you have the Spirit of God living in you. (And remember that those who do not have the Spirit of Christ living in them do not belong to him at all.) And Christ lives within you, so even though your body will die because of sin, the Spirit gives you life[d] because you have been made right with God. The Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from the dead, lives in you. And just as God raised Christ Jesus from the dead, he will give life to your mortal bodies by this same Spirit living within you.

Therefore, dear brothers and sisters, you have no obligation to do what your sinful nature urges you to do. For if you live by its dictates, you will die. But if through the power of the Spirit you put to death the deeds of your sinful nature, you will live.

Thank you Father God for giving me power through your Holy Spirit to shed myself of anger and to open my heart up to love. Thank you!

Is “PRECIOUS” ruining your life?

Blessings from Bev



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