

Quitting

By Don Potter

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I was walking into my house one day and my wife was reading a Scripture and suggested I listen to it read it. I'm not sure if every marriage is like this, but in my house Christine is often the convicting voice of the Holy Spirit. I was very busy that day as I basically have workaholic tendencies. Never time enough to do the things that demand attention much less the things I would like to do. Finally after some looking around the house for the thing I couldn't find I stopped for a minute and said with a half-interested sigh, "OK, read me the Scripture." He also that is slothful in his work is brother to him that is a great waster, Proverbs 18:9," she cheerfully said.

I stared up at the ceiling and then at the floor for a second and thought, "Why would she read me this Scripture? Does she think I'm lazy?" I answered and said, "That's nice, I'll be back later."

The rest of the day was consumed with many things for me to do but I couldn't get this Scripture out of my mind. When I got done and settled down, I opened my Greek-Hebrew Study Bible. I started to study this Scripture. After a bit of time I was taken back with conviction. Let me show you what I found in these words written so long ago.

SLOTHFUL

Slothful means to be slack or idle, which I knew I was not. But then it went on to say; to be despondent, or to withdraw, to desert or quit. That got my attention because I had just been through a bout of pulling back from places and people I felt wounded or offended by. When I get rejected I usually just disappear, if not in the natural then for sure in the spirit. Many times I've prayed for thicker skin but the Lord keeps telling me that "thicker skin means less responsive." Where music and praise are concerned being responsive is vital.

The Lord reminded me that offence means stumbling block or an occasion to fall. Jesus was a stumbling block for many, (Isaiah 8:14) so if I'm offended by someone it might just be Jesus (the truth) I'm stumbling over.

WORK

Work; this is my favorite subject as I feel myself a hard worker. Turns out that the Proverb writer was not talking about labor. "Work" means duty-ship or ministry. It can mean the activity of work or the fruit of your labor. It basically means someone's call. So now Proverbs 18:9 starts with, "He that quits his call or ministry...." I'm really starting to

sweat some because I was not ready to believe that reacting to rejection is really quitting a call or a ministry duty.

The Lord reminded me of King David fleeing his call when his son Absalom made an advance for the throne (see 2 Sam.15:13-29). I've often wondered why David gave up something he had been anointed to do. He was clearly a warrior so he wasn't afraid. Possibly he was afraid of confrontation, but there are many Scriptures showing him confronting and challenging his men. I asked the Lord and He answered with a question: "Why do you flee from your position when challenged?" There is only one answer to a question the Lord asks and that is the truth. The truth is I flee because I never believed in my heart I was competent enough to do the job. David felt the same as do many truly called people in ministry.

So this is the obvious answer, God does not call people to a place or position because they are competent or capable, but because He wills it. If He has called me then He will equip me (Hebrews13:20-21). I continued to study this very short verse.

THE GREAT WASTER

The "great waster" seemed like an interesting thing to say so I looked it up. It means to destroy or to ruin by pulling down. It goes on to say this pulling down can kill others and eventually pull down an entire community. The word "wicked" popped up in there too. Now this simple Scripture could be paraphrased as "He that quits his call is brother to one who pulls down others to the extent of destroying an entire community."

All my rejection issues started passing before my eyes when I knew I was brother to one who could destroy a community. If one soldier leaves his post during war time the enemy will most assuredly come in that open door. It doesn't matter if he has a legitimate reason for leaving or not.

I know I could be spreading a lot of condemnation right now with this, but if this is happening to you and you feel convicted by what this is saying, turn around somehow. Get in touch with God and find out what you are called to and find out if you are running from it. Even if there are great hindrances in the way of getting right with someone who has wounded you, don't give up the call on your life. Being accepted or rejected has nothing to do with the call God has placed on any life. Since the gifts and callings are without repentance, (Romans 11:29) how then can any of us make a decision to quit based on the rejection of others?

WILL THE CALLED RESPOND?

Once, while I was with the Lord, I asked Him to give me a prayer to pray. He said, "Pray that those I've called will respond to Me." I said, I know all kinds of people who want to be in ministry, what do You mean by this? He just repeated the statement.

I personally believe there are many who are in ministry or were in ministry and have backed way off from the first call on their lives. There are a host of reasons for quitting but I trust none of these reasons are good enough to stop an anointed, called and released person from doing everything the Lord has made them to do.