

After “unselfing “ - what?

That has been a huge question I have been facing these past months, but in the quietness I have heard God speaking about “being seated with Him in heavenly places” and so this weekend at Greystones was a great encouragement to me, and a confirmation to me of what I have thought the Lord has been saying. I thought I would write to you and share some of this and explain how the weekend clarified some of my struggles.

Latterly I have sensed that what Jesus has been showing me about this journey that we are on, is that He, Jesus, has set the pattern, showing us the way He wants us to go.

His way was life “in the flesh” (A bad analogy regarding Jesus –but you know what I mean), death on the cross (of self), and burial (of the old self)...

Then:-

resurrection (of the new creation but still “I”), ascension, and being seated at the right hand of the Father. I have felt Jesus encouraging me to live more in resurrection life, more in the ascending with Him and more in the sitting with Him where He sits (as Johan so beautifully explained).

That was the revelation I kept getting, but the struggle for me is that I seemed stuck in the “dying to self” stage. It seemed that I had no sooner died to self in one area, than I seemed to need to die in another area, until I was so dead that I could not rise to any kind of new life.

As the Lord often does lead one in one's struggles, I felt that I needed to read Watchman Nee's “The Spiritual Man”. I found, (amazingly) a friend with a copy I could borrow. In this book Watchman Nee explains (in a chapter entitled “The Believers mistake”) that many fully surrendered Christians fall into the trap of dying so successfully to self, that they become passive both in mind and will and in this state become deceived by the enemy.

I felt as if I was in that place, and in my dying to self, my will and mind had become fertile ground for deception. These past months have been

marked by an underlying sense of nebulous disquiet. Deceived, I was sure I was. How, was not exactly clear to me.

I tried to measure my Christianity against Christians I know and I felt unconnected, frustrated and completely alone.

I thought that God was doing a new thing –wanting to move us onto new unbroken ground, on and up... Other Christians (i.e. those who are on the journey) seemed to be struggling with the present, and were looking back at the past – wanting those old dramatic “coffee meetings,” and trying to plunge back into studying the word, doing New Courses offered by churches and going to “Shopping List” prayer meetings.

But I kept hearing the Lord speaking to me, not directly out of His Word but directly to me – as a man talks to his friend. He spoke such odd things – things about love and things like “You are my treasured possession”, and “I am pleased with you.” “Pleased?” I would respond, “About what? But I'm not doing anything? I am just waiting. I am absolutely and completely useless. How can God be pleased with that? “And finally would come the whisper-”This cannot be God. “

At the time of the weekend I was struggling with trying to resurrect some “new Creation”- some new “I” with a new identity and a new mission and purpose... So the weekend proceeded and people shared their stories, and I began to relax and feel that I had come home.....

The release for me came on Sunday morning when you said:

“I said: I will not be deceived- if I ask for a fish you will not give me a stone...” When you spoke that one sentence I realized that my “Great Deception” was not what I thought it was.

Hebrews 4:2 says; “...but the message they heard was of no value to them because

those who heard did not combine it with faith.”

The deception was not that I was NOT hearing God. The deception was that I WAS hearing God and I didn't believe what I heard. It all relates, as you said, to FAITH. The enemy was attacking me at that place – that vulnerable place where God speaks- and we need to add our faith, (or rather HIS faith- faith from Him), to be able to believe it! That has been very liberating and has helped me a lot. I have been able to put down all attempts to resurrect myself, and allow myself (i.e. my unselfed self) to be drawn up by HIM – by His love. I need no plans, no purposes, no missions. I need only to focus on Him and forget myself. It was wonderful to be with you over the weekend. I soaked in what went on like a dry sponge. It was wonderful to feel “normal”.

Today I walked up the hill in the early morning mist-rain and Jesus spoke to me:

“I have revealed myself to you as a Lion, and as a Lamb. Even as an Eagle. The time has come to reveal myself to you as a man.”

“Oh,” I said

“You don't really trust men, do you?”

“No,” I said.

“It's okay,” He said “You can trust me. This is all about faithfulness. You don't need to worry. I am faithful. I am a faithful God. And I also give faith.”

Stephan, thanks so much to you and Linda