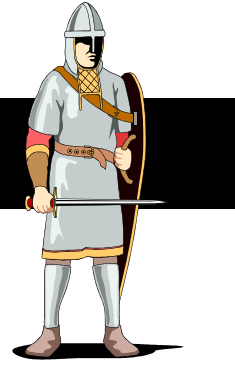


# Wall of Prayer



January 31, 2008

Dear Faithful Prayer Warrior,

As we approach the Valentines season, I am reminded of the true love of our Heavenly Father, our Creator and Redeemer who would give His only Son to live and die for us. John passionately writes to those believers who were being swayed by “the world”: its false teaching, its physical passions...lusts of the flesh, it’s materialistic lusts of the eye, and it’s craving for power. Those who would say they loved God, but in reality hated their brother and showed no sign of new life and true love. In 1 John, John tells us with great passion of being in the presence of the living God; of seeing Him, touching Him, hearing Him. He was an eye witness of the God-Man, Jesus Christ, his Lord, his Savior, the love of his life. In the power of the Holy Spirit, he articulates the relationship he was granted and the Light that came into his dark world and gave him freedom from sin and eternal life; a full life, spilling over with joy; a life that is not isolated but one that is contagious; a conduit for this love to wash over the lives of others. Later in this first letter he writes, “Oh what manner of Love the Father hath given unto us, that we should be called the children of God!” and, “These things I write to you that your joy may be full...that you may not sin” and if we sin, we have an Advocate with the Father...Jesus. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Over and over John’s pen writes of God’s merciful love and forgiveness and of John’s desire that we repent of our sins and accept this unfathomable love he has been in the physical presence of. In John 17 we see that the One John loves so deeply, loves John and prays fervently for him and His other followers and “for those who would believe because of the words John and other eye witnesses wrote.” Jesus’ very words tell of His unending love for those the Father gave Him. He prayed that we would be kept from the evil one and that we would have the joy that was in Him. He prayed that we would be set apart, made holy by the truth of His word. He prays that we would be one, even as He and the Father are one....that He would be in us as God is in Him...that we would all be one...that the world would know that God sent Him. And finally, He prays that we would all be with Him in glory.

As we glimpse into these very personal writings, I am moved by the greatest love story of all: God giving the priceless gift of His son and Jesus then stretching out His arms on the cross to show how much He loves us. It doesn’t stop there. Through the power of His Holy Spirit this amazing love spread through history and rests in us today. We have a relationship with Him and fellowship with one another. We have the opportunity for deep commitments and relationships where we look to the needs of others as if they were our own. We carry other’s burdens and share in the joy of their accomplishments. We are able to love the unlovely and serve those who may not even know us. We are able to love those who have offended us.

Last Sunday I was reminded of this love in the story of Onesimus told by Paul in his letter to Philemon. Here was a thieving slave who had run away from his owner Philemon who held church in his home with the help of his family. Onesimus, whose name means “useful,” was really “useless” until he ran into the forgiving transforming love of our Lord and changed completely. Imagine Philemon’s response when he read the letter from his good friend Paul encouraging him to forgive Onesimus and accept him as a brother rather than a slave. Onesimus made me think of the students for whom we pray. How many teens out there are aimlessly running through life

totally lost and useless. We have an advocate with the Father, Jesus, who waits to intercede for us as we, in all our weakness and frailty, plead for those who may be useless now, but by the work of the Holy Spirit of God can become useful. Those who may be addicted to drugs, promiscuous, or just living in the lusts of this world, could one day fall in love with our Savior and desire to live for Him. Onesimus had become vital to Paul's ministry as he sat in prison...possibly instrumental in writing for Paul whose sight was poor. Even as God's love poured into your life and mine, bringing us into loving fellowship with Him, He can change the lives of our teens if we continue to ask Him to.

In Him,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Susan".

Susan Admire