

Break Free...

*A Thought for the Week From Patrick Kemper at
No Strongholds Ministries*

Week 8

Spiritual Caller ID

2 Timothy 1:7 (NIV)

{7} For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline.

Can you remember back to a time when, if the phone rang, and if you wanted to know who was calling, you needed to actually pick it up and answer it?

I do.

The technology of today benefits us in many ways (among which is caller ID), making it very easy to decide whether or not we really want to pick up the phone and interact with the party on the other end. If you are anything like me, you use it frequently to avoid discussions with telemarketers or addressing issues that really can wait until I have finished stomping out the fire I am currently addressing.

Lately I have been in a slump.

Joy has eluded me and I have been making some mistakes that, no doubt, have perpetuated the lingering of the dark clouds over my life. I am usually an active person who eats right, exercises and remains productive – but not lately. I have been struggling with apathy and lethargy.

I have been hiding from all the things that I am supposed to be doing - the things I am usually doing. I get all twisted and become an encyclopedia of excuses for not being able to step up and do the things that need to get done. Fear grips my heart and I retreat.

As I prayed about it this morning, God brought to mind a couple verses...

Romans 8:11 (TLB)

{11} And if the Spirit of God, who raised up Jesus from the dead, lives in you, he will make your dying bodies live again after you die, by means of this same Holy Spirit living within you.

Romans 8:12-14 (TLB)

{12} So, dear brothers, you have no obligations whatever to your old sinful nature to do what it begs you to do. {13} For if you keep on following it you are lost and will perish, but if through the power of the Holy Spirit you crush it and its evil deeds, you shall live. {14} For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.

2 Timothy 1:7 (NIV)

{7} For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline.

I have obviously been answering the wrong calls.

Application

Truth is the most effective weapon against the attacks of the enemy, but I have been listening to (and engaging in) conversations designed to lead me away from the truth about who I am, what I am required to accept... and what I am not.

You must be intentional about the filters you use (and immediately proactive about the ones you do not already have in place). You go to a lot of trouble to filter out the spam from your email accounts and use caller ID to filter away the conversations that will not be the most productive at the moment, but what do you have in place to keep you from being obligated, bogged down and distracted, spiritually?

If you are showing effort to enhance your relationship with Christ, if you desire to do the absolute most you can with what He has given to you, the enemy is too smart to get right in your face and blast you with things that are obviously wrong.

Guerilla warfare is so much more effective.

The enemy wants to take you out of the game using methods that will encourage you to stay out of the game all by yourself. They will always work on you in the areas where you cause them the most heartache. And for them, subtlety is the key to their success against you much of the time.

In my case, I have been listening to the conversations that have been telling me I am not capable and I should just slow down, take a little time off... If they can once get me off the track for a pit stop, they have created the environment to sell me all the reasons why getting back out there is fruitless, useless and not really worth the effort.

You must be careful to put in place filters through which you test the conversations that are coming at you from all directions. You must be careful to correctly label the conversations that present themselves.

You must learn to identify the Voice... from the noise.

John 10:27 (AMP)

²⁷ The sheep that are My own hear and are listening to My voice; and I know them, and they follow Me.

The only way you are going to become familiar with His voice, discerning it above all the noise blasting at you from all directions, is through submission in worship and choosing to pray – listening - with a heart prepared to be obedient before you speak.

Showing up for “prayer” with just your list and 4.3 minutes (or while you are driving to work) will never place you in a position to hear, and become familiar with, His voice.

I’m not saying that you cannot bring a list and you cannot pray in the car. What I am saying is that you must pause for some intentional, uninterrupted, undivided focus every day. The time you spend sharing your attention with the other tasks you must complete throughout the day will not do much for deepening your relationship, and will not allow you to finish His sentences the way you do with others that have become intimately connected with your life.

This is the objective – finish His sentences.

You should be so connected with Jesus that when He speaks, you know it is Him, what He is saying and can finish His sentence. This is only possible when His list is more important than yours.

Romans 8:12-14 is a reminder that you are under no obligation to listen to the things of the flesh. You have a choice – listen and lose, or crush and cruise - by the power of the Holy Spirit who lives within you.

Finally, II Timothy 1:7 should be the filter through which all internal conversations must pass. If the caller ID is not reading PL&SC (Power, Love and Self-Control), it is not your Father... don’t answer.

Homework for the Week...

1.) Have you been answering the wrong calls? Is the enemy successfully ambushing you with guerilla warfare? What are the areas where they get you to stay out of the game voluntarily? What filters do you have in place? Which ones do you need to install in order to hear God's voice above the rest? Describe your prayer life – is it a conversation, or just a reading of your list? What should you do to change this? Write down what needs work and what methods you will use to begin accomplishing this. Who can you contact to help you? Be specific.

2.) Mid-week check. List the opportunities you have had and how you responded (this is your obedience indicator). If you are still posting a doughnut, more than likely you weren't all that truthful when you asked God for chances to respond and improve. Check your heart; be authentic. Ask God to show you the way through what is blocking you from submitting in obedience.

3.) How are you doing compared to the way you started the week? If you still need improvement, refuse to move on to the next session. Stay here, submit, and choose to be obedient no matter what it takes. Explain how you have improved, or make a commitment to continue working. When you are operating in obedience in this area of your life... turn the page and move to the next session.
