CHRONIC JOY® DEVOTIONAL

AXE HEAD LOST

By Karin Fendick

I have been crucified with Christ [that is, in Him I have shared His crucifixion]; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body I live by faith [by adhering to, relying on, and completely trusting] in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me. (Galatians 2:2 AMP)

Last year, I felt distant from the two things that mean the most to me: my relationship with Jesus and the time I spent stringing words together in meaningful ways. I felt like the sorrowful servant in 2 Kings 6:1-7.

- What had happened?
- Why was I no longer effective?
- Had I stopped listening?
- Did I stop believing God would speak to me?
- Where did I lose the edge that kept my words together?

RECOGNIZING THE LIES

The laptop sat open on the table beside me. Nothing screams at a writer as loudly as an empty page.

- Do you really think anyone would be interested in what you say?
- You're wasting your time; you have nothing significant to share.
- Who do you think you are, anyway?

There was a powerful familiarity in the words. I have learned over the years to recognize the enemy's voice.

Quickly, I pounded on the keyboard: *Shut up! I'm writing here!!!* At least the screen wasn't blank anymore.

This scenario plays out more often than I care to admit, and the lessons it holds don't sink in deeply enough to last.

When he speaks a falsehood, he speaks what is natural to him, for he is a liar [himself] and the father of lies and of all that is false. (John 8:44b AMPC)

When I take a break and sit in stillness with the Lord, I hear a different voice:

it was never about you anyway,
so what you can or cannot do matters not at all
it is only in the willingness, the sacrifice, the giving over
that I rule and reign and have My way
worry not, little one, just remain close, heart open
I know you are broken but also wholly Mine
that is what I use

I can do all this through him who gives me strength. (Philippians 4:13)

IDENTIFYING MY AXE HEAD

The key (the axe head I had dropped) was surrender, death to self, and life in Him.

The empty screen shut me down every time I continued writing about what I could say and how cleverly I could say it. If it wasn't about me, but all about Him, I could relax into the work He has for me.

simply be who you are in Me
speak when I move your tongue
write the words I give you
allow the world to see
You live for Me alone

My heart is stirred by a noble theme as I recite my verses for the king; my tongue is the pen of a skillful writer. (Psalm 45:1)

My life is His. My talents are His. The empty screen is there for Him to fill. I hold fast to faith, and the words come.

PRAYER

Father God, here I am, feeling tired and foolish, but back at Your feet where I belong. Help me always remember that this life is not about me but Your glory and Your story. Break my willful and independent heart so I lean ever harder into you. In Jesus name, I pray.

POINTS TO PONDER

- Have you ever found yourself falling behind on a task that once was simple?
- Did trying harder in your strength help you move forward?
- How has your worldview muddied the truth God speaks to you?