

Be Strong #26

“Wandering to Wonder”

My mind wanders a lot. No, really! I mean a lot! I day dream while I should be focused on the task at hand. I'm distracted easily and here I go chasing rabbits down mind trails. My mind wanders about all kinds of things, but sometimes I wander into wonder. I wonder at God's creation, and I marvel at his creative detail and sense of humor. Take the dung beetle for example. You might be thinking, dung beetles! What in the world? Exactly! What in the world is a dung beetle and why in the world did God create this fascinating bug? Seven thousand species of the dung beetle live on this planet. Have you ever seen one, much less heard of them? I've only seen a few in my lifetime, but I can remember where I was and what I was doing when I saw them. I spotted one on a middle school retreat at Forest Glen Camp when Mitch Young was in middle school. He's now a senior. I remember pointing the “roller” out to him. I'm not sure Mitch was as amazed as I was, but there he was rolling his manure ball across the ground, back to his family for dinner. They spend their lives for dung. That's how and why God created them. They have been around for thousands of years and were even worshipped in ancient Egypt. Archaeologists have even excavated royal seals with the dung beetle impression from the days of King Hezekiah. The Chinese use dried dung beetles to heal certain diseases. And they say the dung beetle saves America \$350 million a year by extracting cattle manure from pasture land.



I wonder sometimes if I'm like the dung beetle who spends much of my time pursuing things in this world that don't really matter in the big scheme of things. It's okay for dung beetles to spend their days looking for dung because that's their purpose, but that's not how or why God created me or you. Have I spent so much of my time searching for ways to provide for my family and satisfying my hunger, that in God's nostrils it really stinks? Don't get me wrong! Providing for our family is a good thing---a necessary responsibility of a parent. But what if our pursuits have led us in the wrong direction? What have you been storing up? What have you been pursuing? What would you say are your accumulated successes? Here's the connection! Consider the words of Paul in Philippians 3:7-14,

*“But whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them **rubbish**, that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith. I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, and so, somehow, to attain to the resurrection from the dead.”*

What prize are you seeking today? Paul said that there was a time when his list of accomplishments was enough to give him great confidence and satisfaction in life. He had stored up amazing treasure for the here and now. But now he says all of that was loss---a waste of his time and energy. He went so far as to call it **rubbish**. There it is! The Greek word for rubbish is actually *scubulou*---dung. He said all that he was pursuing, he now realized was waste---literally. His greatest passion became knowing Christ and following Him everyday. He said, “I want to know Christ!” Yes! He provided for himself and his family! He worked with his hands as a tent maker. But his passion was to know Christ and serve Him with his life. Is that your passion

today? What would your kids say? When you leave the house each day would they say you are on a search for *scubula*, or the treasure that is found in Christ? Would they say you are setting a great example for them to follow as you live your life before them? Do your conversations include your desire for your neighbors, friends, and colleagues to know Christ? Are your prayers reflective of a heart in love with your Savior and a passion to know Him? You may be thinking, "That was Paul, the super apostle that God called for that task. That's not me. I'm the average Joe Christian that loves God, works hard, doesn't cuss much, and goes to church almost every week. Things are cool with me and God." Really? Sometimes I think we forget that the same Jesus that stopped Paul in his tracks on the road to Damascus is the same God who rescued us the moment we were saved. The call He placed on Paul's life is the same call He has placed on and in us--to love God, to know God, to tell His story to all who will listen, and live our lives wholly for Him.

Just wondering!

Well...please ponder these thoughts and allow God's spirit to speak these words into your heart.

"Be strong in the Lord and in His might power."

And don't forget---you are the parent!

In His Joy,

Jerome
Ephesians 2:10

p.s. For more info on the dung beetle, check out this YouTube video. I promise it will have you laughing out loud. What a great sense of humor God has!

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I1RHmSm36aE>