

A Loss For Words

*"In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness.
We do not know what we ought to pray for,
but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans."
Romans 8:26 (NIV)*

The apostle Peter was a man who was never at a loss for words. At least once his ability to speak under the greatest duress got him into trouble. In Matthew 17:5 (NIV) we read "While he [Peter] was still speaking, a bright cloud covered them, and a voice from the cloud said, 'This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!'"

Peter was on the Mount of Transfiguration and saw Moses and Elijah and heard them speaking with Jesus. The scene overwhelmed Peter and he was very frightened. When he ought to have been silent and listen, he inappropriately spoke up. God the Father interrupted Peter and effectively shut him down.

Sometimes prayer is wordless. We come to our loving heavenly Father and are speechless, at a loss for words. Have you been before the Lord at such a time?

Occasionally a tragedy overwhelms us and all we can groan is, "Oh, Lord." or we stammer some other word and fall silent in the presence of God. It is all right to be silent in the presence of the Lord. Habakkuk 2:20 (NIV) "The Lord is in his holy temple; let all the earth be silent before him."

We need to have times of quietness before the Lord when we simply quote Scripture or a hymn of worship. Practice being in God's presence away from the things that occupy you all day and just meditate on the perfections of God and rehearse His goodness to you. Thomas Binney (1798-1874) wrote the following words as part of a hymn:

Eternal Light! Eternal
Light! How pure the soul
must be
When, placed within Thy
searching sight, shrinks
not, but, with calm delight,
Can live and look on Thee.
When we come into the

presence of the Lord we need to experience a true loss for words. If we really encounter the Lord in prayer we will say with Peter, Luke 5:8 (NIV) "When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at Jesus' knees and said, 'Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!'" Or we will act like the aged John when he encountered the Lord of glory, Revelation 1:17 (NIV) "When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. Then he placed his right hand on me and said: 'Do not be afraid. I am the First and the Last.'"

Today may you truly come near to the First and the Last today, see His eternal glory, and go away a changed person. Approach in fear and go on your way lost in wonder, love and praise.

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