

When Does God Quit?

“---would you now return to me?” declares the Lord.”

Jeremiah 3:1 (NIV)

The person in my office that day so long ago was completely broken. She had lived a very evil life for 5-6 years. Finally her conscience had spoken to her about her sins—which were many. She wept and wept, as she spoke briefly about the activities that were an offense to the Lord.

I had known about her because her family had asked me to pray for her during the years she wandered from the Lord. Her parents had taken her to church every Sunday from the first Sunday after she was born. She knew the Bible stories and truths as well as anyone. God had blessed her with a wonderful mind and she was a university graduate.

Now the lifestyle she had enjoyed so much seemed repulsive to her. The thing that caused her to fear so much was the thought that she had crossed some line and God had given up on her. She felt too sinful to come near to God.

I assured her that the reason she was so sorrowful for her evil past, was that God was obviously working in her heart the gifts of repentance and

faith. I took her to such verses of Scripture as Romans 3:10-11 (NIV) “As it is written: “There is no one righteous, not even one; there is no one who understands; there is no one who seeks God.” I said that when someone seeks God’s forgiveness it is clearly God turning them around to the way of obedience. No one seeks God until He seeks them first.

In several places, I had her read about how actively evil all our hearts are before the Lord enters our situation. I sought to persuade her that the Lord begins His eternal work of salvation in us by awakening us to just how needy we are.

I then showed her Philippians 2:12-13 (NIV) where it reads, “Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed---not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence---continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose.”

I taught her that the symptoms she was demonstrating that day in my office were clear signs of God at work in her heart and

life. I offered her comfort and urged her to keep on praying and seeking God to fulfill His promises to those who repent. I told her not to quit her pursuit of God until He made it abundantly clear she was heard and that He had truly embraced her as His child.

She took my advice, believed the promises of Scripture that assure us—whosoever comes will never be rejected—and she found the comfort and forgiveness she so much desired. She came weary, sad and broken. She soon was refreshed, joyful, and healed.

Today you may be in a similar position, or you may know someone who is. Hear the gracious question of the Lord asking you to return, to come back to the God Who made you and Who desires your company and friendship. The only ones God rejects are those who persistently and perpetually refuse Him. Come, and come today.

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