

FLOWERS FROM GOD

The presentation wasn't going to begin until that evening, but I was already nervous. I had taught this material many times in a teleconference setting, but standing in front of a crowd is a whole new ballgame. And I was desperately hoping I wasn't going to strike out in my first inning.

The concerns were tromping through my head like a herd of ants in the kitchen: Was I ready? Did I have all my notes? Was my opening line engaging or cheesy? Could I really communicate what I had learned about God in the last four years? And good heavens, what happens if I lose my place halfway through?

My insides were churning like a concrete mixer on steroids. I was excited, nervous, jumpy and determined to succeed all rolled into one. HOW many hours did I have to wait?

Well, the minutes refused to be hurried by my incessant wondering, so I decided it was high time for me to focus on something else, like the tasks at hand, for example. I had a full morning ahead of me before I left to drive up north to the venue where I was teaching. And I was doing a halfway decent job of distracting myself when a delivery man came to the door. I was expecting either UPS or FedEx, but when I came around from behind my desk, I saw a smallish man hiding behind a lovely bouquet of flowers. Lo, and behold, they were for me!

So much for being task oriented. I sat down and admired the fragrance and beauty of the flowers and opened the card. They were from a friend of mine. She said that she felt she needed to send them and she blessed my day. How kind of her to think of me! Knowing that someone was encouraging me managed to slow down the cement mixer a bit.

I didn't have enough time to call her right then and thank her for the flowers, and decided I would when I got in the car. So, I gamely finished my morning tasks, loaded up my car and hit the road.

Once I got settled in on the freeway I dialed her up and she was home. We chatted for a few minutes and then I brought up the topic of the flowers. I shared how beautiful they were and that it had meant a lot that she had thought of me and was encouraging me on this day.

She had a very simple response. "The flowers weren't from me." She said. That wasn't quite the answer I was expecting. I knew they were from her. Her name was right on the label. So, I tried again. Nope. Not from her. Well, I decided I was not getting anywhere with that tack. Who were they from, then?

Again, her answer was simple. "God."

Huh. This was getting more and more complicated.

Finally, I asked her to explain what she saw from her side of the boat, 'cuz I was getting lost in the fog. She laughed (the person who knows what is going on always can!) and said that she had felt a strong urge from Father that morning to send me some flowers. It was very plainly communicated to her that the flowers weren't from her, they were from Him. He wanted her to be the messenger. But she was to communicate to me that it was HIS idea. He wanted me to know that before I said my first word that night, He was already pleased with me.



Ok, not complicated anymore. Just mind bending.

Really? The Father was going out of His way to express His pleasure in me before I had succeeded or failed? Before I had any fruit of my labors to offer Him? I think I managed to gracefully finish the call with my friend and thank her for having her ears on. But I needed to think and to savor.

Wow. God was apparently not sweating the details nor was He holding off on His love to see how I did. Suddenly that ole' cement mixer ground to a complete standstill. No churning necessary when you are free to go and be yourself, to give it everything you have, knowing that the love of your Heavenly Father is not on the line.

God knew what was needed. He knew that not only would this change my entire outlook, but it would change the flavor of the whole presentation. It would deepen it. For the very topic I was going to speak on was that of our value in the eyes of God. Nothing like living what you teach!

I experienced another flavor of God's love that day, one that I was not expecting to intrude upon my busy day and churning insides. But He, in His infinite wisdom and love did exactly what He pleased. I am grateful that He spoke loud enough for me to hear, and I want to challenge you to look and to listen in your life. He is the same Father to you, in spite of what your present circumstances or state of mind may imply otherwise. Find the flowers that God has sent you, wherever they may be, whatever color, shape or size.

They are there. Father loves you. Period.

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