



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 2:20)

Last year was a dry year for me. I felt distant from the two things that mean the most to me: my relationship with Jesus and the time spent stringing words together in meaningful ways that move the hearts of others. I felt like the 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, white light glaring from the blank screen. Nothing can scream as loudly at a writer as an empty page.

- Do you really think someone would be interested in anything you have to say?
- You're wasting your time; you have nothing important enough to share.
- Who do you think you are anyway?

There was a powerful familiarity to the words. I have learned over the years to recognize the sound of the enemy.

Quickly, I pounded on the keyboard.

'SHUT UP! I'M WRITING HERE!!!'

At least the screen wasn't blank anymore.

This little scenario plays out more often than I would like to count, and it seems whatever lessons it holds fail to 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)

When I take a break to sit in stillness with the Lord, I hear a much 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 would shut me down every time I continued to write about what I could say and how cleverly I could say it. If it was not about me but all about Him, I could let Him teach me how to 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 on to faith. The words come.

PRAYER

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

POINTS TO PONDER

- Have you ever found yourself falling behind at a task that once was simple?
- Did trying harder in your strength help you move forward?
- Have you let the world's opinions muddy the truth God speaks to you?

