A Beautiful Death

I had a dream. Whether this dream was divine or the imaginations of my peculiar mind, I can’t say, but God made the truth and meaning evident. I stood in a factory next to a vat of molten metal about ten feet across. A long arm with apertures dangled into the liquid metal below, spinning around a hub in the center of the vat, slowly stirring the liquid metal. I saw it was filled with a liquid like gold. A voice I knew was God’s impressed me to lay my youngest daughter into the molten metal. Confused and mortified, I couldn’t do it, but a moment later my four-year-old daughter appeared and invisible arms lowered her into the liquid, face up, just below the surface. She didn’t scream in pain, struggle, or show any emotion. The liquid gold was translucent and I could see her eyes looking up at me through the liquid, emotionless, like she was offering herself as a sacrifice and that it was good. A moment later, as the stirring arm spun around, she began melting into the molten metal. I was losing her and there was nothing I could do to stop it. She melted into the pool and vanished. What seared my memory was the look in her eyes, so peaceful, innocent, and willing. I woke up in agony. God was showing me in that dream that my daughter represented the most intimate part of me that I had not yet sacrificed before my Lord. I wanted to, but I didn’t know how. God wanted to redefine who I was and reshape me into something new and beautiful, more a reflection of Himself, but it required a complete surrender or what I call, a beautiful death.

In Galatians 2:20 the apostle Paul explains, “I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me...” He follows up this concept more graphically in Romans 6:3, referring to baptism into His death. What is Paul implying? He means a complete surrender of one’s self, allowing a full submission to the authority of Jesus and His direction. Paul knew there was nothing his flesh could add to Jesus’ death on the cross.

In my dream, I couldn’t make myself die. Death to self does not come through will or discipline alone. Our flesh could take credit for that. It is the invisible hands of our Creator that transforms us. Consider what you are going through at the moment with this in mind. Trials are designed to draw us near to God and pain is the result of the sculptor’s chisel. Tears fill my eyes as I write this because I know how hard it is to be truly transformed into a new and beautiful person that delights our Father. Be encouraged; endure, it’s not in vain.

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