

"WHAT ARE YOU SAYING TO YOURSELF?"

INTRODUCTION

One of the leading contenders for the AL "Rookie of the Year" award in baseball is Mark Fidrych of the Detroit Tigers. This 21 year old native of Worcester, Massachusetts has captured the affections of the fans of the Detroit Tigers - not only because of his pitching ability, but also because he's "colorful". Some say he resembles "Big Bird" of Sesame Street. He also talks to himself out there on the pitching mound. It's different and whether you like it or not, it's cause some excitement in the Motor City. People seem to enjoy it and they've been flocking into the stadium to see him.

Many of us saw him on Monday night baseball back in the early Summer. Howard Cosell didn't quite know what to say. "Look at the Bird...Bird Fidrych... he's talking to himself. I wonder what he's saying? 50,000 people here in the stadium may be asking the same question". He takes the ball and talks to it before throwing it. "I'm going to zing you across that plate...so fast that the batter will swing at you and miss you". When he gets in a jam, he starts jumping around on the mound, talking to himself, shaking his head..."now settle down, Mark. Cool off. Keep your head." Colorful. Scheduled to pitch today.

DEVELOPMENT

So much for Mark, the "Bird". Yes, he talks to himself. Turning to another Mark, to the Gospel writer, we find there in the fifth chapter an account of a woman who talked to herself. It's one of those little stories dealing with the healing ministry of Jesus through which the healing law was revealed.

It happened on the way to the home of Jairus where Jesus eventually healed the daughter of that ruler. Apparently this woman had been plagued with a condition of hemorrhage for many years and she had been the subject of a concern of doctors all around Galilee.

All of them had said there was little or no hope for her. So, when Jesus passed, she rose from her bed and rushed out toward the crowd that was gathering around Him and she said to herself, "If I can but touch his garment, I will be healed" - and the amazing thing is, she was...healed...immediately!

Now Jesus perceived that someone had touched Him and he said, "Who touched my garment?" The disciples said, "Look, Lord...with all these people pressing around you, how can we know who touched you?" But Jesus said, "Someone with faith in healing touched my coat". The woman came forward and fell down before Him and told Him her story. He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well. Go, in peace. Be healed of your disease". Obviously, one of the important points in this sequence is that line, "thy faith has made Thee well". But the real key to this story is the statement which she said to herself, "If I can but touch His garment....I will be healed".

The act of faith was preceded by her saying to herself that she "believed" - which generated her faith. Here was a woman who had been desperately ill for years. Doctors and friends and loved ones had been telling her over and over that there was no hope. But, her consciousness was evidenced by the fact that she refused to listen to what others were saying and she busied herself saying to herself that she could be healed.

"If I can but touch his garment, I will be healed".

"This is terrible. This is an awful thing. So I'm going to be upset!"

WHAT ARE YOU SAYING TO YOURSELF

What are you saying to yourself? May I suggest that you say what you want to demonstrate or achieve - not what you are resenting or resisting. For instance, if you are in need of health and you desire to be healed, don't keep telling yourself how terrible you feel, how bad the pain, how you wish you were well. This only serves to fix a state of consciousness upon you and your life. Learn to say to yourself:

"I am God's perfect child. The life in me is God in me. God's can't be sick or weak or discouraged. I therefore refuse to think on all the things pertaining to sickness. I'm going to think on health....and on wholeness....and goodness...because I am the whole and the perfect expression of God".

And, in the same way - if your need is for prosperity then say things about yourself and to yourself that lead in the direction of prosperity. "I am prosperous. I shall act like it. I shall think like it....dress like it....walk like it... give like it...I am God's prosperous child".

TROUBLE WITH MANY

I think the trouble with so many of us is that we carry too many negative thoughts around with us...~~we don't know how to "jack-up" ourselves.~~ We're not strict enough with ourselves, not exacting enough. ~~We become sloppy and drift along.~~ We do not demand enough of ourselves. Slipping into bad habits, we end up performing most of the time as if our responses to life were by a negative, reflex action.

We weakly follow the line of least resistance, follow the theme that life seems to set for us, rather than singing our own song, marching to our own tune, letting our own particular light shine through.

I recently read a story about a wife who had never been able to please her husband no matter how hard she tried. Finally, in desperation, she determined that she would please him. So she asked him to tell her exactly what he would like for breakfast. He answered, "Two slices of toast - one light and one dark; two slices of bacon - one slightly cooked and one crisp; two eggs - one fried and one scrambled; and coffee". So she followed the order precisely and put the perfect breakfast before him. He took one look and shouted, "Can't you do anything right? You scrambled the wrong egg".

The dilemma of that wife finds a bit of a parallel in the lives of many of us. We too are often accused of scrambling the wrong egg, ~~but we keep on trying.~~ Sometimes we're handicapped by our timidity or shyness or lack of confidence and end up saying to ourselves "that's the way I am....I can't change". Rather, say to yourself, "Look here....I'm a person....a unique person....I'm going to do it my way and stop trying to please everyone....I'm going to live in my own way". ~~You can become a bold, strong character and go on to much greater success than you have ever known if you stop perpetuating a limited thought that you had about yourself when you were a child. As Paul says, "Now you have become a man. Put away childish things".~~ Stop saying to yourself, "I can't do it." Say "I can do all things through the power of God within me". And see what happens.

NEXT TIME The next time you feel yourself slipping into a dark mood, when you feel cross and out of sorts with everyone, when things rub you the wrong way, STOP what you're doing. Leave it for a few minutes. Get out of the room for a while. Go outside and take a walk if you can. Talk to yourself! Have a "heart-to-heart"...a "person-to-person" conversation with yourself.

Remind yourself what a ridiculous thing it is for a great, grown-up person that has been fashioned to dominate the forces of this universe to be completely upset or thrown off-base by whatever it is that's gotten through to you.

Get on the side of the Master. Read a few lines from one of the Gospels. Say to yourself that you are poised and centered in the Christ-spirit. Then, go back to the new task a new person. "It is ~~not~~ in our stars, but in ourselves that we are underlings" said Shakespeare. He only is beaten who admits it. The world belongs to the person who can reach out and conquer it. There is no power that parcels out good things to a favored few and gives inferior things to you and me. Jesus said, "It is the Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom". He has discovered the splendid capital and the all-important currency with which to make his way through life in (1) good health, (2) in happiness, (3) in successful achievement, (4) abiding peace who finds with himself this depth of the Christ spirit, and the Christ power.

FINALLY "If I can but touch his garment, I shall be healed" she said to herself. Jesus replied, "According to your faith, be it done unto you". What are you saying to yourself. Try saying to yourself as you head off to work tomorrow morning, "I can do all things through this power of God that is within me". And see what happens.

"Grant, O Gracious Lord, that what we have heard with our ears, we may believe in our hearts, and what we believe in our hearts, we may practice in our lives - today, tomorrow and forever. Amen"