

IN THE COOL OF THE DAY

Recently, during my quiet time, a phrase came to mind about walking with God: *in the cool of the day*. It was as if He was reminding me that walking with Him should feel like that, restful.

I love that this book begins with the beginning. I'm not strategic enough to have planned that on my own.

"And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden." (Genesis 3:8)

Usually when this verse is quoted, the focus is on the sin aspect, but that's not where I want to draw your attention. I want to point out that God's original design for man (and woman) was for us to walk with Him in the cool of the day. That's what living loved should look like. To walk with the Lord in the cool of the day should be a life of peace and acceptance and purpose.

Punishment for the original sin included mankind being expelled from the Garden of Eden, preventing humans from walking with God physically as Adam and Eve did. In a spiritual sense, that barrier was removed with the rending of the veil when Jesus was on the cross. We now have full access to walk with God the Father and Jesus the Son through the Holy Spirit. We are invited to that walk every day of our lives.

When God questioned him regarding his sin, Adam's response was:

"Then the man said, 'The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate.'"
(Genesis 3:12)

Never underestimate the tremendous sway you have over your husband, home, and family. Take great care how you wield your power. Yes, Adam should have been the leader of his home and said no to the temptation, but Eve had an influence over her husband that altered the course of human history.

Consider this: If you know you are loved and live your life as if you are, there is a much better chance your family will follow suit. Our children tend to model our behavior. Our husbands take cues from us as well. This topic is critical for your life; it's vital that you live loved in front of the ones you love. They will only want what you have if what you have is inviting.

The latter part of the verse says:

"The woman said, 'The serpent deceived me, and I ate.'" (Genesis 3:13)

I'm not sure why this verse has never impacted me in the past the way it has recently, but for whatever reason it's now stuck in my head, often ringing out in my own circumstances. I've been given a fresh revelation, a new way to view this verse: The serpent is still deceiving, and we are still eating.

The enemy feeds us lies, and we eat. We eat until we're so full of doubt that we can hardly believe God is good. The enemy convinces us that what we are experiencing in our Christian walk is all there is, that our mediocre lives are what we are stuck with. We have no reason to believe there's more since we've never experienced more.

I'm here to tell you that's not true. You and I are designed to walk in an intimate relationship with God where we hear His clear leading, a walk where we feel loved and live our lives based on His truth. The Church as a whole isn't walking with God in the cool of the day. Most are hiding among the trees after eating what the serpent has fed them.

The list of lies we believe is a mile long: I am worthless, pointless, and aimless. I'm unlovable. There is no hope. I hold on to yesterday as if I might change it and fear tomorrow as if worry might affect the outcome. I'm too fat, too thin, too short, too tall. I'm not pretty enough or smart enough or capable enough. I have nothing to contribute. God could never love me.

The most detrimental deception we swallow is doubting God's love and faithfulness, which leads us to wonder if God really has our best interest at heart. Will He fail me? Why didn't He heal? Why did He allow...?

There is something about settling the love issue that, with time, unravels all the other doubts. I say with time because trusting in His love doesn't happen overnight.

From my own experience, the most effective lie the enemy has ever fed me was to doubt God's love for me. If I doubt that, nothing else works: not trust or surrender or accomplishing what I was created to do. All it takes for the enemy to defeat and cripple us is to cause us to doubt the completeness of God's love.

Let's consider what it might look like to walk in the cool of the day with Jesus. We need inspiration, a reason to pursue this topic of grasping God's love and living loved. We all need a finish line in sight to urge us on.

If you walk in the cool of the day with Jesus, you:

- know that He is enough
- hear from God
- keep reading the Love Letter
- walk in the moment, not the past or present
- reflect who He is to others

This is far from a comprehensive list, but it's enough to give you an idea of what you can look forward to.

One of the things I love about God is how He can tailor His work in my life to me and at the same time be the God you need. He knows us and meets us individually. Consider this from the Psalms:

"He fashions their hearts individually; He considers all their works." (Psalm 33:15)

In my own walk, the cool of the day means I feel no pressure of impending things. Whatever His call and plan, I know He will carry it out and empower me to do my part. The weight of the world is on His shoulders, not mine. I am at rest from worry. He calms my fears. Past moments of His faithfulness remind me He will come through, just as He always has.

I feel exhilaration while with Him, no matter the gloom and doom that await me in the world. I find time flies, and I must tear myself away from Him. It hasn't always been like that. There were times in my life when I was kind of phoning it in, making time to read a little and pray a little. Now, I get so absorbed in the moment that I find myself running late for what's next in my day. That's a good thing. I can live with that.

I grow along the walk. He accepts me as I am but refuses to leave me that way. Every season brings to light new places for growth and allows for His continued work in making me more like Him.

The cool of the day isn't just a quiet-time experience, something you only recognize while reading your Bible or spending time in prayer. It's a life experience. Jesus wants to hang out with you. He wants you to live out this life knowing love so penetrating that your daily life reflects Love.

"Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light." (Matthew 11:28-30)

The cool of the day feels like that, rest for your soul. If you don't know love so restful, prepare for a journey where you will come to know His love with such certainty that you will live each day of your life loved.

COOL OF THE DAY TAKEAWAY

Key Point

You are supposed to be walking with God as if in the cool of the day.

- 1) Are there times when your walk with God feels like a lingering “in the cool of the day” encounter, or do you more often find you sprint through your time with God to merely check it off your list?

- 2) When you begin your time with the Lord, how would you most often describe your attitude: expectant, obligated, hopeful, hesitant, other? How can your attitude set the tone for your experience with Him?

- 3) During your quiet time, how would you most often describe your mindset: enthusiastic, focused, distracted, bored, scattered, and why do you think that is?

- a) In your time with Jesus, do you feel peace, acceptance, and purpose? How would you rate your current experience in the following areas on a scale from 1-10, with 10 being the highest?

Peace 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Acceptance 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Purpose 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

- b) In each area, do you feel a greater or lesser degree than this time last year?

Peace: Greater Lesser

Acceptance: Greater Lesser

Purpose: Greater Lesser

Key Point

Never underestimate the tremendous sway you have over your husband, home, and family.

- 4) Does your family see you setting aside time for God?

- 5) How can your deepening intimacy with Jesus impact your home and family and how they see Jesus?

Key Point

The enemy is deceiving you if you believe you are anything less than loved unconditionally and completely by God.

- 6) Do you really believe you are unconditionally and completely loved by God, not just in your head, but deep down in your heart? What leads you to this answer?

- 7) How do you think your belief about God's love for you may be impacting your walk with Him?

- 8) The cool of the day feels like rest for your soul. Does the word rest describe you? If not, how would you describe the state of your soul?

- 9) Do you sometimes wonder if there's more to the Christian walk than what you're currently experiencing? Do you see Jesus as enough for you?

"The list of lies we believe is a mile long: I am worthless, pointless, and aimless. I'm unlovable. There is no hope. I hold on to yesterday as if I might change it and fear tomorrow as if worry might affect the outcome. I'm too fat, too thin, too short, too tall. I'm not pretty enough or smart enough or capable enough. I have nothing to contribute. God could never love me."

- 10) Do any of my examples of lies resonate with you? What are some other lies the enemy has convinced you of over the years? Is there a specific lie that comes to mind most often?

- 11) How do these lies hinder you in your daily life?

Write out Genesis 3:13 here:

Remember, he's still lying, and we're still eating. Spit it out!