

That Drove Me to My Knees!

Written by Bill Perkins

I recall visiting a friend in his home for the first time. He greeted me warmly, and we walked into his den. The first thing I noticed was the forty-two-inch HDTV on the wall. Its screen flashed a colorful and precise image while the surround-sound speaker system delivered crisp highs and a chest-thumping bass line.

The Next Commercial

Because I hadn't come over to watch a sporting event or movie, I assumed he would turn off the TV, or at least mute the sound while we talked. Instead, his head swiveled back and forth as he gazed at the TV and glanced at me. After a few minutes, I concluded he didn't want to talk, and so I gave up trying and waited until the next commercial to slip away.

I Pray the Same Way

Reflecting on that experience I realize I often pray the same way. I carry on an unfocused conversation with God, in which I'm distracted by my vibrating phone, the conversation my wife is having in the other room, or the email that just announced its arrival with a soft ping on my computer.

Though Jesus didn't have to contend with the profusion of electronic distractions we experience in our culture, it's not as if his life lacked distractions. He lived in a highly relational culture, and people swarmed him, soaking in his wisdom and seeking his touch.

Everyone Is Looking for You

As his fame spread to celebrity status, adoring crowds flocked to him. At one point the disciples said, "Everyone is looking for you" (Mark 1:37). Yet somehow Jesus managed to slip away to a quiet place to pray. Whether it was early in the morning or late at night, he sought and found solitude.

In each of the recorded instances when Jesus prayed alone, he faced a different kind of need that would require the wisdom and strength of his Father. It explains why Jesus not only prayed alone, but also uttered short prayers throughout the day.

A Fire-Breathing Dragon

I have to confess I seldom feel such a need unless I'm faced with a serious problem. In times of crisis, I pray more because I know the challenge towers over me like a fire-breathing dragon. Because I know I need God's help, I cry out to him. Just let me, or a family member or friend, encounter a financial setback, a relational breakdown,

physical pain, or a life-threatening diagnosis, and I'm compelled to pray—like when my oldest son called and said he had cancer. That drove me to my knees.

It saddens me that it takes a crisis to make me realize life is as fragile as a spider's web. The truth is, I need God's help all the time, just as I need air and water. Because Jesus always lived with this awareness he said, "By myself I can do nothing" (John 5:29). I think the more I realize what Jesus fully knew, the more I will turn off the TV, power down my phone, find a quiet place and allow God to fill my nothing with his everything.