LYRICAL DEVOTIONAL · DAY 208

Close the Gate to Your Mind

> *Watch and pray so you will not enter into temptation.*
> **MATTHEW 26:41**

Written by Bill Perkins

You may not know this about Jesus:
He taught the discipline of the mind
before Paul wrote about it.

Jesus said,
“Watch and pray
so you will not enter into temptation.”
Matt 26:41
He was teaching us to stay alert
at the gate of our mind—
to notice a tempting thought
before it becomes a pattern.

This is what Paul meant
when he said, “take captive every thought
and make it obedient to Christ.”
2 Cor 10:5

Imagine you’re sitting in a beach chair
on a white Caribbean shore.
Sea gulls make a ha, ha, ha, sound
as they fly overhead.
Soft waves roll over the sand.

Suddenly a child beside your chair
begins kicking sand on you,
laughing as he tries
to bury you.

Once you realize
what he intends,
you rise to your feet,
take hold of him gently,

and walk him back
to his mother,
who is running
toward you.

What you did in that moment,
you must do with your thoughts.
When a tempting thought
tries to bury you,
you must rise,
take hold of it,
and remove it
from your mind.

Reject the lie.
Tell the Father
you don't want that thought
in your mind.
Ask Him to keep it out,
and if it returns,
to alert you
so you can close the gate
and remove it again.

But kicking out the thought
is only half the work.
Now replace it
with a truthful one—
whatever is true,
honorable,
right,
pure,
lovely,
of good repute,
excellent,
and worthy of praise,
let your mind dwell on these things.
Phil 4:8

As you practice this,
your inner life will stabilize.
The toxic desires will wash out,

and the peace of Christ
will fill the space
where temptation once lived.

Where do I need to take a tempting thought captive today
and make it obedient to Christ?

It means Christ meets me at the gate.
It means escape is never late.
It means obedience is possible.

Father,
teach me to take every thought captive.
Show me the gate,
strengthen me to close it,
and fill my mind with truth.
I ask this in Jesus' name,
Amen.