

Psalm 139:10-11 - Wherever I go Your hand will guide me; Your strength will empower me. It's impossible to disappear from You, or to ask the darkness to hide me, for Your presence is everywhere.

Have you ever cleaned out an attic? It's no one's idea of a good time. Attics are dark repositories of things forgotten; items no longer used but somehow not yet discarded; things connected with the past but buried under the detritus of years of mindless accumulation.

Taking a brief survey of our own attic, I saw an ancient TV with tubes, too cumbersome to discard; frayed suitcases that couldn't withstand another journey; a pair of crutches from our son's broken leg ten years ago; two doggy beds once occupied by our Italian greyhounds, who are now undoubtedly resting more comfortably in heaven. And boxes, boxes, and more boxes...

Sometimes there is so much clutter in the attics of our souls that we are overwhelmed by what lies before us, our life circumstances stacked up so high that we can't see around them. The other day, I was visiting a patient who had received a very difficult diagnosis. Fear was pressing in on every side as thoughts of what might happen nearly paralyzed her. Facing impending brain surgery, she wept as I held her hand.

Knowing she was a believer in Jesus Christ, I assured this precious woman that He was with her and wanted to take the accumulation of all the burdens that she was carrying. Asking if there was anyone she needed to release from unforgiveness, she immediately identified that individual as herself.

"Beloved, can you picture your body - the temple of the Holy Spirit - as rooms where Jesus dwells? Can you imagine your mind as an attic where the accumulation of years of baggage is obscuring your view of Jesus? Can you picture yourself handing those useless obstacles - the pain of your past, self-condemnation, false guilt and responsibility - over to Jesus?"

As she allowed the Holy Spirit to help her to envision this, I asked what she saw. "He's taking it from me," she said. "And what is He doing with it?" I asked. "He is throwing it away."

I replied, "As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us, and He remembers them no more. If He chooses to not remember them, can you trust Him to help you to do the same?"

She responded in affirmation, so I said, "What is Jesus giving you in exchange for what you handed over to Him?" Immediately, she said, "He

is giving me His perfect peace!” Weeping with joy, she said, “I have never experienced this kind of peace before!” The person, the presence of Jesus, had come into the attic of her soul, removing the junk that had overwhelmed her. As He took away her burdens, she could see and feel His presence.

Today, whatever is threatening to obscure your view of Jesus - the pain of your past; anxieties over your health, family, finances; fear of what the future might hold - hand it over to Jesus. Cast your cares on Him, because He cares for you. Wherever you go, His hand will guide you; His strength will empower you. His love will never leave you.