

OUT OF THE FISHES MOUTH – MAY 2015

I was reading James 4 this morning and it brought to mind of an experience from last week.

The passage starts with this challenging question. What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? The author goes on to say that these interpersonal struggles are caused by internal passions like desire, covetousness, which when unfulfilled turn to anger and violence. The author says we need to seek God with pure motives for lasting fulfillment. When such negative attitudes and actions are displayed it is as if we are warring against God.

I was in Victory Square downtown eastside Vancouver building relationships with members of a particular Muslim ethnic group that I have been praying for. On Wednesday an intern and I had visited and met a particularly needy young man (S) who has multiple barriers. He said that he did not want to die on the streets, he did not want to be deported and die in his violent home country. So on Thursday with two other interns we went down to try and help (S) get some help. I went to the Salvation Army shelter and found a good recovery program. I went back to the park to encourage (S) to come with me to talk to a community worker but I was confronted by a hostile man from his ethnic group. Obviously misunderstanding our motives and deaf to our explanation he essentially rebuffed our help and said that (S) was fine where he was with his "family". I found out later that the hostile man was a drug dealer who probably wanted these Christians out of "his" park. By this time (S) had cracked open another beer and smoked some more dope and the window of opportunity closed. I felt discouraged, sad and angry at the enemy of our souls who seeks to destroy men like (S).

Fortunately James 4 does not end with man warring against God. It says that God yearns jealously for the spirit he has made to dwell in us and He gives more grace. Motyer comments, "What comfort there is in this verse! It tells us that God is tirelessly on our side. He never falters in respect of our needs; he always has *more grace* at hand for us. He is never less than sufficient, he always has more and yet more to give" (1985:150).

The Victory Square cenotaph was unveiled on Sunday April 27, 1924 with the following dedication "To the Glory of God, and in thankful remembrance of those who served their King and Country overseas in the cause of truth, righteousness and freedom." This was a celebration of the victory in WW I but as we know WW II and countless other conflicts were to come. It reflects the truth that in Christ the ultimate victory is won, but the skirmishes continue.



Please pray for (S) and other members of his country who face destruction in this physical and spiritual battle.

Pray that we his children would live victorious lives in spite of opposition.

Blessings

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