

*Come Holy Spirit
Use me to Your glory*

Precious Pilgrim,

I can't believe it! I did it again! When will I ever learn? How many times will I have to repeat the same blasted lesson in order to get the answer right? I'm deeply disappointed in myself and, if I am, I can't imagine how my Father God must feel. He must be thinking, "Not again, Lucy! I thought you'd finally gotten this one down. I mean, we've been replaying this remedial repertoire most of your born days and you are still falling short of the mark. You just don't seem to get it. It's not the items, but the individuals that matter."

All I can say is, "Lord forgive." And thank the dear Lord; I believe He does, for we have a merciful God.

You see, what happened was that I received a phone call today from a loved one and was given a report on an item that had been inappropriately used by another loved one. My immediate internal response was to become a self-righteous blowfish, thinking pompously, "How dare they do such a dastardly deed to this thing - this item - this inanimate object! Why, why - it used to be very important to me and, and, even though it's not mine and I no longer go there, it does represent a lot of wonderful memories. And, and memories are sacred. Aren't they? (Hello, I don't think so.) Why, it's almost Holy Ground. Isn't it? (Hello, I don't think so.) I mean, shouldn't that item be encapsulated, made a memory museum, frozen in

time, my memory time, when it was dear and precious to me? (Hello, I don't think so.)"

Precious Pilgrim, with all this noise I'm making you must think what are you talking about, Lucy? It's just an item - a thing - such do not last. Our Lord Jesus Christ did not die on the cross to save items, but to save individuals! Yes, you can be upset, but goodness gracious girl, get over it! Get your eyes off the item and get your interior heart eyes on the individual, the precious person, the one uniquely made by our Father God to glorify Himself.

Have compassion - have love - have concern for this "culprit-kin" who's fallen short of the mark. "Culprit-kin," ooh, that's a sweet little sticky term, don't you think, Pilgrim. "Culprit-kin." Truth be known, we are all kissing cousins - we are all family in Christ. And truth be known, we do all fall short of the Mark, short of the Christ. Don't we? I know I do, daily.

But still, I guess it's OK to call the perpetrator that "culprit-kin." And the destructive activity was truly wrong. But my holier than thou pharisaic reaction was truly wrong too! It won't help anything or anyone. The situation and person need my prayers given in humility, not my judgment given from a high horse.

I don't need to pick up the phone and go bugle blasting this negative report to others. I'm not directly involved. I've

found triangular relationships work best only for our triune Father, Son and Holy Spirit God -- not us little lambies.

My mind jumps now to our church. We usually sit each Sunday on the right hand side about half way down the aisle. No reason. It just seems that it happens most services. The stain glass window that is nearest to this pew depicts the first Christian martyr, Stephen, as he is being stoned to death. The Apostle Luke tells us in Acts 7:60 that his last words were, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them," which reminds me of some of our Lord's last words on the cross, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." Luke 23:34

And then I just read this morning once more Ephesians 5:14 which says:

*"Awake thou that sleepest,
And arise from the dead
And Christ shall give thee Light."*

And that reminds me to "Wake up, Lucy! Wake up!" It's time to once more mentally pack my knapsack and get back on the road again, the "prodigal son" road again - I need to go see my Father God once more and say, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son." (That's Luke 15:18b-19a)

And then once more it says in Luke 15:21:

The son said to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son."

Pilgrim, you might be thinking - Lucy, what is your problem? Aren't you being a little dramatic? What are you talking about? The fact is damage was done to property and someone needs to pay the price.

Pilgrim, that might be true, but the deep disappointment in myself is that as a Christian, Jesus paid the price, the ultimate price already and left us with His "Lord's Prayer" which includes these words:

"Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us."

As His follower, I'm called to go into the gear of forgiveness - instead, I was having a grand old time mentally capturing this "culprit-kin." I wanted revenge. The Lord Jesus Christ wants redemption. He wants repentance, yes, from us all, but even more so - reconciliation - redemption - revival.

I am called to pray for the individual, not self-righteously make him my prey.

My precious darlin' husband Paul often says, "When you point your finger at someone, look where your other fingers are pointing." You've got it - at yourself.

That's what I was doing, having a grand old time, getting ready to pull out my quick shot finger of self-righteousness, the one which I carry when I'm dressed in my Pharisee garb (maybe that's short for garbage). Instead, our Lord Jesus calls us to "Bless" away. Bless away!

"Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us."

My Lord forgives me time and time again. Lord, may I have the grace also to forgive - in love - as You do love.

"We're off to see the Wizard, the wonderful Wizard of Oz" - no. I don't think I'll be visiting the Wizard of Oz - talk about a puffed-up little man! And I don't think I'll be following the yellow brick road today, but I do think, by God's grace - it's time to take that Prodigal Son's journey home to see my Father God once more.

It says in Luke 15:17 the journey back home began "when he came to his senses" - by God's grace I'm once more "awakening" and coming to my senses. I'm needing to be rightly realigned again - like my car tires do after I hit a curb or two. I need to go see my FATHER GOD. I need to tell him once more - "please forgive." I know He'll meet me running, for it says in Luke 15:20: "But while he was still a long way off, His father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; He ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him."

I believe I'll receive the same homecoming welcome. I believe you will too, Pilgrim, if you also feel a need to take that same repentant return road home today.

And do you know it says on our arrival, there will be a party - a banquet, a feast, and we'll receive the best robe and a ring and new shoes!

Jesus said a little before this scripture in Luke 15:7:

"I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over 99 righteous persons who do not need to repent."

By God's grace and I believe a little help from The Helper, the Holy Spirit, I once more "came to my senses" and like the Prodigal Son am humbly headed home to the party.

Is there some area or item that the Holy Spirit has been shining in on your life too, Pilgrim, that needs a little attention or realigning?

Praise the Lord - it's another Prodigal Daughter Party Time today. We just have to show up and say, "Father forgive" to get the party going.

Peace.

*I am your prodigal daughter-sister,
Lucy*