

A WORD WITH YOU - By Ron Hutchcraft
8542 – “Alone—Under Fire—and Okay”
Lamentations 3:19

October 8, 2019

Years ago, not long after the Gulf War actually, an Air Force chaplain planted this mental picture in my head. It's still there! He told me what he considered to be the ultimate example of loneliness. The chaplain said, “To me, lonely is a fighter pilot in his F-16, on a night mission over enemy territory.” The only light is this eerie glow from his instrument panel—and his instruments indicate that his plane has just been, as they say, “painted” as a target for, in this case, an Iraqi missile. The only sound he heard in that ultimately lonely moment was a song playing in his headset—*God Bless the USA*.

I'm Ron Hutchcraft and I want to have **A WORD WITH YOU** today about **“Alone—Under Fire—and Okay.”**

Now, you're not a fighter pilot, but you may understand some of the feelings a pilot must feel at a moment like I just described. Because you know what it is to feel alone. You know what it is to feel under attack—scared of what may happen next—beyond human help. As you try to complete your mission here, what your heart is listening to may be all you have to sustain you—like a combat pilot playing the music that reminds him of what this is all for.

The Old Testament Jeremiah, was in the middle of his mission when he became nearly overwhelmed by feelings of fear and loneliness and discouragement. Until he, in a sense, heard the music that filled his cockpit. He writes about being alone, under fire, and okay in our word for today from the Word of God in Lamentations 3:19. Listen to the struggle: “I remember my affliction and my wandering, the bitterness and the gall—and my soul is downcast within me.”

Then, suddenly, this depressing tune that focused on the hurts, and the failures, and the discouragements was replaced by a better tune. “My soul is downcast within me. Yet I call this to mind and therefore I have hope. Because of the Lord's great love, we are not consumed. For His compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness.”

When you're feeling alone, under attack, scared and beyond human help, you've got to fill your heart with some incredibly encouraging truths about the God who is in that cockpit with you. First, God will not let you be, as Jeremiah says, “consumed”—“Because of the Lord's great love, we are not consumed.” In other words, God has promised that, “He will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear,” (Corinthians 10:13). Nothing is going to come into your life that has not been Father-filtered first—

signed off on by a Heavenly Father who loves you deeply and knows your limits. Now, he may allow you to be taken to the edge, but never over the edge—to face what is hard to bear, but never what is unbearable.

The second encouragement in a dark moment is that God will never give you a day without the resources you need to handle it. His love just isn't some theology or theory—it's concretely expressed "every new morning" with His "mercies" - His "compassions". These are the resources you need to meet this day's challenges—the emotional resources, the material resources, the people you need, the protection you need, the miracles you need for this moment.

No matter how dark it seems, no matter how alone you feel, God has guaranteed that He will never let you be taken past the breaking point and He will never allow a challenge without giving you the resources to meet it. That is His promise. That is His character! That is His love for you!

Corrie ten Boom, who suffered and lost so much in a Nazi concentration camp for harboring Jews in World War II, said it so beautifully, "With Jesus, the worst may happen, but the best remains." You may be alone—you may be under fire—but, because of the Lord's "great love" you're okay!

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