

Special Forces: Day Five

Basic Training: Unit One

Covert Tactics

Escape and Evasion

I remember a certain training exercise in Denmark during which being captured at least once was almost inevitable due the sparse foliage and the 'enemy' having some very good search dogs. I learned a lot about paranoia when, after having been captured and having been released in the middle of nowhere, I had to find my way to a predetermined link-up point to rejoin my detachment. It was necessary to travel during daylight hours which was difficult enough, and the sound of barking dogs seemed to be everywhere! They were mostly dogs hunting game animals with their masters, but I assumed they were enemy search dogs after me. Well, I made the link-up and our team continued to the next mission target. What a sense of relief!

Key Verse:

"...and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden. But the LORD God called to the man, "Where are you?"" Genesis 3:8b-9 (NIV)

The scene of our key verse is the Garden of Eden. The apple has been eaten and sin has taken up residence on the earth and in the hearts of God's most precious creation, Adam and Eve. Knowing they had disobeyed God by eating the forbidden fruit, they actually tried to hide from their creator among the trees of the garden. Fat chance! Unlike the search dogs in Denmark, God knew exactly where they were and even called out to them. One could easily picture an angry God nailing Adam and Eve to the garden floor like an angry 1st Sergeant dealing with an AWOL soldier who has been caught. Somehow I don't think that's an accurate picture. Adam and Eve were the crown of God's creation. As their creator, God's loved them greater than we mortals can even imagine.

We see another, earthly example of a parent's love in the book of 2 Samuel:

"The king is grieved for his son." And the people stole back into the city that day, as people who are ashamed steal away when they flee in battle. But the king covered his face, and the king cried out with a loud voice, "O my son Absalom! O Absalom, my son, my son!" 2 Samuel 19:2b-4 (NKJV)

King David's son had turned against his father and had been bent on taking over the kingdom of Israel. Fierce battles had ensued and Absalom had been killed. Instead of finding satisfaction in victory, David grieved deeply for his lost son, with no thought of Absalom's apparent hatred for his own father.

The similarities are crystal clear - the creator grieving over his precious children and the king grieving over his lost son. Let me take it one more step and really bring it home. Imagine loving parents losing a child to a senseless, violent auto accident. It's not possible to describe the heart wrenching sorrow.

So What!

For me, it's intensely personal in more ways than one. I clearly remember being raised by parents who loved me, Sunday school, church, catechism classes, and even my first communion. It was at that first communion altar that I first felt the love and presence of God so intensely that I would never forget that I belonged to Him. I also remember deciding to leave the church to run my own life after graduating high school and leaving home. I went AWOL and was in an ODF status for a lot of years (Out 'Dere Flappin'). I left the church but not get away from His love. When I finally decided to just let God take charge of my life it was a matter of just letting go of my own reins. I had an overwhelming sense of God having been there all the time, patiently waiting and grieving with a father's heart.

To whoever is reading this, I probably don't know you, but I know God does. And he loves you with a love words cannot describe. He loves you know matter what, whether you have walked with him all your life, have once know him and turned away, or if you have denied him and never accepted his love. So no matter who you are or where life has taken you, just take a moment to think about it. If you are on the run, just give up. You can't outrun God's love. God is not an angry 1st Sergeant waiting to slap an Article 15 on you or try and send you to Leavenworth.

Listen to the words of Jesus, who bled and died because he loves you:

"For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him." John 3:17 (NIV)

"The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they might have life to the full. I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep." John 10:10-11 (NIV)

"My sheep listen to my voice; I know them and they know me." John 10:27 (NIV)

Listen to his voice. He's calling you.