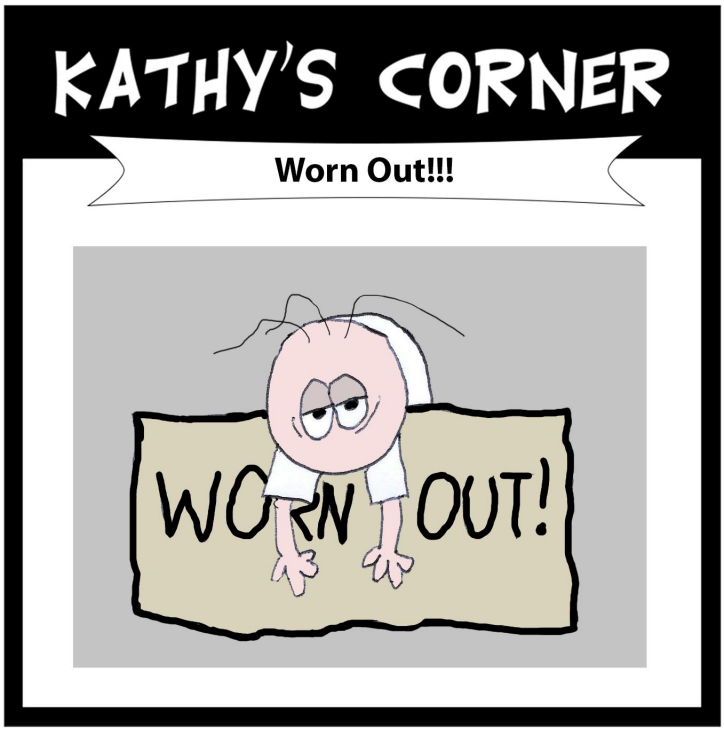
WORN OUT!!!



Over the past several weeks I have heard, "I'm tired.", "He's tired.", "I need rest." "I'm worn out." Some of these I have heard multiple times. And if it hasn't come from my own mouth, it certainly has been in my thoughts, especially since I will be 75 years old this year. Several days ago I was reading in Genesis 18. In verses 11-12 CSB it says, **Abraham and Sarah were old and getting on in years. Sarah had passed the age of childbearing. So she laughed to herself: "After I am worn out and my lord is old, will I have delight?"**

Many times I think about Caleb (He and Joshua were the two spies that believed God when Moses sent twelve spies to check out Canaan, the land God promised to the Israelites). All the spies agreed that the land was flowing with milk and honey, but most were afraid of the strong people living there and discouraged by the large size of the cities and fortifications. Out of Caleb's mouth: **"Let's go up now and take possession of the land because we can certainly conquer it!"** (From Numbers 13:30 CSB) Forty years later only Joshua and Caleb remained of all the Israelites who should have believed God's promise and taken the land. Those Israelites under the age of twenty also survived. *(Side bar: Perhaps this indicates the age of responsibility for one's own actions.)*

Now, getting back to Caleb who is speaking to Joshua, **"You know what the Lord promised Moses the man of God at Kadesh-barnea about you and me. I was forty years old when Moses the Lord's servant sent me from Kadesh-barnea to scout the land, and I brought back an honest report. My brothers who went with me caused the people to lose heart, but I followed the Lord my God completely. On that day Moses swore to me, 'The land where you have set foot will be an inheritance for you and your descendants forever, because you have followed the Lord my God completely.' "As you see, the Lord has kept me alive these forty-five years as he promised, since the Lord spoke this word to Moses while Israel was journeying in the wilderness. Here I am today, eighty-five years old. I am still as strong today as I was the day Moses sent me out. My strength for battle and for daily tasks is now as it was then. Now give me this hill country the Lord promised me on that day, because you heard then that the Anakim are there, as well as large fortified cities. Perhaps the Lord will be with me and I will drive them out as the Lord promised."** (From Joshua 14: 6-12 CSB)

I was in my fifties reading this. Caleb's strength at eighty-five stood out to me in a way that I think God was speaking to me personally. I hope He was predicting the same for me. I hope also that this passage speaks to the older spiritual warriors here at NUMA. We should not give in to weariness We should resist it as we do the devil himself. All of us do need periods of rest and restoration, as the Spirit leads, to preserve His temple.

Daniel received a vision from the Lord about the kingdoms and their kings in the last days. He spoke of the last ungodly ruler in this way, **"he shall be different from the former ones, and shall put**

down three kings. He shall speak words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High," (From Daniel 9:24 and 25 ESV)

Wearing out the saints is a powerful tactic of the devil. He uses this against all the saints once they realize their identify in Christ. Satan's goal is often stated as "to steal, kill, and destroy." We know this is true, but **he does this as stealthily as he can; little-by-little so that we might think it is anything but him as the cause.** What does he affect?—our health, our bodies, our minds, our time, our consecration, our peace and joy, our prayer life and anything else he possibly can. Through our weariness he wants us to become discouraged, miserable, restless, depressed, even hopeless. He keeps us busy and distracted to destabilize us and to make us ineffective in ministry, and to keep us from fellowship with both the Lord and His people. Don't let Him! I know if I let the devil use tiredness to keep me from church, he will make sure I am tired all the time. He will interrupt rest and sleep. The same with sickness, and with business (sometimes we just have to say no). It occurred to me that with all of Job's physical afflictions, there is no record of him ever consulting a physician or using pharmakeia/socery.

Samson is probably the one who comes to mind when we think about a Nazarite. Historically, a Nazarite in Israel was an Israelite who was set apart (consecrated) to the service of God. A Nazarite's vows included abstaining from alcohol, letting their hair grow, and not being defiled by corpses. We all know what happened when Samson's hair was cut. **Because she nagged him day after day and pleaded with him until she wore him out, he told her the whole truth and said to her, "My hair has never been cut,..."** (From Judges16:16 and 17 CSB) Samson's reaction to being bugged by Delilah caused him to react in a way that was his own downfall.

Paul's reaction was quite different to the one who annoyed him. **Once, as we were on our way to prayer, a slave girl met us who had a spirit by which she predicted the future. She made a large profit for her owners by fortune-telling. As she followed Paul and us she cried out, "These men, who are proclaiming to you a way of salvation, are the servants of the Most High God." She did this for many days.**

Paul was greatly annoyed. Turning to the spirit, he said, "I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her!" And it came out right away. (Acts 16:15-18 CSB) The NAS Exhaustive concordance definition of the word translated *annoyed* is *to toil through, to be worn out or annoyed.*

I guess we can see the difference here between giving in and spiritual warfare. Resist the devil! Use your mouth! The harder it gets and the more oppression we face, the more important it is to put on that spiritual armor of Ephesians 6 and to persevere in prayer with thanksgiving. Take your stand! Be consecrated, minister to Christ. Draw near to Him, and see how near He will come to you. Enjoy Him. Love on Him!

Not anymore! I won't have it. I have the Spirit. He is mine.
I won't walk in the ordinary
when I am filled with Life divine.

He is the Master. I am the servant. He is the Father. I am a son.
His is the life I will be living.
He is the way, the only One.