

## Wounds and Walls

As we continue our 40-days of prayer for loved ones, we bump up against some thick walls, or defenses, that surround their sexually immoral decisions. We wonder why: (s)he is not by nature a defensive person. How did this fence get electrified?

It may be helpful to remember that preceding immoral choices are significant wounds of which we are not aware. Sexually brokenness usually results from a series of disempowering messages and experiences in childhood that a sensitive soul agrees with and internalizes. What results is a pervasive belief that one is flawed in his/her adequacy as a gendered person and disqualified from normal love. The enemy of his/her dignity stokes shame and self-hatred to a degree that perhaps we have never experienced.

When this exquisite soul, now in darkness and dangerously turned against itself, experiences illicit love from a similarly wounded soul, (s)he feels like she has come into the light. 'Someone understands me and pays me attention and thinks I am wonderful!' Add the sensual bond (sensational and habit-forming) and you have a stronghold that is mightily defensive. A starving person now eats and will fight for his/her freedom to self-nourish.

We know these 'eating' habits are disordered and thus doomed to fail. But such awareness is rational; the wound and the wall arose out of chaos, irrationally, and are not immediately subject to reason. We have a deeply spiritual problem. Our common enemy who seeks to destroy these souls employs psychological wounds and defenses to wall them off from unfailing Love.

So we pray, and ask the Father of all-living to make known His kindness to loved ones. And He sensitizes us as to make us answers to our own prayers: more aware of what may well drive their defenses, more inclined to listen to His voice than ours, turning from fear and strife and toward compassion for the loved one's well-being. We ask God to burn off our shame and to make us fearless in love for the other's best.

Yet the sword is in our hearts, not our hands. May He turn our zealous efforts to 'set this one straight' into tears for the wounds they bear. Only water brings down such walls. Let us embody the brokenness that invites our loved ones into His.