

## Not Back, *Beyond!*

I want to encourage you to go before the Lord and ask him five questions. Write down the answers. Don't be in a hurry. Let yourself feel and acknowledge what you are experiencing. Here are the questions:

- 1. What have I lost?**
- 2. What have I gained?**
- 3. What idols do I need to forsake? What do I need to surrender? Confess? Release?**
- 4. Lord, what do I need to embrace?**
- 5. Lord, where are you at work, and how can I join you?**

### **Betsy's Example**

- 1. What have I lost?** Sometimes I don't feel safe, and I feel concerned especially for Sam. We've not been able to have anyone in the house. I miss our children and grandchildren. I've had to cancel planned trips to see them, and I doubt that we will be able to go to Canada together in June. I can't walk on the path behind my house because it's too crowded, and there's no way to maintain distance when people come by, especially in groups. I need to wear a mask in public. I can't have our staff over for staff meetings and lunch. I feel a lot of pressure as new projects have opened up. I've not been able to be with people who are struggling. I miss walking with my walking partner of 15 years. I am deeply saddened by all the suffering in the world and the people who are losing loved ones. I ache for the trauma medical professionals are experiencing. I am deeply saddened that friends are sick and in crisis, and this virus is making their care more complicated and difficult.
- 2. What have I gained?** It's been a powerful experience to meet with people and listen to God each day during Daily Connect. Sam and I are much more deeply connected now, and I believe we're having some real breakthroughs in our relationship. It seems that he is more present to what is happening in our common life and ministry, not distracted by a baseball game and half there. We've had some really sweet conversations with our neighbors. I don't have to face rush hour traffic or any traffic at all. People have brought us food when we could not get grocery orders. Sam has done some major cleanup around the house. We have cleaned out a small mountain of invasive plants from our woods and discovered delightful wildflowers back there.

I see parents around me spending more time with their children, and this makes me happy. Yes, I'm sure the children are driving them mad at times, but it makes me happy to see them bond. Everything has slowed down. The tragic deaths of 60,000 plus people in the U.S. have made me think about the importance of people. Many old friends that I haven't spoken to in years have called, and we have rekindled our love for each other. I am interacting with God all the time.

- 3. What idols do I need to forsake?** What do I need to surrender? Confess? Release? Yesterday I had saw myself as a three-year-old standing in Jesus' lap. I was shaking from head to toe. Shaking off trauma. I do not understand what was being healed, but I feel more whole today. Lord, I confess driving myself to the limit of my humanity. I confess fear of failing. Forgive me for letting you lead me to a task, then ignoring you while I worked on it as if you only assign tasks without providing the strength to do them. Release me from this trap. Cleanse me from my sin. I want to trust you with my whole heart. Lord, on behalf of my country and culture I repent of valuing money and getting ahead more than people or relationships, in particular my relationship with you. Lord, to show me my part. Change me.
  
- 4. Lord, what do you want me to embrace?** I want you to draw ever closer to me and surrender your schedule to me, not just for job assignments but for the execution of every aspect. I want to take away all your fear and make you fearless and bold, Mighty Warrior.
  
- 5. Lord, where are you at work, and how can I join you?** I am teaching you a new way of operating with reduced capacity. I am peeling off your perfectionism. *Oh Lord, Not sure I like that!* It is not quick, not easy, but it will bring you freedom. I am showing you how to just being with me, sitting with me without conversation or agenda. Feeling my presence. *Oh Lord, so comforting!*