

I got it when I was less than one. It was soft, and had many colors. I snuggled with it, napped with it, slept with it every night. It was on my shoulder walking with me every day. I missed it when it was in the washer. To the naked eye it was a cotton Indian blanket. But to me it was ... my wo-wo.

What would we do without wo-wo's --- security blankets, crutches we rely on to give us courage, peace, company, confidence. I asked people last week about wo-wo's. Children have them --- teddies, dollies --- but so do teenagers. A friend is a good wo-wo. Parents. Wheels. Being a cheer-leader or a star athlete, or the class brain. Adults have wo wo's. I asked, and here are some of them. Alcohol has been a wo-wo ... before I got hold of myself, having my mother still alive, married love with a sweetheart partner, my job, my money, my dog, my family, being a marine, having great legs, bridge group, mobility: knowing I can walk where I want, my job.

The Jews in the time of Jesus had one of the world's great wo-wo's --- the Temple, 46 years and still being built, gleaming with costly stones, votive offerings, gorgeous ceremonies. Just seeing it made them feel confident.

But today Jesus says the words that all with wo-wo's hate to hear. "All that you see here, all that delights you, that gives you confidence and self-worth --- it has to be taken away." And it was. Roman General Titus came, besieged Jerusalem, and completely torn the temple down in the year 70. And so it is with all created wo-wo's. As you get older you stop being the class brain, or the person with the great legs, or the funniest guy in town. Worse than anything, we even lose the special wo-wo people ... parents, best friends, children, brothers and sisters ... and part of us dies with them.

Loss of wo-wo's is part of human life, part of everyone's life, and we need to grieve our losses. If you live to be old, you will have lost very much.

But if you're a Christian, you learn to accept it, be at peace with it, and even believe there's a value to it.. God gives the wo-wo's, understanding we're very weak, insecure ... and then little by little God removes them ... or asks us to ... so we can depend finally on Him, connect with Him, derive our self-esteem and self-worth from Him. And further ... while we're in the middle of losing, if you're a baptized person, Jesus asks you to give testimony to others that no matter how life might feel right now ... God is good, God can be trusted, God knows best, and that on the other side, in God, everything and everyone we lose is given back.

Testimony from a witness in perfect health with full pockets and lots of wo-wo's is moving. Testimony from someone on their cross, or in the midst of famines, earthquakes or plague, without a wo-wo in sight, is something stronger.

We thank God for all the wo-wo's of life ... but never forget God is the biggest wo-wo of all. And that we get to carry Him around by day, and snuggle with Him, nap and sleep with Him by night ... till Jesus comes with the big wo-wo ... and all is restored forever. WOW!

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