

Responding Like a Sick Calf?

“Kuuuh”, “kuuuh”, “kuuuh”. If you have ever been around a sick calf suffering from respiratory infection, you know the sound I am trying to spell out. If not, imagine a child that has a terrible cough, severe congestion and a high fever that demands immediate treatment, and perhaps you can visualize the condition of the sick calf. This year in Southeast Alabama, we have had to treat several calves for various degrees of respiratory disease.

Almost without exception, though our cattle are gentle, they still do not want us to touch or handle them when they are sick and desperately need our help. Even the mama cow whose baby is sick—wants to lead it away so we will leave it alone. Neither she nor the calf wants to let us do what has to be done for the calf to be healed and to survive. We are risking limb, life and sacrificing a lot of time and effort with the sole desire to help the sick calf. We know the problem. We have what is needed to make it well, but it always resists our help and fights against us with all its might to get away, even though all we want to do is take away its infirmities as painlessly and compassionately as we can.

This phenomenon or tendency, always reminds me of our response to God when He knows we need His touch. He knows our needs. He has the power to heal, restore and to make whole, but we tend to either avoid Him or even run away from Him until we have no other options or cannot run anymore. This is sometimes true when the problems are physical, but it is almost always the case when our infirmity is spiritual and involves matters of the heart and dealing with sin in our lives.

It is critically important to make it clear the when a baby calf gets sick, our greatest desire as cattlemen, is to do whatever is needed to make the calf well again so that it can be healthy and fulfill its purposes in life. This truth is even more evident with God and His love and concern for us. His love for us existed before we were conceived. He is our Creator, our Sustainer, and wants more than anything else to be our Savior. He has a plan for our lives: *“For I know the plans I have for you’, declares the Lord, ‘plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future’.” (Jer 29:11)*. Whatever God wants to do in our lives is founded on, and carried out with, a sincere and unconditional love for us and is 100% for our good!

Sometimes I actually tell the calf or the protective mama cow that is resisting my help: “I don’t want to hurt you. If you only knew that I care for you and want only to help you and save your life, you wouldn’t fight me so hard”. I wonder how many times God has said that to me--- when all the while I was running away or in some way prohibiting Him from doing what He knows (and that I now know), would be best for me, would fix my problems, and would allow me to experience pure contentment and peace.

If there is one truth evident in Scripture and through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus, it is that God is a God of love! His is holy, sovereign, all powerful, all knowing, ever

present and just. His is all these things and much, much more, but all of these attributes are a reflection of His love for us.

Because He loves us with such a sacrificial, pure and unconditional love, we have to know that anything He desires to do in our lives is for our own good. Instead of fighting against Him, how much easier would our lives be and how much lesser our infirmities if we just allowed Him to do what needs doing, to touch what needs His touch, and even to sometime do the surgery to cut out the cancers in our hearts and minds?

Our physical lives are temporary. Our souls will live forever in Heaven or Hell. When we learn we have a physically life threatening condition, we immediately seek out the best emergency treatment. Yet when we learn that we have spiritually life threatening condition, we reject the truth and refuse to turn to the only Physician who can save us.

His greatest desire is to have a deep personal relationship with us and to give us eternal life. Yet, so many people use expressions or thought processes that imply the God will send people to hell. The nature of God and the Word of God shows us that though most people will go to Hell, God does not destine them there. Jesus said in His own words in John 3:16-18: *"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God **did not** send his Son into the world to condemn the world, **but to save** the world through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son".*

God will not condemn us to Hell. We are already hell bound because of our sinfulness! In fact, He gave all He had, His most precious gift—His only Son—to make the only way for us to escape Hell and have eternal life! His greatest desire is to save us from Hell. But, our salvation and the salvation of the world comes only through placing our faith in, and surrendering our lives to, His transforming grace and healing touch as applied through faith in the shed blood of His son Jesus

I challenge you to stop resisting. Instead, run to the Master Physician and allow Him to heal your soul, take away your sin, and give you eternal life.