

The warmth of walls

Some of you have heard this story before but it's worth repeating. When Martha had been in the hospital along time and I had been bedside with her, I realized that I had not spent much time with my, then two year old, son, Dane. I decided to spend a day hanging out with him and after a morning of wrestling and noogies, we ended up beside the creek that runs behind our house. This was to be Dane's first fishing trip so we dug up some "woooms" as Dane would say, and set out. It wasn't long before he had reeled in his biggest fish ever, also his first. It was a whopping three inch long blue gill and felt as big as a house to him. He was beside himself with excitement. Well, I'm not one to let a great moment go by, so after pictures (that now hang as a trophy on MY wall) we placed the fish in our 75 gallon fish tank to keep and watch for a life time. The next morning we awoke to a crispy critter, lifeless, at the base of the fish tank. The fish had, foolishly, jumped out. As I thought over the trauma that occurs when a man loses the biggest fish he had ever caught in his little life, I thought of how we are much like the fish. God has placed us in a fish bowl of, what feel like, uncomfortable boundaries sometimes. There are so many things that we desire but are not permissible within the will of God. The fish had been place in a protective environment where he would be feed well, he would be admired constantly, and have constant care taking. From inside the tank walls, the fish thought life would be better outside the boundaries I had placed him in. He did not understand that life outside of loving boundaries would be a cold, slow, lonely, death. As with us, about mid jump, he probably realized that he had made a huge mistake. Unfortunately for him, there was no going back. But we are so fortunate to serve a God that loving stands and waits in case we jump, so as to pick us back up and gently place us back where we belong. We sometimes get bruised or broken, but isn't the tank always comforting to get back into. My point is this, that God does insist that we obey his will. The walls that he

places are there to protect us and bring us comfort in keeping us from pain that we can not see or understand. As good as life looks outside the will of God sometimes; there is great reward in staying put. Matt. 7:21 says "Not everyone who says to Me, Lord, Lord, will enter the kingdom of heaven; but it is he who does the WILL of My Father who is in heaven." Be encouraged today to enjoy the freedom within Gods will and avoid being a crispy critter at all cost.