

2 Parasites That Will Suck the Spiritual Life Out of You

“Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the saints greet you” (2 Cor. 13:12-13).

Paul, the author of this instruction, masterfully wove greetings throughout his letters to the churches in his care. If it was important enough for Paul to put his greeting in writing, then it is certainly important enough for us to put the greeting into practice.

Let’s turn once again to the example of the lioness. She pairs the dynamic of greeting with something else: grooming. Each lioness has glands located on her brow, just above her eyes, which secrete the pride’s scent. When lionesses regroup, they make intimate social contact by rubbing their cheeks and gently butting heads.

Their attention to scent recognition serves a number of purposes. The greet-and-groom ritual gives them a natural way to detect when something or someone undesirable has joined the pride and to show acceptance and belonging to one another. As God’s children, we can do the same with the people in our lives.

If the ritual of lioness greeting progresses favorably, it quickly morphs into an impromptu grooming session. Lionesses primarily groom each other’s head and neck, areas a lioness would find difficult to reach on her own. With their rough-textured tongues, the lionesses clean off blood and dirt while combing their companion’s fur free of ticks and parasites.

When something takes blood and nutrients from your body, that creature is slowly but surely stealing your life. Like the lioness, we need each other to clean off the dirt, ticks and parasites from our lives.

“Don’t imagine yourself to be quite presentable when you haven’t had a bath in weeks. Don’t be stuck-up and think you’re better than everyone else. ... A leech has twin daughters named ‘Gimme’ and ‘Gimme more’” (Prov. 30:12-13, 15, MSG).

Give me and *give me more* are parasites that diminish our nutrients and rob us of life. When we are part of a community that grooms one another, we help each other keep our lives clean of these things. It seems our large feline friends know innately what we humans often learn at great expense: It can be dangerous to groom yourself.

Who are the people in your life that need to be greeted? Who in your world would benefit from some tender grooming? Ask the Holy Spirit to show you someone who you could invite to be a part of your grooming process. Let’s lift each other up to become all we are destined to be!

Adapted from Lioness Arising *by* **Lisa Bevere.**