

I'm Thirsty

Last week I had the pleasure of flying up north to Pennsylvania for a visit with family and friends. I have three siblings, a younger sister (age 56), who happened to be last week's essay focus and two younger brothers (ages 63 and 51). The purpose of the trip was for a reunion of the neighborhood kids we all grew up and went to school with. We all know what a reunion is and this certainly was a gathering of a group of people that hadn't seen each other for quite some time. Try 47 years! I was amazed at being surrounded by all these old people and then realized I was one of them. What really defined the bond of decades ago was it was like we never left the neighborhood. The friendships survived the decades of time past. We all shared fond memories and laughed for hours at some of the shenanigans we pulled and survived. It was great seeing so many friends after nearly half a century. What started out as a trip to a reunion wasn't really what God had in mind. Apparently, He had other ideas.

Usually when I travel to Pennsylvania, I stay at my sister's house (she bought our parents' house where we grew up) so I get to stay in my old room I had in high school. But as you remember from last week's essay, she had Covid, so as not to bring any back, I stayed with my brother Ben (63). He picked me up at the airport and we headed to his house. Philadelphia traffic is horrendous and even worse

during rush hour. We were a couple of hours pre-rush so the stop and go wasn't too bad. God had it stacked just right (**Psa. 37:23, Prov. 16:9**).

My brother Ben and I grew up together, being shy 2 weeks of being two years apart. I was usually the bad example and he was always the calm and quiet one. I remember my mom always saying, "Ben's tenderhearted" to which I usually commented "he was tender-headed." I was always the con man as well in playing with toys. I'd give him the broken one and tell him he had the cool "wrecked" one to which he happily went along. I'm surprised he and my sister never put out a contract on me for some of my pranks.

Looking back now, I realize how he came by his nick name, Gentle Ben. "The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit."- **Psa. 34:18 (Psa. 51:17, Isa. 57:15, Isa. 66:2)**. So, for the next hour in slow traffic, we had church. He asked questions, God had answers. "But sanctify The Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear."- **1 Peter 3:15**. He and I had shared scriptures a couple of years back and he was more than inquisitive at that time. The seeds must have taken root. We must always be ready to sow the seeds when God provides the opportunity. That's our part. Be ready. God will take the gardening from there. It isn't up to us whether they fall on good soil or are choked out by weeds. We simply need to be obedient

when the situation arises. Sometimes God will till the soil until the seeds sprout according to His purpose. God's timing is always perfect (**Ecc. 3:7, Matt. 13:18-23**). This was only on the ride from the airport. God was setting the stage.

When Friday evening and the Sabbath came, another discussion took place. We talked about churches and how they are and what goes on within them. It was apparent that he was feeling just as I had a few years ago. We agreed that there was always something missing. The truth. Then my brother said something I thought I'd never hear him say in the context he used, "I'm thirsty." I knew in that instant I was not there for a reunion. "O God, thou art my God; early I will seek thee, my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is."- **Psa. 63:1 (Psa. 42:2, 143:6, Isa. 44:3, Matt. 5:6)**. For the next few hours, water flowed into a dry and thirsty heart. We shared the Sabbath and God's Word for the first time as brothers.

Today's churches are full of false doctrine and denominational agendas. The truth isn't in them and the traditions (**Mark 7:8-9**) have muddied any water they serve, which never quenches the thirst for truth (**Matt. 7:15, 24:11, 24:24, Mark 13:22**). I fully understood what Ben was feeling as it is what led me to search for God's truth, His real truth. Not what is being sold in Sunday churches today.

I'm always amazed at how God's Words seem to come to memory when they're needed. "But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not you that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you."- **Matt. 10:19-20 (Eph. 6:19, Col. 4:3)**. Perhaps I wasn't delivered up but I was definitely delivered to this moment in time.

We had a great weekend of fellowship and the reunion on Sunday with old friends. My sister, who had asked for prayer for healing from Covid just the week before, drove by in her Corvette (she knows my affinity for them) just to say hello. Only seven days before, she was fever ridden and in bed sick. She asked, God heard. Prayer works. No doubts. My youngest brother actually mentioned God in a few conversations which is something he never does. Maybe he's next? We can only pray.

I did explain to Ben that seeking to live God's way of life is not for the fainthearted and once begun there is no turning back and the commitment is an eternal one:

Luke 9:57-62- "Now it happened as they journeyed on the road, *that* someone said to Him, "Lord, I will follow You wherever You go." And Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air *have* nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay *His* head." Then He said to another, "Follow Me." But he said, "Lord, let me

first go and bury my father." Jesus said to him, "Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and preach the kingdom of God." And another also said, "Lord, I will follow You, but let me first go *and* bid them farewell who are at my house." But Jesus said to him, "No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."

Luke 14:26-27- "If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple. And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple."

I'm pretty sure we were clear on the responsibilities. One thing I am sure of as well is that if he continues his search, God will reveal His truth to him and he will never thirst again. "But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up unto everlasting life."- **John 4:14 (John 6:35, 7:37)**.

I got to share the best drink of water with my brother anyone could ever have.

"They shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away

all tears from their eyes. “- **Rev. 7:16-17**. I believe *that this will be the reunion*
God has intended for all of us as His chosen.

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