

Memorial Day Week Devotional

Many years ago, I had project in North Carolina that required lots of hours on the road. Since it was cheaper, and often quicker to drive than to fly, I came to know those roads better than I really wanted. Suffice it to say, I had a lot of truck time to myself, and since that was a time for me when I was in a very good place with God, we spent a lot of time talking.

On one particular Friday, I was about 45 minutes from the project on my way home when I passed a small convenience store that I had passed on many occasions. I passed it because, unless I was on empty, it wasn't a place I would desire to go. And when I say go, pun is intended, because this was one of those places where I'm sure you would have to ask for the "restroom key on a stick." Anyway, as I passed the convenience store, I heard a voice saying "turn around." The voice didn't say where to go, but for some reason I knew that. Well, it was getting late, and it had been a long week, and for numerous other reasons, I decided to ignore the voice and just kept driving past the first U-turn. As soon as I did, I heard a voice again. I don't know if it was the original voice, or me, but for whatever reason, this time I listened. As I turned around, I told God, ok, I'm trusting that when I get there you will tell the why, or for whom, that you want me there.

At that point I was a couple of miles past the store, but that was a long and anxious two miles. When I walked in the store, I understood why I had passed by the store so many times. It felt like every eye in the store was on me because "I wasn't from around there." I walked up and down every aisle, not a peep. I walked over to the old refrigerated "Coke" case and got a bottle of Cheerwine, still not a peep. I walked up to the counter to pay, still not a peep. I asked the guy behind the counter, "if he was doing alright today?" He was a man of few words. So, I told the guy behind the counter to, "have a good evening," and walked back to my truck, got in, and drove away.

As I got back on the highway, I have to admit, I was disappointed because I just knew that God was sending me there for something special. And then I turned the disappointment on me, thinking I should have done something more or said something more, I should have been more aggressive. But as I drove further that feeling was replaced with a feeling that I had done what I was supposed to do. It was as if he was checking to see if he could trust me to do something "down the road."

Full transparency, I wish I could say I listened to every voice. The fact is I don't. There are two key phrases in the opening paragraph, "Many years ago" and "we [me and God] spent a lot of time talking." There's not a doubt in my mind that the only reason that U-turn

happened on that Friday night is because “we spent a lot of time talking.” But I also know that one of the most difficult things in the Christian life is consistency. Like I started, that was “Many years ago,” and to be honest those voices aren’t as regular as they used to be, and neither are those conversations. Why is that? I think it largely all comes down to “will.” It’s ours versus His. Which one wins out? It’s only when we are in regular communication with God that we can say “Not my will, but yours be done” (Luke 22:42). And it is only then that we can truly be obedient to what He is calling, or has called, us to do.

So, for this week, while it’s great to have your time to pray and to meditate and to spend reading your Bible, if you don’t already, just try to spend “a lot of time talking to God.”