

The Sharing Org

Ministry to the Adult Foster Care Community

June 2016

Ministry Moment...

In my trunk is an electric pencil sharpener. It's blue (I think). It just sits in a box of items that I occasionally need for services such as spare song books and stuff. Every time I open the trunk that pencil sharpener stares at me wondering when I am going to call on it again. I call it "Jackie's Pencil Sharpener." You see, I purchased it for him.

Jackie and I like to sit together, each of us coloring in our own adult coloring book. We share about life as we color, we talk about drawing and art as we sit, and one of us will work our Lord into the conversation during this time. I have to keep it in my trunk because he said it would get stolen if he kept it with him – *he doesn't have a secure place to keep it.*

Jackie is an interesting character. He served in the Navy after the Korean War. He said he always wanted to go back to the Indonesian Islands – *he liked it there.* After his time in the Navy he lived in California. He worked as a plumber while there. He told me stories of how he did work at certain celebrities' homes, and how Tina Louise (Ginger from Gilligan's Island) was a nice "girl." He likes to draw and shows me his doodles and characters. He wishes he would have pursued trying to sell his work. I had this crazy idea of getting 50 original drawings from him and publishing them into a book for him. I thought a title like "Jackie's Doodles, Sketches, and Other Pleasurable Works of Splendor" would be fun. I don't know, what do you think? A little much? Anyway, I was thinking a coffee-table book with full color drawings on textured paper.

However, none of that is to be. When I arrived at his group home earlier this past month, I learned that Jackie had passed. I prayed with him as he was getting ready to go to the doctor. I thought it was the standard routine doctor visit, but apparently it was a little more than that because I never saw him again.

Now I have this electric pencil sharpener in my trunk that has only ever been used once, and I can't quite see myself getting rid of it: not yet anyway. I'll find a place to put it that will honor his memory but for now, I'm happy to see it every time I open the trunk.

~John

⁶ that this may be a sign among you. When your children ask in time to come, 'What do those stones mean to you?' ⁷ then you shall tell them that the waters of the Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the LORD. When it passed over the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan were cut off. So these stones shall be to the people of Israel a memorial forever." (Joshua 4)

³⁹ And some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, rebuke your disciples." ⁴⁰ He answered, "I tell you, if these were silent, the very stones would cry out." (Luke 19:39-40)

Prayer Letter...

What is an adequate Vision for a ministry of God? I suspect that any future hopes that I have in comparison to the richness of God's plan is unsatisfactory. I officiated at a funeral last week for a man. His obituary said that he was a woodworker – *and that he was a "natural" at it.* Around the funeral home were many pieces of his work, and I pointed out that calling him a 'natural' was a gross understatement. My dad was a woodworker and in comparison with this guy's work, my dad's stuff was garbage. I meant no sleight to my dad, but really, this other man's work was superb. It was the difference between a photograph of a person and my stick-figure drawing of that same person; it wasn't comparable. I think this is how my own understanding of the future vision of our work with this ministry might differ from that of God's. I think my own thoughts are just garbage in comparison.

A few months ago, God impressed on me the need to work on increasing the culture of prayer among us: to increase my personal prayer life, to encourage you to do so as well, and to invite more people to join us in prayer.

- It has been a fantastic time for me personally as I have developed a daily prayer time that has really been great. So good in fact that I have stuck with the routine – *and I am not really a routine type of guy.*
- I was asking the prayer partners to pray for 5-minutes a day, but I want to rescind that request. A good friend of mine has helped me to realize that putting a time limit on prayer is not actually what I want. A time limit is just that -- *limiting.* Plus, it can have the effect of causing people to feel guilty if they should forget to pray. Rather, I want you to pray *only* as the Holy Spirit places our work on your heart to do so. Now, I am asking you to pray as the Lord brings our work to your heart and mind. If your prayer is 10 seconds, 10 minutes, or 30 minutes, the time is not what is important, it is the Spirit's leading you to pray that is. For my part, I will continue to lift up your name up in prayer, each morning, and ask the Spirit of Jesus to encourage you to pray on our behalf. I like this approach better as I know that the Spirit of God is more reliable than each of our own efforts are.
- And I am noticing that the prayer culture of the ministry is already changing. We have new individuals and churches that have joined us in our monthly prayers, and I am receiving personal notes for specific prayers from people. Thank you for the honor! All of this is showing me that things are slowly changing for the better.

Finally, this coming month, I pray that you will know your true value to God. For our value is not found in our personal accomplishments but in the sacrificed blood that Jesus so willingly poured out for us upon the Cross at Calvary. Memorial Day is about remembering those who sacrificed their lives for our freedom, and it is fitting to remember our Lord at this time as well. Be blessed, and may you know your true worth in the eyes of God.

With much love,



John

“This day [the Passover Day] shall be for you a memorial day, and you shall keep it as a feast to the LORD; throughout your generations, as a statute forever, you shall keep it as a feast.

(Exodus 12:14)