



Glenn Brown

441 ½ Lark Drive
Grand Junction, Colorado 81504

Telephone 970-434-1377
Email casabrn441@gmail.com
Website www.glennbrownministries.com

FEBRUARY , 2022

SERVANTS and HEROES

As I reported in a previous Newsletter, at the beginning of December I spent a week in the VA Hospital recovering from a stroke that affected me mentally as well as physically. Then I spent more than a week in rehab in the same hospital regaining strength so I could take care of myself.

An unexpected blessing I experienced during that time was the wonderful people I encountered, both staff people and patients. The professional people: doctors, nurses, therapists, clerks, etc.. were not only top-notch in their various specialties, but they were also kind and caring. One example was the night custodian while I was in the hospital. Early each morning when he was in my room I talked with him briefly, and he was a very impressive guy. I asked him what he did during his career years, and he said that for 32 years he was the science teacher at Grand Junction High School. What! If the custodian taught science, the doctors and nurses probably had PhDs from Harvard.

When I went to rehab, I hadn't had a shower or even brushed my teeth in a week and felt like a mountain man. I also realized I was too weak to bathe myself. A nice nurse's aide, an older lady, said she would be glad to help me take a shower. The thought that came to my mind was: "Yeah, you can help me do that when pig's fly," but I just told her that I preferred that a man help me.

And so Arnie (not his name) helped me take a shower. Arnie was about 6'3", 230 lbs., and had been an army MP in Germany for four years. If I ever get caught up in a big gang fight, I'm going to stand behind Arnie. And he was the most gentle, compassionate guy you will ever meet. I never imagined that someone would have to help me bathe, but Arnie made it palatable. When he was washing my feet, I moved my knee and almost bumped his face. I apologized, and he said, "That's OK. It's the ones that do it on purpose that bother me." I asked what he meant. He said, "There are old guys that will purposely hit you in the face with a knee or an elbow and then laugh about it."

That flabbergasted me. And I believe it says something profound about human nature, about good and evil, and about what happens to people as they grow old. I believe that by the time we get to be 60 or 70, our character has become fixed. Of course there are exceptions, but they are rare. There are many kind, thoughtful, generous old people, but there are also a lot of old folks that act like and talk like the very devil: critical, grumpy, selfish, cynical, cruel, they have dirty minds and dirty mouths. (I'll bet you were thinking of some folks in the "good and evil" category as you read this paragraph - - right?)

That's why we need to be mindful of the decisions we make every day - - every choice we make is incrementally shaping our character so that we are becoming what we will be at the end of our life.....as we enter into eternity. There is a proverb in Ecclesiastes 11:3 that says, "Whether a tree falls to the south or to the north, in the place where it falls, there will it lie." To me, that proverb is profound and disturbing.

Think about the character of an old man who would purposely try to break the nose of a strong young man who is humbly helping him take a shower. When that old tree dies and falls to the south.....and he stands before a holy God for his final judgment, what do you think is going to happen? What if the old guy was a church guy, a Baptist, Lutheran, Catholic, Pentecostal? His judgment will be more severe if he had awareness of God's truth and grace and ended up acting like the devil. We can't depend on our church connection to save us any more than the Jews could depend on the Temple or the Ark of the Covenant to save them.

(I got off on a rabbit trail there, sorry.)

When I went to rehab, I got acquainted with some equally impressive people. At lunch one day I sat at a table with several guys (and I don't think I should use their names):
Veteran A - During the Korean War he was trapped at the Chosan Reservoir by the hordes of invading Chinese troops.... and they had to fight their way

out. If you have read the history of that war you know there was incredible suffering and heroism displayed by our guys. (Google: “Korean War, Chosan Reservoir.”)

Veteran B - Lost his left leg below the knee by a roadside bomb in Vietnam. Subsequently his left arm was paralyzed by a stroke. He scooted around in his wheelchair with a good attitude and no evidence of self-pity or bitterness. By the way, long ago he was one of the early coaches of the University of Texas football team. What a guy!

Veteran C - Various disabling infirmities. He showed me a book that recorded the adventures of the warship on which he served in the South Pacific, and there was his photograph as one of the officers on that vessel. Wow!

Veteran D - A man that has endured 13 years of slow decline with ALS. He told me his prognosis — his doctors expect him to live perhaps two and a half years more, and you may know what the end of life is like for victims of this disease. He showed me photos of his wife and grown children. He was a believer, and I said to him: “If I may, I want to ask you a deep question: In the long run, has this experience of having ALS been a good thing or a bad thing in your life?” He responded instantly: “Oh, it has been a good thing! God has used it to bring me closer to Him, and to bring our family closer together in love.”

REFLECTION: Please stop and think about these people that I met just a few weeks ago in the VA Hospital here in Grand Junction. In my mind, they are heroes: the staff people who are humble servants, and the veterans who are military heroes....and some of them are heroes of the faith.
=====

HOW THEN SHOULD WE LIVE?

In my last two newsletters I shared my conviction that God’s judgment is on our nation. For many of you, my sharing and teaching simply confirmed what you have believed in your heart for a long time.

For others, if you can’t read the signs of the times then nothing is going to change your minds.

If you are in the former group, how then should we live? Some thoughts:

When you grew into your teen years and on into adulthood, at some point you became aware of your own mortality. Did that make a difference in how you lived? Possibly:

(1) You pushed it into your subconscious, refused to think about it, and pretended it wasn’t real.

(2) You may have grown cynical, reckless, defiant. The Bible describes this attitude: “Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die!”

(3) You may have started searching for the meaning of your life, which led to a search for God. And if you searched for God, you found Him.....and then everything changed.

We are mortal. Every human life comes to an end. And every family, group, business, tribe, and nation also ends because it is composed of humans, and “Everything seen is passing away.” Veteran D, in my article above, knows that his expiration date is expected to be no more than two and a half years. He is living in peace and contentment because of his walk with God. We should also be living in peace and contentment, but we should also be seeking to know God’s specific assignment to us in this critical season.

Individuals and nations do not usually turn to God if everything is going along wonderfully. I admit that I have only turned to God or returned to God when my life became painful and out of control. How about you? Surely one reason God has allowed increasing pressures to come on our nation and on our individual lives (and many people have told me that their life situation has become increasingly painful and difficult in recent years) is so that we will run to Him.

Read the first two or three chapters of the Book of Judges and you will see the encapsulated history of Israel, and you will also see God’s heart and His patience. I think you will also see a clear picture of America and why increasing difficulties and pressures have come and will continue to come on our land.

How then are we to live? Jesus spells it out clearly in John 12:15-26 (The Passion Translation): “The person who loves his life and pampers himself will miss true life! But the one who detaches his life from this world and abandons himself to me will find true life and enjoy it forever....”

Most of the time I feel that I have made that choice and am ready to pay any price to love and serve the Lord.....but at other times I feel like such a pretender that I cry out, “O Lord, have mercy on me!” The Bible makes clear that we will always be dependent on Him - - we don’t have and will never

have any righteousness of our own. God is “Yahweh Tsidkenu” - “God our Righteousness.” Romans 5:7 says we have received “the gift of righteousness through Jesus Christ.” He is our Righteousness. Read the 6th chapter of Romans, and read it again and again until it gets deep into your heart.

It is clear that the time is past for Cultural Christianity, Easy-Peasy Christianity, Average Church-Guy Christianity. Actually, I don't think those are examples of Christianity at all, they are distortions, perversions, evasions. God is going to do a great thing in the coming days. When the darkness increases, the light will shine brighter. God needs some mighty men and women of God to sign up on His team. It's a rough game. People are going to get hurt, people are going to die.....on both teams.

Back in the early 1900's there was a famous painting of Christ hanging on the cross, and his eyes appeared to be looking deeply into the eyes of those who stood before the painting. At the bottom of the painting were the words, “I did it all for you. What will you do for me?” For a number of years, this painting was taken around the country during the Easter season and displayed in a gallery or hotel lobby. It was taken to a certain hotel in New York one Easter season, but it was a time when the hotel was being renovated and much construction resulted in reduced numbers of people coming to see the painting.

A big, husky guard was assigned to watch over and protect the painting. During the final week of the display, he noticed a certain construction worker who came at lunch time every day and spent his whole break gazing intently at the painting. On the final day of the exhibition, he noticed the man again staring intently at the painting with tears running down his face. As the man turned to go back to work, he heard him say, “You can depend on me, Jesus! You can depend on me!”

Can He depend on you?

COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

In this fallen world, every one of us goes through suffering, loss, and grief. But for parents who have lost a child, the suffering seems to be on a different level. Their lives are simply shattered.

Many lose their faith and trust in God, in prayer, in life itself.

“The Compassionate Friends” is an international ministry where parents that have survived the loss of a child reach out in compassion to others. Their monthly newsletter here locally includes the names of a number of children who have died, the cause of their death, and the names of their parents, and asks the recipients of the newsletter to pray for these parents. Following are a few of the names listed in the February newsletter, and I am showing only a part of the information. Some of the deaths happened recently, while some happened several years ago:

Stephen Atkins - age 14 - suicide
 Shane Bascom - age 25 - auto accident
 Michael DeLong - age 15 - assault
 Brian Elliot - age 30 - suicide
 Paul Koches - age 30 - drug overdose
 Ryan Lynch - age 15 - accidental gunshot wound
 Dorothy Rathjen - age 1 month - pulmonary hypertension
 Nelson Macke - age 9 - horse accident
 Buck Harris - age 48 - Pulmonary edema
 Seth Stephens - age 47 - murder
 Robert Wilson - age 24 - heart arrhythmia

Pray for the dear parents of these children.

My friend, Alice Monroe, is the professional advisor of the local chapter of Compassionate Friends and the editor of their monthly newsletter. Many years ago, she lost her 16 year-old son in an auto accident. This humble lady is a demonstration of kindness and strength that is God's gift to her. On her part it was bought at great cost. Alice writes:

“Embrace life again? Not me! Life is fragile and it would be too big a risk. I can't walk on eggs and not smash them, so how can I ever trust life again? We who suffer a great loss feel that way....for a long, long time. Slowly, ever so slowly, we begin to crack open the door of our life and peek out... That little crack begins to allow fresh air to seep in...and a ray of sun flashes against the floor. One day we open the door a little farther. We cautiously tiptoe back into life. After the loss of a child, that tiptoeing is comparable to a marathon.

“When a cup of hot coffee tastes good, when a song plays and we don't turn it off, when colors return to a sunset, when we can answer the phone with a somewhat friendly voice, when we feel comfort from a warm blanket on a cold night, we have proof that we are alive.

“May we each be given courage to one day have our doors wide open. So what if we break all the egg shells! It’s a different life, still waiting to be lived.”

Alice

=====
=

I would like to thank each of you for your support of this ministry.
If any of you want to receive tax credit for your financial contributions, you may send them to:
CANYON VIEW VINEYARD CHURCH
736 24 ½ Road Grand Junction, Co. 81505