

A Word From the Publisher



Last week was a rough weather week for us with all rain. The days were gloomy and chilly and the rains came down. Yes, we are so blessed compared to other parts of the United States who were under blizzard and heavy snow conditions. We are blessed to live in Florida and that's why we choose to live here! We have some cold, rain and lots of sunshine! I was so excited for Saturday to come because the forecast was to be sunny all day and it was. After sleeping in a little, we enjoyed our coffee on the porch sitting in the sun watching all the birds in and out of the birdfeeder. I gulped my coffee down, changed clothes and came back out to work outside! My heart was happy!

Those days are great days to reflect on God's goodness to us. We need the rain and He provides. We (I) need a break from the normal...He provides. What an awesome God we serve. I say this to remind us (me included) that God remains in control. We are in some changing times in our world but I need to remember that God is bigger than the world he created. Many times it's easy for me to let the problems of the world overtake my mind rather than

relying on the things of God, which is much more pleasing. Instead of being problem-centered try being God-centered...it sure makes life sweeter!

I am reminded of my childhood and what awesome days those were. I know it was probably difficult for my parents with five young children but we never knew it. Believe

it or not, we didn't have cell phones, iPads or computers. We were outside ninety-nine percent of the time. We had rules and we followed them. If not, we got spankings...yep with a belt or switch! Yikes! That was never a pleasant experience however we learned from that. While doing the story on Conner's Service Center, I was reminded of walking up to the station many times (by myself). I guess I just went to see Robert and get a piece of candy then go through the neighborhood. I, pretty much, enjoyed visiting with people even way back then. The funny thing, I can still hear my mama's whistle or yell when it was time to come home, and that was that. I did!

What fun times we had. I can remember playing 'war' in the back yard with Gus and his friends. I don't think he let me play many times because I couldn't make the right sound of a bomb exploding! Ha ha! We rode our bikes all over the place. As we grew up, if we wanted a vehicle, we had to pay for it...as to why I didn't get a car until I was a senior. In fact, I walked (yep) to school with Daddy (he was the Dean) most of my senior year in high school.

Fast forward several years, as the older siblings graduated and began working I also learned from them. My parents gave two options upon graduation: go to college and they would help pay for it; or get a job and gave us some money. There weren't too many options, which was great. There was no gray area, choose option 1 or 2.

The most important memory of growing up was our home was centered on Christ! Each meal was held at the kitchen table and began with a blessing, Sunday morning and evenings were at church and that was that. We all attended youth activities, yes they had youth activities back then. Daddy was a deacon and Mom sang in the choir. I can still remember seeing her 'giving me the look' from the choir when I was talking in church. Saturdays were spent at the beach with the car loaded with PB&J sandwiches, Chek drinks and children! I'm so thankful for godly parents and influence they continue to have in my life. What a blessed child I was to have such an awesome childhood.

I share these thoughts to remind us that we can take a step back and remember to enjoy the simpler things in life. God has provided such a beautiful place to enjoy that we so many times take for granted. As the world is concerned, we must do our part to stand up for our convictions but remember to keep God as the forefront of our thoughts! God remains on his throne and in total control!

Have a blessed week!

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