

Bermudian Church of the Brethren

WEDNESDAY's WORD – *a midweek thought from Pastor Larry M. Dentler to share a word of inspiration ... encouragement ... challenge ... a smile ... in the middle of your week February 15 in the year of our Lord 2017 - #684*

Last week a group of 12 men from Bermudian spent the week in Columbia, SC serving with Brethren Disaster Ministries (BDM). BDM goes into an area where there has been a disaster, after the initial disaster response, and sets up a long term recovery project using volunteers from Brethren churches, under the direction of trained leadership, to work on rebuilding & repairs to damaged homes. It truly is a wonderful ministry. Great, dedicated Christian, on-site staff. Sacrificing volunteers. Well organized. Amazing things accomplished in Jesus' name!

In October 2015 two Tropical Storms merged over the SC area dropping over 17 inches of rain. Flooding exceeded the "1000 Year Flood" levels. The homes we were helping to rebuild were of low income families that weren't in the best of shape to begin with, but were severely damaged by the wind & rain.

Throughout the week as we worked, when something funny would happen my men would laugh and say, "*Oh yeah! That's going to be a WEDNESDAY's WORD!*" So let's share some memories...

The Pearl (or underwear) Of Great Price

A Brethren Disaster Ministries Mission Trip 2017 Memory

After a full day of construction work, we would gather back at our "home base" – the Youth Building of Cornerstone Presbyterian Church ... our "home away from home." Everyone was anxious to get cleaned up. I had just showered and was back in the dorm area near my bunk getting changed into clean clothes, when our "fearless leader," Brother Joel Stern came bounding into the dorm with his usual energy, and smiling from ear-to-ear. He was holding up a pair of white underwear in both hands ... "*Hey Larry, did you forget something?*" I responded with a confused, "*What?*" Grinning and holding the underwear up for all to see he said again, "*You forgot something!*" I answered with a laugh, "*Sorry ... not mine.*" Now Joel was perplexed, "*But they have to be yours! You were in the shower right before me. They must be yours!*" He was still holding them up for the whole world! I laughed again and said, "*Sorry Joel, not mine, there are my dirty ones (pointing to my dirty clothes on the floor) and here (pulling down the waistband of my jeans to show the top of my underwear) are my clean ones! Not Mine! Besides I don't wear white ones!*"

Well now Joel was really unsettled! He went from person to person in both dorm areas determined to find the owner of the unclaimed underwear! "*Not mine!*" was the response over & over again, along with a few comments along the way that I'll not repeat here! By the end of the week Joel still had not found the owner of the "homeless" "whitey-tighties." And it was driving him crazy! He even brought the unclaimed drawers back with us to PA ... he is bound and determined to find their owner. And if any of the rest of us from the team know who they belong to ... well, we aren't talking!

Joel's passion to find the owner of the left-behind underwear reminded me of the simple parable that Jesus told of the "pearl of great price."

"God's kingdom is like a jewel merchant on the hunt for excellent pearls. Finding one that is flawless, he immediately sells everything and buys it."

Matthew 13:45-46 Message

What are YOU passionate about? A pair of unclaimed underwear? A beautiful pearl? Your hobby? Your home? Your car? Your collection? Your work? Your bank account?

None of these "passions" are necessarily wrong! But if they get in the way ... if they come before our passionate pursuit of a deeper, deeper, relationship with your Lord ... then we're on the wrong track! There are numerous Scriptures in both Old & New Testaments that point us to a passion to know the Lord more deeply!

"A deer longs for streams of water. God, I long for You in the same way. I am thirsty for God. I am thirsty for the living God. When can I go and meet with Him?"

Psalms 42:1, 2 NIV

"All I want is to know Christ and the power that raised Him from death. I want to share in His sufferings and be like Him even in His death."

Philippians 3:10 ERV

Today ... pray (or sing as a prayer) the chorus below, and commit in your heart to make knowing Jesus your deepest passion!

"The greatest thing in all my life is knowing You; The greatest thing in all my life is knowing You. I want to know You more, I want to know You more. The greatest thing in all my life is knowing You."

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And if you happen to have lost a pair of white men's underwear in a shower room in Columbia, SC ... I have just the guy for you to see!

More about Jesus would I know.....

Pastor Larry <><