

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 27 in the year of our Lord 2019 - #778

Thinking about Dad

Last Saturday I had the privilege of speaking to about 70 men in our Southern PA District Church of the Brethren MAN2MAN Spiritual Leadership Summit. It was an honor. My assigned topic was *“Living as a Man of Christ in Divisive Times,”* certainly a timely subject! I talked a lot about forgiveness and grace, and told a story I’ve told many times about how my Dad went to the hospital to see the man who had caused him the loss of his business & our home, as that man was near death with cancer. That act of forgiveness left a huge impact on this little boy.

Since Saturday my Dad’s been on my mind. Even though he went to be with the Lord way back in 2001, I still miss him and think of him so often. He sure shaped who I am and who my brother Lewie is. Across his lifetime he was: a farmer, an engineer, a fire company founder, a tractor mechanic & business owner, a truck driver, a bus driver, a security guard, a policeman, an RV mechanic. He designed a steam to diesel conversion that the U.S. military embraced. He built two houses from scratch. Built his own garden tractor from scratch. Built two fire trucks starting with bare cab & chassis. He could fix anything! He loved the Lord and was a leader in every church he was ever part of and served the Body of Christ as: Sunday School teacher, Stewards Commission, Building Committee, Youth leader, Evangelism leader and served on the Board of Directors for the Jacobs Brothers King’s Kids camp – surely his greatest legacy to me was this sense of love, trust, dependence & service to the Lord! He was a mentor to many young people including prisoners while he worked at the State Prison in Camp Hill. He was a wonderful husband to my mother with all her health problems, an excellent & beloved father & grandfather. He wasn’t perfect, but he was my Dad and he looked perfect in my eyes. I’ve lived my life against the standard I saw in him. His grandkids called him, “Pap Pap,” and mine just call me, “Pap,” and that’s great because I feel he was twice the man I’ll ever be!

In his last days, near death, he asked if I would serve him Holy Communion. What an honor! Talk about coming full circle. The one who had so often lifted me was now so weak I needed to lift his head. He could barely swallow so I wet my finger in the grape juice and put just a few crumbs of Communion Bread on my wet finger and put it to his mouth. It was a profound moment for me. In the days that followed I penned some words reflecting on that experience. Verse 1 reflects on the time when Dad moved his young family into our new home he had built near Lisburn. I was a baby, Lewie was 8. The second verse remembers the dark moment when because of his business partners he lost both business and home. I remember Mom crying as the papers were signed selling the house. The third verse reflects on that Communion moment with my Dad right before his death. And the last verse remembers the Upper Room when Jesus first gave Communion to His frightened Disciples.

Refrain: *Let me give you bread, Let me lift your head,
Let me reassure you, Of the Savior's love,
I will be beside you, When your way grows weary,
Loving you as surely as the Father loves above.*

1. *The whole world set before them, Everything looks bright,
A brand new home built with his own two hands,
He gathers Mom & Lewie and baby Larry too,
As father for his family he'll provide.*

Refrain

2. *Mom cries at the table, As papers there are signed,
The business failed but through no fault of his,
Everything he worked for, Now he sees it go,
But somehow for his family he'll provide.*

Refrain

3. *Years have come and gone now, Age, it takes its toll,
By the bedside of my Dad I stand,
"I would like Communion," he says to his son,
And in that moment life has come full round.*

Refrain

4. *It all seemed so simple, Bread and wine in hand,
Jesus looks into His family's eyes,
And in those eyes He sees me, and you, and all the ages,
And words of love and memory now He says.*

Refrain

"Let Me Give You Bread" words & music written by Pastor Larry M. Dentler
In loving memory of his father, Dale H. Dentler, 1911-2001.

Thanks for taking a few moments to let me remember my Dad today and the legacy he left me.
If you are a parent or grandparent, I pray that you are very intentionally leaving a legacy of faith
for those who look to you as "Mom," "Daddy," "Pap," "Gram," "Pop," "Mother," "Grandpa,"
"Meema" or whatever..... Remembering Dad, Pastor Larry <><