

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

September 18 in the year of our Lord 2019 - #805

Intimate

In the last couple weeks I've had the incredible, rich privilege to share in some moments with folks that only a pastor has the privilege to share. At the bookends of life's journey. They don't teach you about these in seminary. And for an introvert like me they can be emotionally difficult. Blushing even as I think about them again. Intimate. Holy Ground.

The first was at the funeral for Brother Marlin Miller. (I shared my funeral message about his 'tools' here a couple weeks ago.) The service was over, the gathered friends & family had left the room, the children had said their goodbyes to Dad and departed for their cars. It was just JoAnn and I near Marlin's casket. JoAnn leaned in towards Marlin's body. She had some things to say to him. (Now, I know, and she knew that Marlin wasn't present there. But this physical 'tent' was the Marlin she had spent 65 years with, raised seven children with, started businesses with, traveled in a motor home with, faced deep losses with, and shared great joys with. And this body was the husband she had so lovingly cared for as his health had failed.) So she leaned in and whispered to him. I was standing nearby ... but she spoke so softly even I couldn't hear. These were her words to him. Private. Intimate. Holy Ground.

A week later I stood in the stone foundation ruins of a barn built in the 1700s. I was officiating the wedding of Bermudian's own Ean Julius & his bride Morgan Bankert. It was a perfect weather day. The bride was beautiful. The groom was handsome. And this setting ... so perfect for this couple. I always give couples, as I work with them on their weddings, several options when it comes to their vows. Ean & Morgan chose an option that very few choose. They wanted to each write their own vows. So we had talked about what wedding vows mean, what they imply, what's usually included ... and they prayerfully, lovingly penned the words, the promises, they really wanted to say to each other. I had not seen their work ahead of time. When that time in the service came they leaned towards each other, looked into each other's eyes and shared their vows. With no microphones & no amplification, and the two of them speaking so softly, I'm sure no one gathered to celebrate with them could hear a word. And that was OK. They were hearing each other. God was hearing. And this old preacher, feeling like I was eavesdropping on a very personal conversation, I heard. Private. Intimate. Holy Ground.

One of the great mysteries of our faith is that the God of the whole universe desires an intimate relationship with YOU ... personally. Ever since He walked with Adam & Eve in the cool of the day in the Garden of Eden ... and wouldn't you love to have been able to eavesdrop on those conversations!!! ... ever since then He has desired a close, personal, intimate relationship with each of His children. Jesus died on the cross so that the barrier between you and an intimate relationship with the Father ... your sin ... could be torn down. Sin forgiven. You made new. He loves you so much! He cares about that arthritis pain in your shoulder. The stress at work. Your worries about your children. The broken relationship with another family member. Your

financial problems. Your anxiety over the upcoming surgery. He cares! There's nothing too insignificant. He cares! And if you will lean into Him ... He will most certainly lean into you! He will comfort you. He will speak to you. He will guide you. He will help you. Find that quiet place. Separate yourself from all distractions. Pray openly & honestly about what is on your heart. Quiet yourself and listen. Private. Intimate. Holy Ground.

"I am my beloved's and my beloved is mine...." Song of Solomon 6:3 NIV

"...casting all your cares [all your anxieties, all your worries, and all your concerns, once and for all] on Him, for He cares about you [with deepest affection, and watches over you very carefully]." 1 Peter 5:7 AMP

On Holy Ground! Pastor Larry <><