

FEB. 2017

CHAT WITH THE CHAPLAIN

In Genesis 2:7 it says, " Then the Lord God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life....." There's a whole lot more going on here than meets the eye. But, just for grins and giggles, let's go into a holding pattern on the word 'dust'. We could even get half-way poetic and call it 'dirt' instead. Then we could throw in the word 'bag' and then what happens? Anyone who has drawn a breath for more than 20 minutes knows that when you use the words dirt bag, it's probably not meant to be a compliment. I'm pretty sure too that I'm not the only one to call the devil a dirt bag. Maybe though we can take this a different direction. Someone, and I can't remember who , has said that born again, believing Christians are God's dirt bags, suitable for seed planting and watering. Now, what in the world are we talking about here? In 1st Corinthians 3:5-7, it's talking about the growth of the Church (Christian believers) in the city of Corinth, near Greece, and mentions Paul the apostle and a fellow Christian teacher by the name of Apollos. It says," What then is Apollos? And what is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, even as the Lord gave opportunity to each one. I (Paul) planted, Apollos watered, but God was causing the growth. So then neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but God who causes the growth". All this planting and watering business is the business of speaking forth the Word of God into other folks lives. And, you may hear that and be thinking, " Well, who am I (remember Moses) to be doing that sort of thing? I'm just a nobody". But somebody has said that God can (and does) use a nobody to plant a seed in a somebody with an eye on everybody. Meanwhile, the devil points at you and says to God, " What do You want with that!?" And God says, " I want him to become everything I have created him to be! " In Ephesians 2:10 it says, " For we (You, me and Uncle Frank) are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them". God's gifts (workmanship) to you are your talents, and He wants a return on His deposits. You could say that well, I'm saved, safe and born again, why should I worry about planting and watering? My answer would be that it's not a question of worry, it's a question of the condition of your heart. God gave His All (John 3:16) so that we may have all. Are you willing to return the favor with your talents. Rush Limbaugh says that his talents are on loan from God. I agree. If you want to know what God wants out of you, just look to see what He has put into you. I came across an example of God's gifting awhile back that I thought filled the bill.

It goes like this – “ He gave each of us eyes equipped with 3D, high definition, auto focus and self cleaning lenses, that can see a billion + colors in panoramic real – time, positioned on a pan/tilt, image – stabilizing neck. All of this is protected by a ‘helmet’, made of bone that in most cases, meets or exceeds D.O.T. specs”. I like it!

Keep in mind that even though we are ‘dirt bags’ for God, we are also much more than that. And, we have a Heavenly Father who is the ultimate ‘Gifter’. Ezekiel 36:26 says, “ I (God) will give you a new heart and put a new Spirit within you ; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh”. Ultimately God wants to gift us with change in ‘altitude’, but He’ll change our attitude first. And, a change in attitude will happen if we choose a plan of action. First and foremost in that plan should be prayer. I know we’ve been over this before but it always bears repeating. Prayer is no more or less than talking with God. No pews or kneeling pads required. And, by the way, there’s no dress code either. We’re probably all guilty of talking to ourselves on occasion and that can get real boring real fast. Just spin it around and pray instead. God’s on line 24/7/365. As you commit yourself to prayer, God will begin to reveal Himself to you in ways you may never have expected; through family members, perfect strangers, unexpected and unusual circumstances, radio, tv, or you name it.

Back to the plantin’ and waterin’, you might consider what is called the ‘Great Commission’, which is given to us by Jesus in Matthew 28:19,20 where it says,” Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age”. And in Mark 16:15 it says, “ Go into all the world and preach the Gospel (the Good News) to all creation”. I don’t see anywhere in either passage where it says The Great Suggestion. These are marching orders straight from the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. What we do with that is of course up to each one of us as individuals. Tune into God’s agenda for you. It will be unique and personal because we are all wired so differently. and, His unique agenda for you and me was designed before we were born because it says in Jeremiah 1:5 , “ Before I formed you in the womb I knew you.....” Draw near too God and He will draw near to you.

--- When you kneel down to God

He stands up for you

---- When He stands up for you

No one can stand against you

Dan Benson

ANI Chaplain --- bensoncma@gmail.com --- 208-262-6418