

Faith Life Weekly 0118

*Very truly I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen, yet you do not receive our testimony. If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things. (John 3:11-12)*

I have heard it said that for God to fully explain eternity and the kingdom of heaven to us would be like a human being explaining calculus to an ant. Our normal modes of communication are ill-equipped to grasp the enormity of what God has in store for us. We'll never fully get there – not in this life.

But hey, we have to try. Don't we? We make our own efforts to fill in the blanks from the glimpses and flashes of illumination and wisdom that we find in God's Word, yet in the end we tend to put limits on the work that God is doing, coloring God's will and design to accommodate what we are able to accept and experience. It is almost like some funny, cruel joke, that we are always left "chasing our tail" in this regard; never fully satisfied, always left with more questions, trapped in our own incomplete logic and wisdom. If only there was a way out of it.

Well, actually, there is. What Jesus wanted from Nicodemus back then, and what he wants from us today, is that we turn it over. Trust in the Lord to handle what is ultimately and always his. Enjoy the ride. Take in and breathe deeply of the fullness of life that God has to offer us. Revel in the power and depth of forgiveness and all that it can open up, instead of constantly saying, "Should I really be forgiving this?" Claim the joy and warmth that comes from his grace instead of holding crossing your arms and saying, "No thanks, I don't really think I'm worth all that." Let his love find you, and let the answers to myriad questions come as they might, or not.

Last weekend, I went through the drive-thru at a local fast food place and when I went to pay, found that someone ahead of me had covered the cost. I wanted to thank this person, and I also felt a little bad when I got home. I told Dana about this great thing they did and then said, "Maybe I was supposed to pay for the person behind me. Darn it." She shook her head and said, "Maybe you're just supposed to enjoy and appreciate what this other person did for you." And as is sometimes the case, she was totally right. I will sometime soon pass this grace along, but not because I have to. Not because I will then be "following the rules," and doing what a good guy does. I'll do it because I can. I'll do it because it doesn't compute and it points to the one who is above all. God loves you and so do I.

Pastor Bill