

Giving Me Pause – November 11, 2003

Two things have happened in my life recently that have given me pause.

The first is the past week of campmeeting. I spent the week sitting in the audio booth in the main pavilion, running the audio and taping the programs. Sitting through most every meeting that was held there for a week and having the responsibility of listening the whole time so as to be sure to have the best possible sound for the audience, I was able to form opinions regarding what was being presented by the various speakers.

The thing that impressed me most was that while each presenter approached the gospel through different illustrations and while teaching various methods, at the core of all their presentations was the gospel being told in a way that goes beyond much of what I have heard over the 40 or so years that I have been paying attention in meetings. If this is a representative sample of what is currently being preached and taught by Adventist leaders across America and the world, then I am greatly encouraged.

This similarity of message across the board, presented by speakers from all over the country, spanning age, ethnicity, and cultural differences, was a truly remarkable thing to me and one that made it seem as though they must have gotten together in advance and planned this out, if I hadn't known it wasn't so. It was as though they were working in unison and as a team to get the truth out about God and that nothing else was important.

I suppose that ultimately this was so. I suppose that while they had not had the opportunity to get together in person in advance, they had gotten together in The Person in advance. I suppose that they had gone to God in prayer and meditation during their preparations and that perhaps God himself, through the Holy Spirit, had guided them so that they ended up teaching the same thing despite whatever external diversity or differences there may have been. That's an exciting thing to me.

The second thing that happened to me recently is that I had the opportunity to visit with and then during a subsequent visit to anoint an academy school mate of mine who is ill with cancer. That's a pretty exciting thing. To be able to go to someone whom I've known since we were teenagers and to share the truth about God's love, to perhaps have a part in correcting some of the misconceptions that have been ingrained over the years, to then administer the ritual of anointing as the family is gathered around in prayer, to see the tangible effect of the spiritual healing taking place, that's about as good as it gets.

These things, and others, give me pause.

They make me wonder if I am seeing the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, at least on those who are gathered, spiritually, in the upper room, so to speak. They make me thankful again to be a believer and give me joy once more for the liberty that is ours because of Christ's sacrifice on our behalf proof positive of the love that God has for us. They humble me as I see God's hand at work collectively and individually as he works things out for the best in the end.

May it be soon.