

Tears on my Sidewalk



Brazil is different, very different. Dogs are everywhere. Correction: barking dogs are everywhere, especially around our house.

This morning as I was praying, the huge dog next door insistently added his strident bark to the neighborhood canine howlers. The barking was insane. With a short “forgive me, Lord” prayer, I went to the front window to see what was agitating the usual early morning quiet.

On my sidewalk, I saw a woman sitting down on the edge of the curb. Nothing too unusual until, looking closer, I saw her tears falling on the sidewalk. Even from my window, I saw that the tears were “huge” and full of pain! Her grief was intense. Drying my own tears of prayer, I stepped outside to find out what was happening.

“Is all well?” I gently asked the woman. The first thing she said in reply “Do you remember me, pastor?” (I didn't.) “I was that

backslid teenaged girl that you tried to keep in church, many years ago” She gave her name then I remembered her from years past. “Why are you crying?” I asked her. She looked up at me with a tear-swollen face and said four words: “My mother just died.” “And in my grief, the only thing I knew to do was to come and sit on the sidewalk of the only person that ever tried to save my soul. Help me to find God again, Mr. Pastor. I beg you. HELP ME.”

She appeared to be around thirty years old, which meant it had been about 15 years since I last saw her in church. It is amazing: hungry souls always remember where the preacher lives after years of living a spiritually destructive life.

That means that many backsliders are desperate to return to the Father's House. Much like the prodigal son remembering the smell of bread in his father's house, spiritual runaways still remember the last powerful service they were in. Believe me, they remember! But to have any chance of spiritual restoration, it is the Prodigal son/daughter that must come to their senses. Luke 15:17 describes this desperate moment as “...when he came to himself...”

If you are a wandering soul lost in a dark world of hopelessness and you read this short (true) story, and if you are ready to come back to the Father's House, please go sit on the sidewalk of that Apostolic church where you first received the Holy Ghost. (I know you have not forgotten the address.) The Man of God will meet you at the door to clean you up and feed your soul!

John "Brad" Lambeth

jblambeth@gmail.com