

MOMENTS OF SOBER MEDITATION

"There is no remembrance of former things; neither shall there be any remembrance of things that are to come with those that shall come after." (Eccl. 1:11) "For there is no remembrance of the wise more than of the fool forever; seeing that which now is in the days to come shall all be forgotten. And how dieth the wise man? as the fool . . ." (Eccl. 2:16).

This morning, May 11, I parked my car on the side of the road and walked down the edge of freshly plowed ground until I came to a grown-up and almost forgotten cemetery on Mr. C. R. Sharp's farm. There are two graves marked Stephen and Sarah Townsley -- my great, great grandparents. According to the 1850 census of Lauderdale county these two came to Alabama from Virginia. At the time the census was taken, in 1850, both were thirty-seven years old --making their birth date in 1813. As I left the graveyard my mind was filled with thoughts. I thought of all the offspring who have come from these two, and how many of those who have their blood don't even know their names -- much less where they are buried. I thought about how quickly man is forgotten when he passes from this life, and how little one's own offspring remembers or cares about where his body has been laid to rest after the passing of a few years.

On my way home I passed another cemetery where preparations were being made for special remembrance on the part of loved ones for their dead. No doubt many who are buried in this cemetery are only names on the tombstones with no real remembrance of who they were or what they did in life.

As I think of my experience this morning, I am grateful that I am a Christian. I am grateful to God that I understand the real meaning of life. Those who strive in this life for recognition and to be remembered by those who follow after are seeking an empty goal because nine times out of ten in a hundred years one's own descendants won't know his name, what he did in life, where he is buried, nor will most of them even care ! So, the thing that should bring joy to man and the thing he should strive for is to have his name written in heaven (Luke 10:20) -- to have his name written in the Lamb's book of life (Rev. 20:12, 15).

So I say to you, friend, what are you striving for in this life? Recognition, financial success, to be remembered for all your success after you are gone ?? What good will all that do you if you are not prepared to meet God in the judgment? (Rev. 20:12 - 15; Acts 17: 30 - 31). Even though you seek to be remembered by the coming generations, you have no assurance you will be remembered at all. In a hundred years your grave may be grown over with weeds with no one in the community who knows one thing about you. If recognition in life has been your goal and you have made no effort to seek God, your soul will be in agony in torments in Hades (Luke 16: 23 - 24) awaiting the judgment of God (Acts 17: 31; II Cor. 5:10), after which hell will be your final destiny !! (Rev. 20:15)

Friend, won't you believe the gospel and that Jesus Christ is the Son of God (Mark 16: 16); won't you repent of your sins (Acts 2:38); confess Christ before men (Acts 8:37), and be baptized for the remission of sins? (Acts 2:38)

When you do this, God adds you to the church (Acts 2:47); then live a faithful, godly life in service to God and heaven will be your home in the after awhile (II Tim. 4: 6 -8). Friend, this is what life is all about.

Donald Townsley

(Taken from "The Voice", May 1973)

