

August 10 2014

Scripture Lessons

Romans 10: 5-15

Matthew 11:25-30

Sermon *My Yoke Is Easy*

While I was growing up and as most of you know I lived in Colfax in Whitman County in the Palouse country. My grandparents lived about half an hour away in Moscow, Idaho. Now when we were kids there was a front way to get to grandma and grandpa's house and then there was what we called the back way. Now we usually took the back way because it went through some pretty farm country and there was very little traffic. I have very fond memories of the back way to my grandparent's house because we knew very single farm and we knew every single farmer by name. We saw the countryside in every season of the year and I even learned to drive back on that road. You wouldn't want to have travel at one point back then. My fondest memory was of an ancient watering trough under two huge weeping willows trees. It was just about half way through the trip to grandma and grandpa's. The trough was made of concrete way and it dated way back in the days when teams of horses would frequent what was called the Harvey Road and would stop to refresh themselves on hot summer days. The old watering trough was fed by a rusty steel pipe which was tapped a spring on the hillside behind it. And there was a crack in the corner and the water ran from the pipe year around and then drained from the crack in the corner of the trough. In later years there were even gold fish added that lived in the trough, as well, so we didn't drink right out of the trough, of course. That trough was like an oasis in the desert. And on hot summer days we, too, would stop and quench our thirst with that ice cold water. We would dunk our heads in the trough and splash each other before it was time to get back into the car for the remainder of the trip to grandma and grandpa's house. The trough was always there for

us and it seemed there would never be an end to that wonderfully cold water.

As I thought about my childhood watering trough it reminded me of this word that I shared with you from Jesus on the cross. When Jesus said I thirst. I thought about the fact that this person, this Jesus whom we seek to follow, whom we try to emulate, was after all a really human being. He knew and felt all the same things that you and I feel and experience in each day of our lives; the good things, the bad things and things which fall somewhere in between.

I thought Jesus would really appreciate my watering trough back that day on the cross. But was cool water all that Jesus had on his mind on that first Good Friday when he said, "I thirst". I suppose it might have been because I am sure that Jesus was completely parched after everything that he had been through but I sense that there may have been a deeper longing in Jesus, a deeper desire a deeper thirst hidden in Jesus' words on that day. Each of us whether we are experiencing physical pain or emotional stress or just a feeling of emptiness about where we are in life, thirst after something; sometimes we don't know what that is. Something that eases the pain, something to calm our spirits in the midst of difficulties; something to fill the void that we might feel inside of ourselves. And Jesus was no different. On that day all seemed lost; death was only seconds away. God seemed absolutely nowhere to be found. Jesus as we are so often, was in the midst of, what I would call was a desert and wilderness time-searching, searching after an oasis. He longed to be filled. He longed for his thirst that day to be quenched. He longed for his soul to somehow to be touched by God.

You know as terrible as that experience was for Jesus and as terrible as some of the experiences we must face can be, yet I can't help but believe in my heart of heart that longing, that thirsting can be a gift from God; because then we are wanting to be in touch with that which is ultimate; rather than the things which come and go like so much of life. We want God. We want a relationship with something; with someone to finally fill the loneliness that often eats away of our souls. Like Jesus

each of us face times in life when we search so much for something so much that can satisfy that it really hurts to the core of our being. That is when I think about that watering trough. That is when I long; I long to be with God. I think also that is what Jesus says to those of us that seek to follow him those words that Jack just shared with us. "Come to me all of you who are weary and carrying heavy burdens and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me for I am gentle I am humble in heart and you will find rest, for your soul for my yoke is easy and my burden is light AMEN