

# MARK'S REMARKS

Yes, it is true. Mark has not remarked for quite some time, seven months to be precise. As I begin typing under this heading, clouds are attempting to organize into a steady, much needed summer rain storm. It has been difficult for them lately. In a sense, I am again writing these Remarks because of a clearing of clouds. The final clearing arrived the other night on a gentle unexpected breeze. A kind-hearted soul. An encouraging voice. She knows who she is and to her I say Thank You!

Last week my dad called to inform me the silo was purposefully being taken down on what used to be our home farm. The young man who bought the acreage a couple years ago decided to have this debt-free 30,000 bushel storage facility removed because... it was in the way. Yes, that was sarcasm. The event itself merits a page but we'll save that for a later date.

Several people were in attendance for this destruction and since the land I once knew as home was under new ownership, most of them were strangers. And that is why I still plainly hear my sister's comment. *"I feel like the outsider."* Immediately I knew what she meant. Looking in from the fringes nothing really seemed to be the same. Land, buildings, sights and sounds that we used to inhabit, or maybe they inhabited us, now seemed foreign.

People and time had changed 'our' farm in numerous ways and both were working together as a 35 year-old stable storage tower was reduced to a disorganized pile of concrete. Its absence wants me to clothe what now appears naked.

Time and distance, working together, can and often do produce change. We can ride past our former home, walk into our previous school, visit past church families, or travel to our hometown claiming, "Look what they did to the place." Friends can change to acquaintances, residents can change to visitors, members can change to guests.

It is true, I think, a part of us seeks change while keeping one foot in the established. Longing for adventure we still hear and consider the voice of caution. We have become friends with the recognizable but something calls us to meet the unfamiliar. I wonder is that because we consist of the temporary and the eternal?

As we travel together discerning the changes of our lives, some towering higher than others, it is the Strong Tower that remains, secure, mighty, a stronghold, a refuge. It is to Him we are called to run. It is Him we are called to proclaim. It is Him we have the opportunity to introduce to those looking in from the fringes, longing to know certainty in a life of uncertainty, longing to become familiar with the unfamiliar.

*"He then brought them out and asked, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" They replied, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved— you and your household." Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all the others in his house. (Acts 16:30-32)*

*"The name of the LORD is a strong tower; the righteous run to it and are safe." (Proverbs 18:10)*

In the Tower,

Pastor Mark