

MARK'S REMARKS

I woke early the other morning. Extremely unusual, since early morning and I have an agreement that we will not often greet each other. After making a cup of coffee, okay I actually made 8 cups but can only hold one cup at a time, I switched on the T.V. to discover what occurs when I am normally sleeping. Suddenly I was pulled into the confusing and spinning world of infomercials. Channel after channel was churning out the latest and greatest device, that unbeknownst to be, I was somehow surviving without. How could I have known I was missing out on the strongest and sturdiest ladder capable of safely supporting three people... on both sides? I wondered when I would find myself and five friends simultaneously in need of a ladder. Even better, I discovered a sleek powerful vacuum capable of sucking up a bowling ball, which come to think of it, was just the item I needed to remove a similar bowling ball from the middle of our living room. You think I would have stopped but as I once heard, men do not necessarily want to know what is on TV, we want to know what *else* is on TV. Spurred on by genetics, I clicked my way to increasing discoveries.

A rotisserie that would allow me to utter, "*Set it and forget it,*" a weight program allowing me to "*lose weight and celebrate.*" Only five minutes a day, and I could have a before and after photo. I realized if I purchased items wisely, I could make an unlimited amount of smoothies in a rapidly powerful, easy to use blender, listen to 25 hours of the musical 80's, while water heated in a light, portable, and powerful personal steam cleaner to destroy *rust like substances from bathroom fixtures*. In addition I could watch and learn how to play the *Esteban's American Legacy Guitar*. All this easily financed because "*I saved a bunch of money on my car insurance by switching to Geico.*" Combined with uncomplicated installment plans and easy return policies, everything I never knew I needed was within reach.

At first thought we might wish our spiritual journey was similar; simple, quick, effortless and uncomplicated. It isn't and upon further reflection let us be thankful it stands in contrast. Would we really want to relax in the comfort of a well worn chair and discover; "*Tired of dealing with hate, chaos, pride, and anger? Call now and receive love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, and goodness. Order within the next five minutes and receive, at no extra cost, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. If unsatisfied, simply return at no cost.*" (less shipping).

It would be a tragically low grade process for such a benchmark to which we are called. To become like His Son, Prophet Priest and King. 40 days and nights of rain, 40 days on Mount Sinai, 40 years of wandering, 40 days of temptation were not quick or effortless. The refining of precious materials is not a quick, painless process. But it eventually produces pure qualities that unlike infomercial products, we cannot truly survive without. If sanctification, the word uttered by theologians, was designed by the world, it might look like an infomercial. But the process is designed by our Creator, therefore to journey toward a pure reflection of the Name that is above every name is perfectly constructed, *but* simply not simple.

As a holiday of thanksgiving approaches, I pray we understand more deeply the One who works will give us persevering strength for the journey in becoming what we are called to become. May we offer our thanks for His giving.

May the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, equip you with everything good for doing his will, and may he work in us what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Hebrews 13:20, 21

In His strength,

Pastor Mark