

Dear Leominster Church Family Letter #5

Hello again from our little white bungalow with blue shutters. I use that word bungalow very sentimentally because it was one of my father-in-law's favorite words. Whenever we would be out in the car for a ride and Leo (Dad) would see a lovely open field, he would invariably say, "I think I'd like to build a little bungalow over there." Of course he was all talk. He had lived in the same house since he was three years old and loved the old homestead Pam and I now call our home. Well anyway, those of you under 40 have learned a new word, bungalow.

I've been doing a little traveling this week. I traveled down to the basement to look for a box to mail something. I traveled over to our spare bedroom one night to get a glimpse of the moon shining into our south facing window. Then I decided to really push the envelope by making an extended trip out to our back yard to plant some spinach. Well, that's what wanderlust can do to a person.

Despite the circumstances we all continue to find ourselves in during these unprecedented times, I hope we've not forgotten we're all in a prep school. I make that statement based on this quotation, ***"Those who appreciate probationary time as the preparatory school of life will use it to secure to themselves a title to the heavenly mansions, a membership in the higher school."*** Allow me to share with you a couple of things I learned this week.

The first thing was absolutely one the greatest blessings of my life, and I say that without the slightest atom of exaggeration. One of my favorite composers and songwriters is a man named Rob Gardner. I have enjoyed his music for a long time and had been aware that a number of years ago he wrote an oratorio entitled "Lamb of God," based on the closings scenes of the life of Jesus. Well, this past Sunday, he sent out a message to all those on his email list telling of a special presentation of "Lamb of God" featuring the artwork of the famous 19th century artist James Tissot, who after having something of a conversion experience, traveled to the Middle east and produced 325 paintings based on the New Testament. I tuned into it on YouTube with Pam, and friends, it was without a doubt the closest I've ever been to heaven. We were so moved that we started calling as many people as we could who we thought would enjoy it as we had. I called one man and told him if it wasn't the best thing he ever saw, I would drive

to his house and take him out to dinner on me. He contacted me later that evening. Here's what he texted.... *"You won't have to drive down to take me out to dinner... (Did I mention he lives in Tennessee?) ...it was everything you described and more...truly a plethora of artistic inspiration! Thanks for sharing."* We got similar calls from others, (Tim and Karen and Larry and Nancy). I guess what I'm trying to say is how thankful I was that in this time of being cooped up without the ability to go anywhere for weeks, God brought a little piece of eternity into our living room. For an hour and an half, Ephesians 2:6 became a reality.. ***"God raised us up with Christ and seated us with Him in heavenly places."*** I've always known God ***"is a lover of the beautiful,"*** (Steps to Christ pg. 85) but I'm so grateful He reminded me again this week in such an incredible way.

The second thing I learned this week came to me on one of my frequent walks around a lovely little lake near our house. You know we live on Silver Lake St. Pam went to grades 1-4 at Silver Lake School. We get to this lake by walking through Silver Lake Cemetery. You know the name of the lake now. Well typically, there might be one or two people fishing on a nice day at this rather small body of water, but now there are more people fishing than I've ever seen. There are people fishing alone, couples fishing and families fishing. As it turns out, these extreme times we are living in has gotten a lot more people into this sport. I was reminded of the words of Jesus, ***"Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men."*** Mark 4:19 I wonder if what we're all going through presently will make "fishing" more prevalent in *our* lives. I stopped on my walk to enquire of one angler, "How are they biting?" I was shocked when he said, "I've caught 38 fish here this afternoon." After he told me he threw them all back, he said this, "This isn't a very big lake, but you'd be surprised how many fish there are here."

Friends, maybe you don't live on a very big street, or in a very big town or in a very big apartment building, but I think you'd be surprised how many "fish" are closer than you think. Let's remember the promise of Jesus was not only to the 12, but for every believer. You may not catch 38, but how about one? Remember, ***"One soul saved in the kingdom of God is of more value than all earthly riches."***

God bless you and happy fishing. Pastor Mark and Pam

P.S.** Go to YouTube...type in ***Lamb of God Virtual World Wide Sing-a-long.***

