

FIVE MINUTES WITH TOM MOOTY

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"I GET MY IDEAS FROM ALL OVER"

I guess the most difficult part of this writing project is getting the ideas in the first place. You send me lots of good stuff over the party-line (Internet); and I really do appreciate it. Here's a sample of something someone sent me in days gone by:

The story is told of an old man who lived on a farm in the mountains of Kentucky with his young grandson. Each morning, Grandpa was up early sitting at the kitchen table reading from his old worn-out Bible. His grandson who wanted to be just like him tried to imitate him in any way he could.

One day the grandson asked, "Papa, I try to read the Bible just like you but I don't understand it, and what I do understand I forget as soon as I close the book. What good does reading the Bible do?"

The Grandfather quietly turned from putting coal in the stove and said, "Take this coal basket down to the river and bring back a basket of water."

The boy did as he was told, even though all the water leaked out before he could get back to the house. The grandfather laughed and said, "You will have to move a little faster next time," and sent him back to the river with the basket to try again.

This time the boy ran faster, but again the basket was empty before he returned home. Out of breath, he told his grandfather that it was "impossible to carry water in a basket," and he went to get a bucket instead.

The old man said, "I don't want a bucket of water; I want a basket of water. You can do this. You're just not trying hard enough," and he went out the door to watch the boy try again.

At this point, the boy knew it was impossible, but he wanted to show his grandfather that even if he ran as fast as he could, the water would leak out before he got far at all. The boy scooped the water and ran hard, but when he reached his grandfather the basket was again empty. Out of breath, he said, "See Papa, it's useless!"

"So you think it is useless?" the old man said. "Look at the basket."

The boy looked at the basket and for the first time he realized that the basket looked different. Instead of a dirty old coal basket, it was clean.

"Son, that's what happens when you read the Bible. You might not understand or remember everything, but when you read it, it will change you from the inside out." That is the work of God in our lives: to change us from the inside out and to slowly transform us into the image of His son.

Good material, huh? I wish I had a nickel for every friend I have out there who cares enough to send this information in. Of course, I get duplicates; but if something is worth reading once, isn't it worth reading twice? As they say, "I would rather have three or four copies of something and not need all of them; as no copy of something and need just one of them".

I think I remember someone saying that. No? Well, I just had an original thought; and you can hardly find them anymore!

True, it matters about our frame of mind when we come to the Bible; but for a dirty man to come to the water for cleansing, he first has to admit that he is dirty. It's the same thing in the spiritual sense too; before a person will come to The Lord for cleansing, he first has to admit that he is dirty!

That's why it seems to be so difficult for the good ole boys to come to Jesus; they have been drilled all their lives that they are tough; and they can "make it"; and they don't need anyone.

But they do! You do! The basket was cleaned after it was exposed to the water - maybe not once, but over and over; and it became clean. A clean basket can be used for many purposes other than just carrying lumps of coal. It might just be in line for such a high priority job as being used by the Mayor; maybe the County Executive; maybe the Governor; maybe the President - or even The King of the Universe - God Himself!

So, how about it? Would you rather be a dirty old coal basket, stuck back in the corner somewhere; or serving God as a clean vessel which is fit and worthy to be used in a mighty manner?

The choice is yours to make; and make it - you must! There is no fence to straddle; you have to make a choice!

Tom Mooty serves as Senior Pastor to the West End Baptist Church of Newport; and writes this column for the Wednesday and Weekend Editions of the "Newport Plain Talk". It can also be seen on the home page of www.webc.online. Contact Mooty with your comments at tommooty15@gmail.com; write to him at P.O. Box 851 in Newport; or see him on the streets of his hometown, Newport, Tennessee.