

FIVE MINUTES WITH TOM MOOTY

Column Number 2135

"The Dogwood in the Winter"

A long time ago in a galaxy far, far away, I had a home built. It cost considerably less than the car I am driving today (actually less than half); but it took one of the two nickels I had left to rub together.

Things went ok; the house is still standing today and is worth over five times the value of the car I am driving today (actually almost six times); but I sold it a long time ago and have gotten that nickel back to rub together with the one I had.

Such is life; such is life!

My dad - Fred Marvin helped me do the work for which I was responsible; and we made a pretty good team if I do say so myself. And I do say so myself!

Landscaping was not my strong suit; but I figured I better have at least one dogwood tree to fit in with the neighborhood; but how do I know where a dogwood forest (do dogwoods grow in forests or orchards or what? I told you that was not my strong suit).

So, I asked a friend of mine who had considerable wooded lands on his farm if I could dig a couple of dogwoods.

Say what? Go to the local landscaper? Haven't you been listening

to what has been written in crayon? I only had one nickel left of the two that I rubbed together.

But, I didn't know what a dogwood tree looked like without the beautiful white or pink "x" shaped dogwood leaves; so, dad and I agreed that we would wait until the spring; and go out on the farm and find a couple; mark them with a piece of material; and go back in the fall when they could be dug and replanted.

Great plan, huh!

So, we waited for the leaves to fall off the dogwood trees; and figured they must have fallen off "our" two trees in the "Forest Primeval". And they had; and we went; and we dug them; and we replanted them; and, as far as I know, they are still hanging in there as we speak.

My point? Believers in The Lord Jesus The Christ should be easily identified 24/7/365 $\frac{1}{4}$. The Bible clearly says that "you shall know them (Believers) by their fruit".

But, we should be easily distinguishable in the fall and winter as well in the spring and summer. We are not supposed to be dogwoods - but evergreens - and therefore easily identifiable when ever and where ever we go.

Christian, that means you - as well as me. You can reach someone that I cannot; and, please remember: "You are the best Christian somebody knows; and, in fact; you might be the ONLY Christian somebody knows.

Since the fruit of an apple tree is a apple; and the fruit of a pear tree is a pear; the fruit of a Christian tree is - that's right, another Christian. So, we practice living our faith in front of a world of folks that haven't heard and do not know about Jesus; and then you can see the plants you have replanted growing and maturing as Christians - all because you lived it in front of them!

Tom Mooty serves Newport's West End Baptist Church as its Senior Pastor; and he is not really sure what a "Senior Pastor" is; but he is one! He is in his third term as Pastor and is entering his thirty-fifth cumulative year at this church and his fifty-seventh year in the Ministry. This Column was begun in 1970. Contact Mooty with questions or comments.