

HOWE THINGS ARE...

November 2005

The other day I went to do laundry (writer types tell you you should hook your reader in with the first line --- I'm pretty sure "the other day I went to do laundry" fails the hooking-your-reader-in test...).

So the washing machine is in the garage. In order to get to it, I go outside and up a path around the side of the house. I trudge with laundry basket and accoutrements to the garage where I discover that the woman I rent from already has a load in the washer. This is wrong, I think. She's retired. She has all day, every day of the week to do laundry. I have Saturdays. I'm very upset with the situation. And then I realize, seriously, this is it. In my life right now, the only problem I can dream up is ready access to laundry facilities.

My first reaction is dread --- because you know when things are going well, it's about that time something's going to happen. And then I start wondering when did I become so fatalistic. My brain's firing away Bible verses: "in this world you will have trouble"... "share in Christ's sufferings"...

So I wonder if I'm kidding myself --- viewing my life through rose-colored glasses and ignoring some really huge elephant problem? But honestly, things like this happen: the other day at work, I had two meetings in a row (unusual for me --- my job doesn't entail lots of meetings generally) and both meetings were discouraging. I'm sitting in both meetings wondering what God is doing because it sure looks like work-wise, there's going to be a big shakeup and it's all going the wrong direction in my opinion. Luckily I've abandoned my former fantasy wherein I can either (a) predict or (b) control the future. So I'm not pleased but not terribly upset either. The next morning I shared with a friend just a one sentence: not sure what's going on at work, doesn't look good. Then I go into the office and everything's changed for the better. The day before: hopeless like some doomed train wreck about to happen and then next day, ka-blam, fixed. Like the problem just melted away --- I didn't lose sleep over it; didn't actually do anything at all; it's just gone.

So I'm ready to feel guilty because I'm about sure I don't deserve the cool setup I've got going... and I read this:

"God richly gives us everything to enjoy" 1 Timothy 6:17

I often wonder why God insists on being so bold --- why not hedge your bets and say, "God richly gives us *much* to enjoy"? or "*quite a bit* to enjoy"? I could be on board with those statements, but "God richly gives us *everything* to enjoy". It just doesn't sit well --- almost some sort of prosperity theology maybe. And yet, here I am, with just the laundry issue to complain about, in the face of God richly giving... everything... ('can't really, given my present circumstances, deny the 'everything' in that sentence...') And He gives everything apparently --according to Himself, His word-- for me to enjoy. Truly mind-blowing how this God insists on acting: reckless and passionate in his grace for me.

Stuff you could pray about:

- Wisdom at work --- and praise that I'm feeling more competent and less sponge-like. A couple times, problems happened when I was on call and I knew what to do (I don't know that we ought to thank God for problems, particularly ones that happen at 3am, but the fact that I knew what to do... and that the tiny little beeper sound actually woke me up... these are reasons for praise.)
- Possible roommate person --- we'll see how it goes, but, oh, would it be nice financially and otherwise to have a roommate again.
- Praise God for the opportunity to attend a dedication for the New Testament in Gullah, a language spoken in parts of the Carolinas and Georgia. It was neat to see people react to God's Word in their language for the first time ever. Plus, a reminder to be grateful for the blessing I have: not just one, but choices for a Bible translation in my language.

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