

## **Pastor's Piece**

As I was deciding what to write for this edition of the newsletter, I was struggling with what to write. For inspiration, I went back through some of my computer files looking at some of my past writings for inspiration when I came across the following. As you will note at the end of the piece, I originally wrote this seven years ago at a retreat I was attending in Virginia. I feel it is still relevant after all these years.

There was a young cashier taking a verbal barrage from the customer in front of me. The young cashier looked frazzled and worn, struggling mightily not to explode as she slammed the cash drawer closed. I looked everywhere but at her as I paid for my stuff. As I walked out the door, I heard a loud clang in my head. It was the sound of a hammer hitting a nail. The sound of denial.

My elderly neighbor was struggling to use the clippers to trim his shrubs. The trimmers looked too heavy to lift. He had to pump the handles four or five times to cut one branch. Sweat rolled down his face, dripping off his chin. I was rushing to my car. I just had to get to the Super Sale at the mall before the item I wanted, but didn't really need was swept off the shelf. As I pulled away, a loud whack rocked my brain. The sound of a hammer hitting a nail. The sound of denial.

My little niece and nephew want to go to the park. They want to soar on the swings and dig for treasures in the sandbox. They want to run in freedom, without a care in the world. They want to soak up the sunshine. I pop a movie in the DVD player and sit them there, instructing them to be quiet as I return to the dining room table to figure out what bills I can pay this week. As I sign the check, put it in an envelope, smash a stamp on it, my eardrums rock at the crash in my skull. The sound of a hammer hitting a nail. The sound of denial.

I kneel down beside my bed. I pour out tears that flow like the mighty Mississippi. Sobs come from somewhere deep within the caverns of my bowels. I can't speak a word, yet my mind is crying out, "I'm sorry! I'm sorry! I'm sorry!" Then I feel two hands lift my head up. Two thumbs begin to wipe away my tears. A gentle voice whispers, "I took the nails so you could be forgiven. You are made clean. You are made whole. Go and rejoice in the Resurrection!"

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