

Thought for a Wednesday
July 8, 2009

As you read this my family and I are traveling to Cleveland, OH to visit Karen's family for a week. In recent years we've met at a camp ground in PA that was about halfway for all of, and when I say all of us, I mean all of Karen's siblings, spouses, children and Gram and Pap – Anywhere between 30-40 people, depending on who can make it each year. It's basically become our annual family reunion.

Honestly, I'm looking forward to a week off. Since arriving in January, we've been trying just to catch our breath with a new community, new school, new job, new church, new, new, new, etc... You catch my drift, right? Anyway, it's been quite exhausting, so time off and time spent with family and friends is a welcomed event now that school and V.B.S. are over.

Over the 4th of July holiday, my mother and I were talking about my stepdad – He loved the 4th of July and we'd always make a trip to Mars, PA where he grew up and his parents lived for a parade, picnic and fireworks... Those were good memories of years gone by. So, you can imagine that our conversation got a little nostalgic and emotional thinking about how much we missed him being with us – But then, our conversation turned to the subject of heaven. And as much as my stepdad loved my Mom and us, he wouldn't trade a moment of being in the presence of Jesus to enjoy one more 4th of July with us...

Now, the upcoming week with Karen's family and the conversation I had with my Mom got me thinking about heaven and the reunion that awaits all of God's people. Because truth is, there's going to be a grand reunion to come for all of us who are walking with Christ – Whether He returns to claim His Bride (church) or we graduate from this life to the next, a reunion awaits us. There are people who have been so influential in our lives, whether family or friend, mentor or teacher that we'll see – What a reunion that will be? There will be people that we have influenced, whether directly or indirectly that we'll see – What a reunion that will be?

“Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.” (1 John 3:2, NIV)

“And just as we have borne the likeness of the earthly man, so shall we bear the likeness of the man from heaven.” (1 Corinthians 15:49, NIV)

I'm looking forward to the reunion we'll share this coming weekend with our family – It'll be filled with good times, conversations, good food and catching up... But I'm also looking forward to the reunion that awaits me and all of us when face to face, for all eternity, we'll be together in heaven...

See you all next weekend! You guys are awesome and we love you all very much!

Be Strong, Be Courageous, Be Fearless – and remember...

Christ **IS** All!

Pastor Mark