

Anecdotes by Papi

Don't Worry The Lord Will Take Care Of It.

By way of paraphrasing and consolidating numerous scriptures I begin this trivial tale with the statement in the following second paragraph. Garnered from an unwavering commitment to the charge of **2 Timothy 2:15** which says, *Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth*; I ventured forth in the year 1973 lacking no restraint to *give diligence to make my calling and election sure*: and with a promise of “*for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall.*” **2 Peter 1:10**; I was sent to preach the gospel.

The necessity of preaching the gospel was placed upon me; and if I did not preach the gospel, there was a miserable foreordained assignment to my life for not doing so! So then those that preach the gospel are mandated to live the gospel. Go into the world and preach the gospel to every creature I send you to; and take NOTHING for your journey for the laborer is worthy of his hire. Jesus assured his disciples he would see that they got paid. That's basically the initial charge. Rebuke – reproof – give righteous instruction – have no fellowship with works of darkness – baptize believing folks – shake dust off your feet – freely receive and freely give - you know the volume of the BOOK! This then is how I begin this particular narrative and unlike so very, very many who are the called and not necessarily the chosen who do not understand **Romans 10:15** wherein it says *And how shall they preach, except they be sent?* I was actually sent to live the faith of the gospel that I was ordained from on High to preach.

Not many understand that statement concerning the woe for not preaching the gospel but certainly the renowned Apostle Paul understood. He penned just those

words so that others could understand their calling and gain knowledge of what to expect in following in his footsteps as he himself followed in the footsteps of Christ. **Ezekiel 3:18** *When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; **but his blood will I require at thine hand.***

Living by faith, as in abiding from faith unto faith, especially in finding subsistence regarding the simplistic preacher needs of himself and his little family, is easier said than done. “Our Father” had not allowed me to join an organized religion and instead insisted that I preach against that very element. The traditions of men make the word of God non-effect in the lives of would-be believers; and make the majority two-fold the children of hell because of the adulterous pagan mixture that they preach and pass off as the Gospel of the Kingdom. Shame on them! So then all are assured to fall headlong into the ditch except they recover themselves from the snare of Satan.

I had early discovered that very few people that had allowed themselves to be encapsulated behind denominational walls and guidelines understood even the basic tenets of living a life of faith pleasing to “Our Father.” The barriers of denomination had made sure none could understand that “we are our brother’s keeper” and should therefore love one another. People did not love people whom they had seen and people did not love God whom they had not seen. I found few that actually believed in miracles and knew by faith that God was a healer. The so-called church world was full of a few believers; more make believers, and mostly unbelievers. The concept of understanding that God is a spirit and those that worship him must do so in spirit and in truth was almost non-existent; people by and large pictured God as an old, old soul with a long white beard sitting on a throne in a place called heaven. Yahushua (Hebrew for Jesus) said in **Luke 10:3**, to those he sent: *Go your ways: behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves.*

Why ... because everywhere you travel people like ravenous wolves gnaw on you, back biting, even when you are watching them – all in the name of defending their little unscriptural denominational territory. **Because ...** they are one **because ...** their mama and daddy is one! Oh my, I shouldn’t get the preacher in me kindled. I am trying to tell a little story entitled “Don’t Worry the Lord Will Take Care of It.”

No doubt my whole family has long forgotten the number of times I've made that statement over the years; but oddly enough just yesterday we were remembering that very statement. When my son Carl was completing his senior year in high school he sat quietly and sadly at the dinner table one afternoon and finally spoke concerning us not having the money for his college education. He was an honor student graduating at the top of his class and deserved what opportunities a so-called higher education could award. I simply said "Son, Don't Worry the Lord Will Take Care of It." And HE did; long story – happy ending.

But I recall one time in particular that "Don't Worry the Lord Will Take Care of It" was said and that time concerns this particular narrative. We as a family lived totally by faith. Let me reiterate what I really meant to say; "We as a family lived totally by faith." You actually haven't got it yet; no offense intended. **"We as a family lived totally by faith."** Of course my children obviously did not concern themselves as much as my wife and me, especially in their younger years; but we actually lived day by day and from faith to faith. We were forced to rely on "Our Father" for our daily needs. We have always by faith trusted the Lord to provide for us over these 35 years of serving Him; however, there was a unique three year period in which we received our diplomas for doing so. Amen.

Winter 1982 Royaltown Illinois and, yes, it was cold. I was sent to preach a revival in a little church up there and they were all poor folks just like some of the rest of us. The pastor and his wife had provided a little travel trailer with no heat for me to sleep in and frankly what covers I had for warmth all needed cleaning. I brushed my teeth and cleaned up in a local gas station bathroom and that was my routine for the first week. At least it was a little better than the thatched mud hut I was given on an island off the coast of Haiti. Those sleeping quarters not only came with chickens but tarantulas as well. For those who have never had to sleep with tarantulas that's another word for BIG SPIDERS!

I called my wife one evening and told her I was going to take ten dollars or so, whatever it took, and get me a motel room and rest a little. I did just that and decided to stay there the remainder of that visit up north that year. I will never forget the conversation I had with my wife that evening. I told her that by the will of the Lord was I called to be an apostle of our Lord and Savior. And though I had stood before as many as 60,000 people and ministered to them, had seen believers healed and set free; had preached so hard that my shoes had actually filled up with the sweat running off my body; I had seen visions, received revelations, and prophesied of things to come; but it was only ... just at that very

moment I actually felt like an apostle. Paul said he had learned to be content in whatever state the Lord had placed him.

The very next evening before service I called home again and a portion of my wife's conversation was in keeping me abreast of happenings at "our house." She sounded just a teeny bit worried as she said "The phone bill came today - it's fifty seven dollars." Can you guess my response? You're good! "Don't Worry the Lord Will Take Care of It". I went to service that evening and preached and the pastor took up an offering for me. I never took an offering; if church leaders took one for me, I received it with thanksgiving and believe me I never got rich traveling and preaching the gospel. Most folks would say "if I had a million dollars I would give it to you" when in fact they would never give you the twenty they actually had. It is a sad commentary but nonetheless true. Will a man rob God? Ask a sent preacher. Returning to my motel room that evening I took the offering out of my briefcase and counted it. Why report on counting an offering one might ask? Because ... I never counted offerings, they were what they were. Because ... God had promised to meet all my needs; according to his riches in glory. Because ... greater is he that is in me than he that is in the world. Because ... a King had once said in his old age he had never *seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.*

I just didn't count offerings until I got home to pay bills or buy groceries. This may sound amusing to some but it is certainly verifiable as truth; I developed a peculiar habit in my early Christian years. After getting paid I could hardly wait to pay my bills and to pay my tithes. It is absolutely the truth! My lovely wife Ladonna and I in 35 years have never made a late payment of any bill or financial obligation; not even once! The Lord has always provided so we could pay things ahead or precisely on time. There were numerous times that I didn't have the price of a cup of coffee in my pocket and there were times that the money for my electric bill did not show up until the day it was due; nothing was ever paid late and by the grace of God we are able to praise his Holy Name for these divine favors. Amen.

So then for some strange reason I counted that particular love offering. It was a total of fifty two dollars. Uh-oh! Fifty two dollars won't pay the phone bill; it was \$57.00! I acquired restful sleep and went back to church the next evening.

As I was walking up to the little church and others were faithfully filing in I heard a voice behind me. "Brother Ragan, Brother Ragan, I wanted to speak to you a moment before you went into the church." I responded "ok."

“Brother Ragan please forgive me, the Lord told me to put this is the offering last night and I didn’t do it, please forgive me.” Beloved, in faithful obedience he handed me a five dollar bill. You see the Lord honors those that honor Him. He could have just as easily made that offering \$157.00 or \$20.96 but he didn’t. The offering of fifty seven dollars, no more and no less, was especially sent to pay my phone bill on time. After all I had learned a little saying in which to promote trust in a higher source.

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