

Sticky-Togetherness – February 7, 2010

Sometimes when it snows, we get enough to build something. You know that I have built many things over the years. I usually build one or two things per year, as we haven't gotten many snow storms in recent years. These things that I build are usually a hit as I get many comments from people that drive by and see them. I'm glad that some people enjoy driving by to see what I've built because I enjoy building things.

Friday night and early Saturday morning, we had a snow storm which dumped about eighteen inches of snow all over the place. When I was cleaning off my car after work on Friday, I noticed that the snow was very wet and heavy. It was also very slippery on the roads. But when I shoveled the walk later that night, it was very light and powdery: you know, the kind that sparkles like diamonds in the sun (or in this case, the streetlights). When I got up on Saturday and saw that we had a foot and a half of snow, I knew it was a great opportunity to build something. You see, the more snow you have, the less you have to gather from all over the yard! By afternoon, the sun was out and I thought the snow was starting to melt a bit. This is good because it makes it easier to work with. I got dressed in some warm clothing and went to play in the snow. I was only out for ten or fifteen minutes and I already had a big pile gathered. I knew I'd be able to make something big. Unfortunately, I got a late start and it wasn't long before the sun went past the trees. That leaves me and my creation in the shade, the temperature drops, and soon the snow gets crisper. By five o'clock I realized that I would not be able to finish my sculpture. The snow was getting too powdery. I probably could have just carved something out of the pile, but couldn't really pack snow on to shape it right. I'll have to finish it another day when the sun is out.

As I stood there trying to figure out what to do with my pile, I picked up a chunk of snow. I broke off a piece and it just fell apart. I could see all of the individual flakes. It wasn't packing snow. All of the flakes were individual bits and they wouldn't stick together. I know that it is for this reason, that I couldn't put them all together to build something neat. In order to build a big snow creation, I need to get all of those flakes to come together, be joined, and stay that way. But I stopped working on my creation last night because the snow lacked this "sticky-togetherness." So, that's what we're talking about today. You see, people need "sticky-togetherness" too. The most obvious example of togetherness between people that comes to mind is marriage.

Ephesians 5:31

For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh.

This is symbolized at the wedding by two candles (which represent the bride and groom) being brought together to light a unity candle. The two individual candles are then extinguished. They are now one. You snuff out the unity and you've got nothing. I guess sometimes they leave the individual candles lit to represent that although they are joined as one, they still have their personalities and individualities. That thinking seems to be rooted right in this divorce-happy mindset today. Snuff out the unity and you still have the separate candles. You see, they never did have unity. They never did have true marriage. The second example of togetherness between people that comes to mind is that between people and God. That is fitting, actually, because in the scripture that we just read, Paul was using the example of marriage to draw a parallel to the relationship between people and God.

John 15:4-8

4 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. 5 I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the

same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. 6 If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. 7 If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. 8 Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.

John 17:23

I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.

Finally, on a related note, I would like to mention the togetherness between one another. Perhaps you felt that the last scripture that we read felt a little cut off. Well, it was. Let's read a few verses before that.

John 17:20-23

20 Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; 21 That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. 22 And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: 23 I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.

Jesus prayed for that same unity that exists between himself and the Father, and also between himself and the church, to be present between each believer and other believers. We need sticky-togetherness! You may get tired of hearing it, but I'll keep preaching it. Just as a bride and groom become one flesh, and just as the church becomes inseparably united with God, we should also be joined together as one by the Spirit of God and His Love. Do you remember my story at the beginning? The sun had passed the trees and was low in the sky. I was in the shadows and it grew cold and the snow would no longer pack. The snow flakes separated and fell apart. Let's not have a cold attitude and cold hearts in the church anymore! We need warm love in the church. We can't just be a bunch of individual flakes! We need to be packed together and built into one church, melted together by the radiant sunshine of God's grace and His love!

Romans 12:3-5

3 For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith. 4 For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: 5 So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.

1 Corinthians 12

Colossians 2

Ephesians 2