

Be a Berean!

The Bereans...received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day. (Acts 17:11)
["Be a Berean" will regularly cover topics that arise during Lockport Alliance Bible classes. Contact Franklyn Pfeil—liftedup@lockportalliance.org—with questions or comments.]

"WHOOSH"

Except for the last seven or eight years at LAC, I've been unchurched for most of my life. If you were to hear me during unguarded moments, you'd be able to tell:

"We have a great band!" I often exclaim on Sundays as we drive home.

"They're called the 'worship team,' Franklyn."

"Yeah, well, they're great whatever they are, aren't they! And our priest--just when I think he can't top last week, he nails another one!"

"Kevin's our pastor, not a priest."

"Oh...you say 'to-ma-to' and I say 'to-mah-to'. Whatever you call him, he brings it!"

I went to church as a kid, but I didn't understand much. They seemed to do their darnedest to hide the light under a bushel basket. Between "Ave Maria" and "Kyrie Eleison" and "Adeste Fideles," I didn't have a clue.

But during those summers, I went to Camp Kenan, where I learned "Michael Rowed the Boat Ashore;" "The Church in the Wildwood;" "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot;" "How Great Thou Art;" "Jacob's Ladder;" and "The Wise Man Built His House Upon the Rock"--

The wise man built his house upon the rock,
The wise man built his house upon the rock,
The wise man built his house upon the rock,
And the rains came tumblin' down.

Oh yes, the rains came down and the floods came up,
The rains came down and the floods came up,
The rains came down and the floods came up,
And the house on the rock stood firm.

But...

The crazy man built his house upon the sand,
The crazy man built his house upon the sand,
The crazy man built his house upon the sand,
And the rains came tumblin' down.

Oh yes, the rains came down and the floods came up,
The rains came down and the floods came up,
The rains came down and the floods came up,
And the house on the sand went WHOOSH!!....

I learned that song when I was seven. It was wacky and funny and at the end when the house blows away, we always yelled out the "WHOOSH" with all our might!

I loved Camp Kenan, and my brother and I continued to go there every summer. When I was about twelve, in the camp chapel--a small clearing overlooking the lake, covered by boughs of vaulting trees--I heard Goose Gray, the renowned story-teller, recite the Sermon on the Mount. Goose, in his prime, could take the bushel basket off the candle. We were spellbound. To our surprise and delight, in the final sentences of the Sermon on the Mount, we heard familiar phrases:

Every one then who hears these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house upon the rock;

and the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat upon that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock.

And every one who hears these words of mine and does not act on them will be like a foolish man who built his house upon the sand;

and the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell; and great was the fall of it.

And when Jesus finished these words, the crowds were astonished at his teaching, for he taught them as one who had authority, and not as their scribes.

We all looked to each other, mouthing out--That's 'The Crazy Man' song!

Soon thereafter, sooner than I knew, ensued 30 years of wandering. I do not know when I entered that wilderness. I didn't even know I'd been in a wilderness, until the day when... a seed--a story told by the King, entrusted to a story-teller bearing His image, planted in subterranean strata during forgotten lakeshore summers--pushed its way, in a season of its own choosing, towards the Light whence it derived. It was then that I decided to rebuild my life according to the Scriptures.

I can't speak with the commanding authority of Jesus Christ, nor can I recite with the mellifluous cadences of Goose Gray in his younger day. But I can craft an essay that will leave you with the words Jesus left with the people on the mountainside--along with a question that His Word begs:
*Every one then who hears these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man.
And every one who hears these words of mine and does not act on them will be like a foolish man.*

Had enough of 'WHOOSH' lately?

Scripture cited: Matthew 7:24-29

It is our fervent hope that you will 'be a Berean' by attending one of these Bible-based classes this week! —
"Approaching God: Lessons from the Inspired Prayers of Scripture" --Sunday at 9:45
"Jesus, the One and Only"--Sunday at 9:45
"Speak God's Word"--Sunday at 9:45