



Georg Christoph Lichtenberg

Navigating Life...Chase Dreams, Not the Wind

"Yet when I surveyed all that my hands had done and what I had toiled to achieve,
everything was meaningless, a chasing after the wind;
nothing was gained under the sun."

Ecclesiastes 2:11

The Hebrew word for Ecclesiastes is Preacher and is used here

What is happening in our country these days? Honestly, I can't answer my own question.

Attempts to successfully change the world to one's belief through violence is frightening. Attempts to avoid the conflicts and cries for change through complacency is frightening. Attempts to denounce other points of view without efforts to understand them is frightening.

Is there a via-media? Could we not try to find "it"...that common ground to strive for? Can we find a way to become one nation where all people are equal? It is evident that some throw barbs at the "other side". The attacked raise their shields to defend against taunts from the warriors across the river of divide. Many are sensing a central resting place is impossible. Separation is becoming the ordinary.

In addition to TEDDY TALKS, I am fortunate to lead discussion and learning groups on Sunday and Tuesday Mornings. Both are Bible study sessions. The New Testament is where informing and leading discussion is most comfortable. Old Testament interest for me is the Hebrew Law of Moses (Torah, Pentateuch, and first five books of the Bible), all driven by laws for the chosen people in Israel. Many are laws Jesus took exception to.

When I ask the Zoomers, "What's next?" Many asked to study Old Testament Hebrew text. Putting it off was a badge of courage for me. Only recently did their inquiries lead me to begin to research other books. Ecclesiastes, one of the five wisdom books has intrigued me over the years. So, I went to the Preacher for this TALK.

The writer of the Book of Ecclesiastes tells how he tried all the things which in his time were thought to be fulfilling. One by one Preacher dismisses his experience with the phrase "chasing after the wind." The words run like a thread through the book. I know you think a sailor at sea or on the lake chases the wind. Chasing the wind is not the objective. To chase the wind provides little progress toward reaching the desired port.

What I know is winds too strong or winds too weak can each cause peril. Intentional preparation for either extreme is a life saver and a life changer. Knowing how to capture whatever wind is available, no matter the direction, will take the sailor to a safe harbor. The trick is getting every person on the ship working toward the same dream...Safe Harbor.

Convinced I am that human beings on either side of the political, religion, and emotional harbor are “chasing the wind.” Regrettably the extremes on all sides draw in the neutrals who are “just attending the rally.” Through the magical pull of “group think,” folks get caught up in the battle and make regrettable decisions. Emotions crescendo among noise and passionate chanting. Getting arrested or injured comes when people are chasing the wind.

Wind cannot be caught or collected, it's intangible. While many of our possessions and accomplishments take a perceptible form, they cannot give us meaning or make us change agents. As the human animal, we were made in God's image. He created us to long for the things that He wants, fulfillment and wholeness in our life. Each yearning are hard to achieve when persons are embittered, judgmental, vengeful, or simply caught up in the fray. Create a Dream, and we individually and collectively model: Kindness. Love. Care. Support. Joy. All are a gift from the Prince of Peace.

The Preacher came slowly and painfully to the understanding which ends his story. We hear his disappointment at the end of each frustrating experience. We sense the emotional and spiritual woundedness each time some grand experiment left him feeling empty. He was persistent and stubborn. He tried it all! All of us who have lived very long understand that. We have been there. Some of us are still there.

Today we Dream. Today we personally stop chasing the wind and strive to achieve our Dreams. By engaging our Peace Dreams, and with the help of God, we model and perhaps achieve peace and unity in the nation and the world.

Say this aloud with me: *Serious, intentional, and heartfelt Prayer for unity is the recipe to Dream Peace.*

Peace always,

Ted