

Plaid Ponderings: A Dirty Church or a Clean Church?

(Formerly Podunk Ponderings)

This year Faith Baptist Church of Kenmare celebrates its 50th anniversary. As I write this, preparations are already being made to celebrate this joyous occasion of God's faithfulness over the past 50 years. For 50 years, the gospel has been celebrated every Sunday morning, children have been raised up to know the Lord, and this body of believers has shared the Gospel with its community. Yet alongside these preparations to celebrate God's faithfulness in this work, we have some looming expenses as our building is also celebrating 50 years of use! A verse that I have been meditating on through the plans for celebration and maintenance is Proverbs 14:4, "*Where there are no oxen, the manger is clean, but abundant crops come by the strength of the ox.*" *Proverbs 14:4 ESV*

There is a temptation we face, as redeemed sinners, to become frustrated and divisive when we are faced with bills, expenses, and decisions about where Church funds need to go. In most situations there are more needs and wants than available funds. We are tempted to become frustrated with our brothers and sisters in Christ when they disagree with our views on how funds should be used.

Though wisdom and grace are needed to work through our differences, I believe that there should be a thankfulness when we are faced with these kinds of decisions. This thankfulness should come from the fact that our facilities are being used for the Lord's work! If we hadn't shared countless meals together there wouldn't be any stains and wear on the carpet. If no one ever sat in our pews then there wouldn't be any scratches on the wood. If there weren't any toddlers running around touching the glass doors then there wouldn't be any smudges on them.

I have a few tools lying around my garage. Some of these tools I bought because I needed them for a job. These tools have dings and scratches on them. Any tags or stickers that were on them when I bought them are long gone. Some have even broken entirely, but this isn't true of all my tools. Like many men, I occasionally walk through the tool store, see something on sale, and buy it without necessarily needing it for a specific project. Some of those tools eventually get used, but occasionally I buy a tool that's on sale, and could theoretically return it 5 years later because it's still in its original packaging! Though these tools are in "mint" condition, this condition is evidence that they haven't been used very much.



A dirty stable is a sign that there are oxen in it, oxen that are out plowing fields and producing crops. A tool that is worn and scratched is a sign that many things have been built, that projects have been completed. We could be frustrated that we have to dig into our pockets to pay for new church boilers, or we can be thankful our boilers have worn out, because that means the heat has been on for 50 years! Where there are no oxen, the manger is clean, but abundant crops come by the strength of the ox. Be thankful that the Lord, in His grace, has used your facility and the people in it to further His great Kingdom. Trust that as He has been faithful in the past, He will continue to be faithful in the future.

Sincerely,

A Plaid Pastor

-by Pastor Josh Emmel, Faith Baptist Church, Kenmare, ND