

Howell eNews June 28, 2022

On Sunday afternoon I went over the proverbial river and through the woods. No, I was not going to my grandmother's house. I was on a five hour journey of remembrance with my brother, Mike. As you probably recall he has terminal cancer. He worshiped with us two Sundays ago. It was the last time he was able to drive. The cancer is now quickly taking over the speech and reasoning part of his brain. He could not tell me where he wanted to go because of his inability to speak coherently. But, he pointed the way.

We went everywhere! He was happy to travel to the old Otis homestead. It is a very remote farm near the Yankee Springs Recreation Area. Almost 70 years ago some family members built a hunting cabin on an acre of the land there. It is a hidden place, impossible to see from the road. The setting is peaceful, quiet and private.

My cousin Ken, who was born in 1959, the same year as my brother was buried there after he succumbed to cancer himself in 2007. The land now is called "Otis Sanctuary " and is owned by the Audubon Society.

Behind the cabin, atop the large hill is a bench with a gravestone on it for Ken. We drove up to the hidden cabin yard and somehow we walked up the hill. The picture is Mike on the bench. He said, "This is where I want to be. It feels so right." I never argue with a dying person so I said that we would somehow get it done. It was quiet for a while. What can you say anyhow? I laid my hand on his shoulder and prayed for him. What a powerful moment!

He took me two-tracking on an unofficial abandoned road in my wife's new car. I was not sure it was such a good idea but there was no time to object. The two-track was five miles long, filled with deep ruts and wash outs. Somehow with God's help we made it! The whole scene reminded me of the homestead on "Walton's Mountain."

Both of us were so thankful to be there frozen for brief moments in time. Journeying through a lifetime is a very emotional experience. It is hard and yet an honor at the same time. I know Mike is soon to reside on the other side of heaven. I will struggle through his funeral. One thing I know for sure is that with Jesus the separation won't be long. We have both walked with Jesus for most of our lives and life will not end with physical death, but simply an awesome change of location.

Solomon tells us - there is time for everything, a season for every activity under heaven...and that "God makes everything beautiful in time." I am so glad for Jesus! Where would we be without Him? I want to introduce Him to as many as I can. Is there someone you can introduce to Jesus today?

Pastor Scott