

Lookout Mountain

Christ the Redeemer Church
June 27, 2010
Smith
Fifth Sunday after Pentecost/Glorieta Sunday

Luke 9:51-62
Rev Gary L.

www.christredeemerchurch.com

Daniel and I climbed up Lookout Mountain there at Glorieta Christian Camp outside of Santa Fe, New Mexico, tucked in the Sangre de Cristo Mountains of New Mexico. We were at 7,500 feet. Near God. Then I saw it first.

I called Daniel over. "Look. There is El Porvenir Mountain." We were so excited to see that clearly defined 11,700 foot mountain rising about all other peaks east of us. We hiked it in 2005. We spend one week each summer in a tent near a family cabin in Gallineas Canyon near El Porvenir. We trout fish for a week each summer. I had no idea all those cabin years that Glorieta Christian Camp was only 40 miles from the cabin. You never know when something very good is near you without you being aware. God is like that. Always near and always Good, even when we are unaware.

In 2004, six years ago, when Daniel was 14 and trying to sort out life without me being around much, I was busy wasting my time piddling around with an obstructive, controlling and restrictive and mean-spirited small group of small-minded and selfish folks who were playing church and wanting me to raise money to save their exclusive club. Daniel and I went a year without talking to each other. We were both lost. You can get lost in church and you can get lost in life.

Rev Don Waddleton, Director of Church Growth for the United Methodist Church bishop's staff in Houston and manager of over 30 current church starts in Houston, told me last summer at Youth Academy, "Some churches have good DNA. Some have bad DNA. We have to make sure new church starts begin with good DNA." Well said.

We both dreaded our summer trip to the cabin. We had always spent the week together in the tent by the trout stream, laughing and telling fish and bear and ghost stories and making man noises that no one could hear but us two boys. We arrived at the cabin and put the tent up in silence, both of us already looking forward to the end of the week.

We crawled into the tent at 10 pm, putting it off as long as we could. Enmity is no fun between a parent and a child.

Silence.

About 11 pm I started gushing and desperately telling him stories of my growing up. At midnight he talked to me for the first time in a year, "Dad, I had no idea you went through those things. I thought your life was just perfect and easy. I thought you had no idea what I face in life." We project perfection for some reason as adults. We fake it. We build walls that keep others, including our own children, out. We talked all night literally. I asked for forgiveness. He did also.

By 4:30 am we were both crying and hugging each other. At 5:00 am we even laughed a bit, for the first time in a year. We got up at 7 am and went fishing together. I am sure I caught more fish than he and larger fish than he. That IS what is important...that I win in life. At the stream he

said, "Dad, I was afraid we were never going to talk again in life." I told him I had the same fear.

That tent and that mountain saved us. This year's Father's Day card to me read, "Each Father's Day I look back and say that you and I couldn't get any closer. But we do every year. Thank you for how hard you work to give me opportunities."

Mountains save us. We stood there and grinned on Lookout Mountain as we peered in silence at El Porvenir. Mountains and tents save. Some lives and relationships got saved, redeemed, at Glorieta Mountain this year. Read your Thank You notes and you will see. Amen.