

Unforgettable: Covid Cure

'I will not forget you! I have engraved you on the palms of My hands; your walls are ever before Me' (Is. 49: 15b, 16).

In our covid-struck but not destroyed 40th anniversary as a ministry, I rejoice. I am grateful for periodic visits to my nearly 95-year-old Mom who still presides with dignity over the CA home in which I grew up.

Fun to serve her and fun to run thru the 3-mile radius where I can recall homes of classmates, from K-12. Last trip I determined to intercede for each house I ran by where I remembered its previous resident. I pleaded Jesus' mercy over each.

The gift of remembrance! As I bounded by familiar dwellings, I recalled memories, foul and fair, plus phone numbers and spirit-to-spirit connection with a few who I knew in formative seasons. If I recall each one prayerfully, with hope for a brighter future, how much more does Jesus? 'I will not forget you!' says our God who does not forget each child's cry for mercy, even if the adult-child appears to have forgotten Him.

Perhaps our prayerful remembrance has power to bring His Presence near. Now.

At the end of my intercessory run, I approached a street that flanked my elementary school and began to pray for an unusually good friend of the past, Elena, who had lived on that street. I recalled her with affection: funny, pretty, as insecure as the rest of us yet inclined toward God. In high school she turned her heart Jesus-ward while I turned toward 'gay' mischief; by the time I came to my senses through the mirror of Mercy, she had turned away from the One to other faces.

Annoyingly zealous, I invited her into my revival. She refused, but not without giving me some sage advice. 'Do everyone a favor: when you talk about Jesus, don't mimic someone else. Be yourself.' Got it. Unforgettable. To paraphrase John Wimber: Be natural. Supernaturally natural.

I only saw Elena a few times after that—at class reunions, at the local gym when I visited Mom. She usually shared some sorrows. Her life had not gone as she hoped; her parents divorced, as did she, and her children suffered and wandered. We laughed of course—neither of us lost our spontaneity--but her pain lay close to the surface as did her resistance to trusting this Jesus again.

Years later, last month, I ran round the corner onto Elena's old street. A woman walked ahead of me, and I knew it was her. We talked for an hour. Something had changed, her face was lit by unseen light. It seems the covid clampdown coincided with her mother's death and a child's further unraveling. Alone, she heard quietly: 'Be still and know that I am God.' She had nothing but time to return to her first love. He remembered her and she Him.

Of course, we spoke of our days 50 years earlier on that same street trying to figure out our lives. And we rejoiced together that the One who made us remembered us. He is becoming the very form of our lives now. More than nostalgia, we recalled His faithfulness revealed in myriad ways, including friendship. We rejoiced in new mercies that morning. Unforgettable.