

Stuff About Things

by Robert F. Turner

One “thing” is a mail box some where along a country road in northwest Arkansas. There is this tall pole, with one properly placed box, about 42 inches above the road. But fifteen feet above the first box, on a red and white striped extension of the pole, there is a second mail box – clearly labeled “Air Mail”! It is hard to beat that Arkansas spirit.

And then there is genuine Kentucky country ham. It is something like a “spirit,” with a soul of red-eye gravy and a tabernacle of soda biscuits: choked from the mother dough, patted into shape, and baked in a wood-burning stove to mouth-watering perfection. For forty years I have eaten cereal every morning, thinking that was breakfast – then this came along. Kentucky ham pushes diets aside, cuts straight through to yesteryear and my early upbringing. It is basic, it is fundamental! Why fight it??

Another thing is a country meeting with singing like you seldom hear any more. Dragging, off-key, and “wound” pronounced like “hound” – which, incidentally, makes it rhyme with the companion word, in the song. I stop trying to override the monotone behind me and just sit listening, and realizing that these folk are singing to the Lord. The melody in their hearts is somehow transferred to mine.

And a baptizing! A family man, long deaf to well-meant pleas, now yields to Christ. Calloused hands cover an emotion-twisted face. His voice is low but firm as he confesses his Lord. Friends can scarcely wait to shake his hand. His wife stands to the side, head down, tears streaming. A neighbor says, “You all ride with us;” and a caravan of cars move up the road to another community, fifteen miles away, where there is a small church building with a baptistry. Oh Happy Day – !!

Out back of the barn a lady calls “George! Now where is George? If you see a black pig, George is close by. That pig always stays somewhere near George.” And sure enough, we find the, pig and George – a 950-pound Hereford bull – that ambles up to allow the owner to scratch his massive head.

I like to think the Lord saves few spots like this, here and there in Arkansas, Kentucky, Indiana and Pennsylvania (and wherever **you** live) as a kind of “left-over” from Eden – samples of the better things in life.

Editor’s Note: I have actually **seen** that “Air Mail” mail box in Northwest Arkansas. There may be more than one in the state! Some of our young people may read these “things” and not understand them. If so, find someone 65 years old or older and ask them! Or, ask someone who grew up on the farm. It’s a life full of many wonderful, simple “things.” “City-slickers” like myself have missed out on a lot. ~ *Wayne*

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