

News from the Brick

Nettle Creek Church of the Brethren
5352 N. Brick Church Road
Hagerstown, IN 47346

Established 1820



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Jodi Johnson, Interim Secretary
Sunday School: 9:00 a.m.
Worship: 10:00 a.m.



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*Continuing the Work of Jesus.
Peacefully. Simply. Together.*

Carol's Comments

"The Sign of the Cross"

¹The Pharisees and Sadducees came, and to test Jesus they asked him to show them a sign from heaven. ²He answered them, "When it is evening, you say, 'It will be fair weather, for the sky is red.' ³And in the morning, 'It will be stormy today, for the sky is red and threatening.' You know how to interpret the appearance of the sky, but you cannot interpret the signs of the times. ⁴An evil and adulterous generation asks for a sign, but no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah." Then he left them and went away.



On our way to Tennessee for vacation, we came upon a huge cross sitting up on a bank along the highway. You couldn't miss it. It towered high above everything around it. This was much, much larger than the crosses you normally see along the interstate. This particular cross was set amid commercial signs and everyday life. Close to the cross was a very large Adult World store, which of course, was about pornography. At least the signs enticing you to the store were not what a Christian would want to frequent.

I thought about this cross standing there, setting as a reminder that the cross is bigger than the call to materialism or self-gratification. It stood majestically above everything else but yet was planted in the middle of life. It's a reminder that while all around us are things to draw us away from Christ, God's presence can be seen—is seen.

Also not too far from this huge cross was another much smaller cross. Perhaps the smaller cross was there first and then the huge one was constructed. This gigantic white cross stood there as if casting its shadow over the Adult World store. The smaller cross, which was not very far from the large one, somehow seemed to demonstrate how little we make God's presence known in the world. It was overshadowed by the commercial signs and Adult World establishment.

As I pondered those two crosses, I wondered where most Christians are today: standing tall and firm knowing the power of the cross or standing small and puny in the surroundings of the world and being less effective for Christ. We have a great God who gave us Jesus Christ, who suffered and died on the cross and rose to new life. The cross is a reminder to us of the power of God's redemption and love for us. It is a sign that can loom large and powerful in this broken world or small and helpless. It all depends on how we let the presence of Jesus Christ live in us.

The Pharisees and Sadducees went to Jesus asking for a sign from heaven. They weren't able to see that Jesus was the sign because he, like Jonah, would beat death. Jesus would be resurrected and through his death and resurrection show us the way to God...to claim our belovedness in him. We too live in an adulterous generation and many are asking for a sign to be given them. They want hope. They want love. They want acceptance. They are empty and need to have the love of God demonstrated to them. We, who are Christian, need to re-evaluate our Christian presence in our world and communities, so that our Lord and Savior's cross "draws all humankind to him." And may it be so.