

Things to Know



Musings from the Word

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Returning to that familiar text of John 3:16, my focus today is upon the fact that one character surrounding that passage is named (“Nicodemus”) and the other character is not named. A few years back, I lived in another part of the country and discovered a nearby cemetery. Once in a while I would walk through that cemetery. There were no names on the simple markers. I discovered this space was utilized by the county for burying people who died unclaimed. I was stunned! I have visited the graves of US presidents. I have visited the Oak Hill Cemetery in Battle Creek. I have visited the special monument of Joshua V. Chamberlain, a leader for the Union forces at Gettysburg and seen all the tributes surrounding his site. Named people. Known people. People we pay attention to. And yet, in that space on my walking path, the unnamed went to their final resting place—and without fanfare or acknowledgement. What moves me in this John narrative? While still unnamed, there was plenty of acknowledgement. The kingdom of Jesus refuses to treat the unnamed as society does. The kingdom of Jesus includes them in His-story. That unnamed woman is understood by the writer to be as much a part of the Jesus-movement as the named man in chapter 3. And I believe this is how He intended His church—His church as the body of Christ. And what is my prayer stemming from this fact? That Jesus living in me will grow in me so that I can see the invisible as much as I see the visible. That I can acknowledge in the hallway or byway the unnamed. That I may recognize the truth declared so long ago: “The mass of men lead lives of quiet desperation.” And to the degree of accuracy, I can meet in the unnamed the presence of the divine—even in their quiet lives of desperation. Both the named and the unnamed came to Jesus in their own kind of desperation. Their desperation drove them to Jesus—one for answers and the other for water. The kingdom of heaven, the “whoever,” both reign in the kingdom of Jesus. May. I. Know. This!

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Beecher Hall, named after the brother of Harriet Beecher Stowe, Edward Beecher (a strong opponent of slavery and first college president in the state of Illinois), is the oldest college building in Illinois, built in 1829.

Musings from the Field

- Check out the first installment of AdventHealth’s Spiritual Renewal Series [here](#). ◀
- Continued prayers as we seek pastors for both the Hinsdale Church and the Epic Church.
- [Here](#) ◀ is the announcement about Andrews University’s new president.
- To see what I presented to the Lake Union regarding the Illinois Conference report, this [here](#). ◀

“Christ declares that pretentious piety is nauseating to Him.”

(*Special Testimonies B*, p. 20)