

The Best of Friends

Tommy and Joseph were the best of friends. They grew up together in a small town in the South and just like any small town in the US, it was a great place to grow up. Tommy and Joseph shared many of life's experiences such as football, summer camp, hanging out at the Dairy Dream and flirting with the girls. Once they even raised a hog together for an FFA project. Though they were friends, there were some big differences between them. For instance, there was religion. Tommy's parents were Christians and very faithful in attendance and involvement in the local church, while Joseph's family did not participate regularly in religion and only attended occasionally on special holidays.

As the boys grew into adulthood, they continued to be friends. They both served as "best man" at each other's wedding. Through the years their friendship continued as their families grew and developed. There were softball games, backyard cook-outs, camping trips and graduations. As an adult, Tommy continued to serve and worship God regularly, while Joseph didn't attend church anywhere. Tommy never spoke of God, Jesus, or the church while he was with Joseph. He didn't want to make his friend uncomfortable and certainly didn't want to strain such a wonderful relationship. The two men continued to be friends for the rest of their lives.

On the Great Day of Judgment, God had gathered all of the people from all nations before Him. It was an awesome sight, billions upon billions of people standing before the Almighty God (*Matthew 25: 31, 32*). Then, just as Jesus had said, God separated the people into two groups, one on the left and one on the right. Tommy was there on the right side, along with his family. But Tommy couldn't help but notice the great multitude standing on the left side. He knew the scripture well, "*And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.*" (*Matthew 25:46*). As Tommy scanned the crowds of people on the left side, there, to his horror, he saw his best friend Joseph. Tommy realized that it was too late to talk to Joseph about Jesus, about going to church, or about being obedient to the gospel. Tommy had only wanted to keep his friendship and thus avoided sharing the greatest gift offered to mankind. Joseph looked over at Tommy and said, "Why didn't you tell me this was going to happen? I thought we were the best of friends."

Please share the "Good News" of Jesus Christ with your friends today!

Jay Launius - 2022