

Often it's good to come to the end of something. The end of the semester is great if you're a student. The end of summer is great if you're a parent of an elementary age kid. The end of a "timeout" is really good if you're either a parent or a toddler. This is the last *Lunchtime Musing*, at least for 2011. You'll know next week if I will continue to write.

A number of years ago I wanted to become a better writer. I still do. The good people at the Calvary Baptist Church in Midland, MI allowed me to do some additional graduate work in which a major focus was writing skills. When I look at church history, so many effective pastors were writers. They didn't write with the intention to be published (though their published words remain for us to read). They wrote as expressions of their own hearts to their Lord and for the benefit of their immediate families and the people to whom they were a shepherd. Writing became another means by which they could raise in the minds of their readers Scripture texts to consider, answer questions the congregation proposed, place warnings before a trap, and offer counsel on topics of the day. We are a very blessed people to have an immense amount of sound, biblical literature available to us in traditional and digital formats. We should make use of it in both reading and writing.

Some people are not naturally born readers, but I do believe God intends all of us to become readers at some level. How do I know this? Because God chose to reveal eternal truth by the written word. Surely, God intended for those words to be read. If He did not, then what is the point of writing them? None of us would argue that God intends for His word only to be read by elite readers, would we? Does anyone want to label God an "elitist?" Didn't think so. You may not read at the level of a librarian, but in all likelihood you can read. So read your Bible, and read other Christian literature. If you don't know what to read, ask me or ask Pastor Chris. Ask someone who you think is a reader of Christian literature. Someone says, "I just don't like to read." I don't like to exercise either, but I know the benefit when I do and the consequences when I do not.

Some people can put thoughts on paper in such a way that words come to life and complex issues become so simple to understand. The rest of us take way too many words to say a plain thing or confuse a matter by trying to explain it all. Our best piece of written communication was the love note slipped to the cute little redhead in the second grade.

Writing is much more difficult than reading. Writing requires a beginning thought, and that can be a horrible place to start. And writing creates an

occasion for transparency of our inner persons, a transparency, by nature, we reluctantly express. On the other hand, writing uniquely becomes a two-way gift. Both the writer and the reader receive from the exercise. When a writer expresses thoughts in words and I get to read it, I benefit from his work. When he puts his thoughts in printed form, he benefits from the expression. Because both giver and receive benefit, it is a gift unlike many others.

I long for more Christian writers. I don't mean the kind that publishes books. I mean a Christian dad who writes a note to his son about something, anything that comes to his mind. I mean a Christian wife who writes to her husband something that will encourage his day or remove a point of pressure. I mean a Christian girl who writes a note of thanks to her mom. I mean a Christian boy who writes a list of five or ten things he would like to accomplish to please his Lord Jesus Christ. I think we need Christian writers like that. Would you consider becoming a Christian writer?

So, there you have it. I hoped to have 52 Lunchtime Musings in 2011. I fell one short because of a snafu back early in the year. So, you only had to read 51 out of 52. Thanks for reading and thanks for commenting. Your comments make me think about how better to say what I intended to say.

Mike VerWay
Pastor
First Calvary Baptist Church
Inver Grove Heights, MN 55077
www.1stcalvary.com