



ETOOTONIN'

2011.07.10

Eyes Forward

XII / 117

I've had probably only one new Etoonin' subscriber in 3 whole years. Here is the video she shared with me: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4r7wHMg5Yjg>

Anyway, tonight I threw a lasagna dinner for my alcoholic neighbors. Know why I prefer alcoholic neighbors to corporate wage slaves? Everybody has problems, but alcoholics don't try to hide them. I fit right in. Alcoholics are real. Jim Bures is real. Honey Badgers are real.

It didn't go quite like I was used to: most of them just chewed and screwed. At Christian parties, people tend to hang around a lot longer. Linger just a little bit longer. Laissez les bon temps rouler. Let the good times roll.

I think I love alcoholics even more than my own family. When I had my graduation party, two people showed up who I'd never even met before, but nobody from my direct family came. Nobody in my family celebrated my victory over depression. When in the hospital in February, not one of my family members visited me. Today I got pissed off at my brother. His wife seems to hate me. She seems to feel entitled to criticize and comment on my weight which is a direct result of the bipolar medication I take. We had a fight a month ago and my brother stopped calling me since then. You know, no matter how your family treats you, you can't live without your family. I wish I could. So eventually I called him. He said he'd call me back later, but never did.

Anyway, so Today I call my brother and ask him for his wife's Mom's phone number. She lives in Puerto Rico. At one point her husband offered that I could come and stay in their Fajardo, Puerto Rico apartment any time I wanted. So I wanted to treat some good friends to a vacation, so I called them on it. I sent them a letter asking for permission to rent it. They never answered. So I called my brother again today and asked him for their phone number. He said he'd get back to me. He never did. So I called him again. He told me that he spoke to his wife's mom and suddenly she did not feel comfortable with me renting the apartment. He didn't give me her phone number: he asked her my question for her instead. So I got pissed. I told him not to interfere with my family business again. I wrote him off.

I know my eyes. They see only my perspective. But I know how to love. I love my alcoholic neighbors. The problem with my family is that they are rich. They are self-reliant. There is nothing I have that I can give them to show them I love them, because they already have everything they need. I am poor. I have nothing they want. The one main thing I have is God, and they don't want that. No one does. Not even the alcoholics. But at least the alcoholics, who are poor like me, love me back. I am able to give something to them, like a delicious dinner that I prepared in three hours. I invited my family to a party to provide for them, to thank them, and they did not show up. How can I show love to people who do not show up? I just can't. I can't prove it.

Anyway, so I went on a long walk to brood about this. And what I came up with is the inevitable truth that I must do like the Shawn McDonald song, Eyes Forward, says and keep my eyes focused on the prize. Know how much of my score keeping against my family is relevant? None! For Christ was crucified on the cross for their sins as well as mine. As much as I dwell on the hurt and the emotional pain, I know that pain is me trying to hang on to something I want. To something I just can't get. To something I have no right to ask for. For loving relationships are always voluntary. And you have to accept whatever the giver gives. Period.

I was tempted, on my walk, to console myself on the corner by purchasing a Dunkin' Donuts coffee, even though I had the same product sitting in my fridge. Isn't that the way we deal with pain? Look for consolation in something. But none can be found that way. Believe me. I looked for consolation from my emotional problems with my spending habits and it landed me in bankruptcy court. So I pressed on. I walked and felt the self-pity and the pain. And then I came home and wrote to you all about it.

I don't usually find people that are willing to listen to me whine, but my new subscriber said she is up for the challenge. She just got a job that makes no sense. She works in a cubicle. They hired her to do the \$75,000 worth of work they did not want to pay a professional firm to upgrade their website. There is just no way one person with all her strength could ever do that! Thank God she can laugh at her situation. I told her my advice: collect a paycheck until they fire her. She laughed. I mention this only because I had to explain to her how Etoonin' works: I take my problems and I paraphrase them with hyperbole. I exaggerate. Of course my problems are not that bad. My problems are

no different than anyone else's. Life is hard, whether you have bipolar or not. Everybody has challenges. I just talk about mine to a large audience. You wouldn't believe how cathartic it is! I found a crew of people who love me and I say whatever I want to you. Hey, you can unsubscribe if you don't like it. But you know I am telling you the truth: God is active in our lives. There is no denying it. I tell my story because I want people to see what God does. And you should pay attention to what God is doing for you: He is granting you complete freedom to be yourself without worry or fear of repercussions from anybody.

Just ask my alcoholic neighbors who used to be my enemies when they played their music too loud until I decided to knock on their door instead of call the cops.

I just don't walk this life alone. I complain fiercely against God: I am His biggest critic. But I have one ace up my sleeve: I know that it is He that provides for me, not my own wealth or my own skill or anything I have. I don't have much. I know it. I bank on it. I am free to be me, completely.

Anyway, I bought my first cell phone today. I decided to join the 21st century. I have pie in the sky ideas of incorporating my business in Harvard, MA so I appear well to do while I bounce around from Gardner to Clinton and other places. Part of this plan involves porting a Google Voice phone number with a Harvard exchange to a cell phone. The other part involves renting a P.O. Box in Still River, MA (a borough of Harvard). Just think about it: Still River. What an excellent town name for a brand like All for the Lord! But now I am left with \$33 in my bank account and just enough gas in my car to get me through another day of delivering pizza. Life in the whacked lane where...

