

“By faith...”

I suppose the beginning of every year brings a bit of newfound hope and promise with it. There is something exciting about the idea of starting fresh and doing ‘it’ differently or better than we have before. We look out and see the possibility of a fresh life, or perhaps something new and exciting sitting on the horizon, waiting for us to apprehend it. As I contemplate 2022, I do have some of these ideas and visions—but this year has more meaning to it as Dunklin steps into its 60th year.

Around 60 years prior to me writing this, a man named Mickey Evans was wrestling with what he thought God told him to do. I don’t have all of the dates precisely put together, but I do know that the Lord’s vision was revealed to him early in 1962. “Build a camp for alcoholics, Lord? You want me to leave the church and work full-time on building this camp?” These questions swirled around in his head and he fought with God for two months before he surrendered to the call. That surrender took place in the spring of 1962.

During this divine encounter, Brother Mickey was in the midst of preaching the idea of walking by faith to the church he pastored. He taught from Hebrews 11:8-9, which says “By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going. By faith he made his home in the promised land like a stranger in a foreign country; he lived in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise.” Brother Mickey began to realize that God was calling him to practice what he preached. In *The Road to Dunklin*, he shared that it was a frightening experience to actually be the one ‘not knowing where he was going.’ All he could see was a ‘little camp.’

This was the very beginning—before the property was purchased, before the tent was put up, and prior to the first man being rescued by the Lord and brought to this ‘City of Refuge.’ This was the very first page of a beautiful story composed of many different chapters. It is a story about a man who loved the Lord enough to step out in faith into the unknown and trust what was shown to him. It is a story about a Redeemer who loves even those who are tough to love—and He loves us in a way that is difficult to comprehend.

Hebrews 11:10 read, “For he (Abraham) was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God.” This verse shines light on what transpired here in 1962. When a man knows that he has been

called to build something God-ordained, it inspires him to look forward and believe in what the Lord has revealed and asked him to do. Knowing that the Lord is the architect and builder brings a passion and perseverance that can only come from Him.

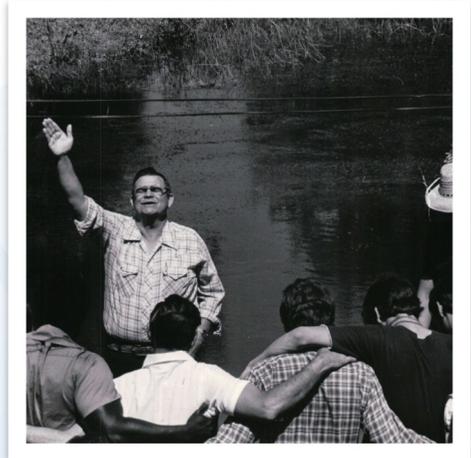
As we ponder these past 60 years, we lay hold of the fact that the Lord initiated this vision. He is the One who asked that it be done, and He is the One that empowered that first generation to build not only in the physical domain, but in the spiritual as well. The foundations were laid and it is now our calling and divine privilege to continue this work with the utmost care and excellence, ensuring that we bring honor and glory to the Lord Jesus Christ in all that we do. We consider all that has been done physically that we can see, but we know that the most important thing built here is spiritual and unseen.

Dunklin has overcome and thrived through the past 60 years due to the fact that Christ is our Head and we are His 'under-shepherds.' We will not waiver on the truth that He was and continues to be the architect and builder. It is our main purpose to glorify Him—and that is what we will do this year, and by His grace and loving mercy, for another 60 years.

By faith!



Nick



You are invited!



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