

Writing - Email Newsletter

Identity

Can you imagine a 9 month technology fast?

No email. No phone. No Google. No Facebook. No TV. No radio. Not even a newspaper.

For 9 months.

I did that this year. I'll tell you more about it someday.

The hardest part about it?

Stopping.

The day after my fast ended, MsBoyink and I visited the Ark Encounter in Kentucky. There were crowds. Movies. Smartphones. Selfie sticks.

It was like flipping the lights back on after a "total darkness" moment on a cave tour. The sensory input was overwhelming.

The world is noisy. So many blogs. So many experts. So many voices.

And yet, here you are. I don't take your attention for granted.

Thank you for reading.

On my mind this week?

Identity.

"Where you are from determines a lot about who you are."

I heard this in a podcast this morning.

It's true. We identify others based on where they are from.

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Close to where I grew up was a single red blinking light country town named Borculo. If you were from Borculo you were a hayseed backwater farmer. Borculo was the punchline to a joke we worked into our high school play every year.

It never failed to get a laugh. I cringe a little now.

We weren't the first ones to stereotype people based on where they are from:

Philip found Nathanael, and said unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.

*And Nathanael said unto him, Can there be any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip said unto him, Come and see.
John 1:45-46*

We don't just use home towns to identify others. We use it to create our own identity.

We are Michiganders. We tolerate long winters. We operate boats. We carry a state map at the bottom of our left arm.

But this morning I wondered.

Can you flip that around?

Can you choose who you'll be by where you choose to live?

We are getting off the road. Stopping down.

But where?

That's the topic of just about every conversation MsBoyink and I have these days. There are so many things to consider. Community. Jobs. Housing. Weather. Church. Kids. Friends.

Unless God throws us a curveball, we've narrowed it down to two places.

Back home or not back home.

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We debate between them. Each has advantages and disadvantages. We've prayed over each one.

This morning I asked MsBoyink: Who do we feel that God is calling us to be? Does one location help us more than the other?

Going home is hard. People often can't understand that you aren't the same person as when you left. Even Jesus said:

*"No prophet is accepted in his own country."
Luke 4:24*

The inverse can be true as well. We've been gone for eight years, but we might expect businesses, churches and people to be the same as we remember them.

There's something about a fresh start. Being known for who you are, not who you used to be. And doing the same for others. Starting at the starting line, not 10 yards back.

We can't make a decision yet. We've got some appointments back in Michigan. And an important conversation to have.

Who knows? We might swing back and look at home again.

If so, you'll probably hear about it here.

Because it'll be on my mind.

Have a great week, my friends!
