



The Power of Blood

In July of 2024 we celebrated the Fourth while sailing on the Snake and Columbia River in Washington and Oregon, ending by the Pacific Ocean. One stop included a visit to Sacajawea Historical State Park, including the museum, near Pasco, Washington.

The park dates back to about when I was born (1935) and honors the 17-year-old Shoshone woman who assisted the Lewis and Clark Expedition in 1804-05. Their excursion was to explore the newly acquired western portion of the country acquired through the Louisiana Purchase.

One of her main contributions was the ability to help communicate with the Native American tribes. She also actually assisted with navigating the landscape — an essential helper accompanying her husband.

While reviewing the pictures recently of our visit to the museum, I thought about Jesus' visit to this earth many years prior to Sacajawea. He, too, had some helpers along the way — an ordinary dozen guys called the 12 disciples.

Leaders needed support staff at the time of Jesus, but also in the 1800s, as well as leaders at your place of worship today. Their jobs may be different, but our role as helpers and encouragers remains the same. Today it maybe a word of praise or note of support. Think about a quick, quiet lunch where we pick up the tab, or a walk in the park as we quietly listen as our guest releases a bit of stress. Perhaps it's volunteering for jobs that need completing quickly. Whatever, helpers help heavenly leaders do their job more effectively. Maybe we need to initiate a Sacajawea Club for our teens as they learn and practice the art of supporting others?

I was reminded that even Moses needed help and support. As the Israelites were fighting the Amalekites, Moses was ordered to hold up his hands. As long as his hands remained up, the home team would win. When he lowered them, the enemy took over. As you might expect, his arms grew tired and the support team stepped in. Aaron and Hur found a stone for him to sit upon and then the wonderful act happened — they HELPED hold up his arms so they could remain upright until sunset. (Exodus 17:8-16) Challenge: Discover your helper role — perhaps just holding someone's hand.

As I reviewed a bit more history of L and C, Sacagawea's name reappeared. Guess what her name means? The Native American's name meant, *"One who assumes a burden."* She certainly was acting out her name. Then I think of our Master, Jesus. He was the one who lifted the burden for each of us. *"Come unto me, all you who are weary and burdened and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light"* (Matthew 11:28-30).

Paul even instructed the Christians in Galatia (Turkey) to, *"Carry each other's burdens and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ"* (Galatians 6:2). Today our challenge as followers of the King is to lift, hold, help, and carry each other along life's pathway. Paul does not enumerate how to carry another's burdens. We each must inventory our own skills, talents, resources, and interests, while at the same time being alert where a helping hand is needed.

While viewing the pictures I took that day at the museum, I was startled when one slide popped up. **"BLEEDING"** was printed on the simple poster. The words that followed seemed to have application for today's essay. *"Lewis and Clark used a sharp lancet (surgical tool used to make incisions) to open a vein in the patient's arm and bleed them. Therapeutic bleeding was the leading medical practice for curing many ailments. In reality, however, the procedure likely worsened the patient's symptoms."*

We need blood. Extracting too much, either by accident or intent, can result in death; BUT the sharing of blood is also a powerful way to help a friend or an unknown human. For years I faithfully journeyed to the blood bank to allow the staff to "take a pint." I gave, but when facing open heart surgery years later, I required blood shared by an unknown giver. I was incredibly grateful for the lifesaving gift. However, I had to accept the gift for its healing powers to work.

Do I need to remind you, however, of the incredible gift of blood that can help each of us? The Son of God gave. He didn't just drop off a corn casserole for some hungry friend or servant of God needing a little boost. Of course not. He gave ALL of his BLOOD that horrible/glorious day on the cross about two thousand years ago. Because of His sacrifice each human may acknowledge the Power of His Gift, become a follower, and then each day lean on Him for comfort and care.

Today Acknowledge and Accept Christ's Gift of His Blood Sacrifice.

Share the Saving Power of His Blood With Others.

Then together celebrate His Resurrection and Join Him One Day Along with His Heavenly Father.

BLEEDING

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