

The Best of Friends
By: Jay Launius

Tommy and Joseph were the best of friends. They grew up together in the small town of Burlington, North Carolina, about 50 miles from the coast in the rolling Carolina hills. And just like any small town in the US, it was a great place to grow up. Tommy and Joseph shared the same experiences that most friends do; they played football together, went to summer camp together, hung out down at the Dairy Dream and flirted with the girls. Once they even raised a hog together for an FFA project. Though they were friends there were some differences between them. Take religion for instance, Tommy's parents were Christians and very faithful in attendance and involvement in the local church, while Joseph's family did not participate in religion of any kind.

As the boys grew into adulthood, they continued to be friends. They were each other's Best Man when they both married local girls. They continued their friendship as their families grew and developed. There were softball games and backyard cook-outs, camping trips and graduations. As an adult, Tommy continued to serve and worship God regularly, while Joseph didn't attend church anywhere. Tommy never spoke of God, Jesus or church while he was with Joseph. He didn't want to make his friend uncomfortable and certainly

didn't want to strain such a wonderful relationship. The two men continued to be friends for the rest of their lives.

On the Great Day of Judgment, God had gathered all of the people of all of the nations before Him. It was an awesome sight, billions upon billions of people standing before the Almighty God (Matthew 25: 31, 32). Then, just as Jesus had said, God separated the people into two groups, one on the left and one on the right. Tommy was there on the right side, along with his family. But Tommy couldn't help but notice the great multitude standing on the left side. He knew the scripture well, "And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life." Matthew 25:46. As Tommy scanned the crowds of people over on the left side, to his horror he saw his best friend Joseph. Tommy realized that it was too late to talk to Joseph about Jesus, about going to church, about being obedient to the Gospel. Tommy had simply wanted to keep his friendship and thus avoided sharing the greatest gift offered to mankind. Joseph looked over at Tommy and said, "Why didn't you tell me this was going to happen? I thought we were the best of friends."

Share the Gospel (Good News) of Jesus Christ with your friends and family this week, please do it before it's too late!

YOUTH GROUP

We need volunteers to drive the van to Jabberwacky this summer. If you can help, please sign up.

There will be a Camp Bandina meeting for campers and parents Sunday, May 19th immediately following morning service. Please make plans to attend.

June 2-8 for 6th-12th graders.
Camper fee: \$180
Additional camper (same family): \$160
Pre-camper fee: \$50

Everyone is invited to the Ratcliff's house for a graduation celebration, honoring Emmie Ratcliff on May 25, 2024 at 6:00 pm.



MARK YOUR CALENDAR! VBS WORK DAY JUNE 1ST STARTING AT 9:30 AM.

We need water bottles! If you are able to donate cases of water, please bring them to the church ASAP.

Wedding Shower Celebrating
Anna Escobar & Quincey Trammel
June 9th at 1:30 pm.



There will be a men's Bible study this Thursday 5/16/24 at 7:00 p.m. continuing on Romans 9:19-31.



Free Goods Giveaway 8/3/2024



We are collecting for our 2nd Annual Free Goods Giveaway. Donations can be placed in the cradle-roll room.

India could use your continued support in sponsorship of student preachers enrolled in preaching school. If you would like to support a student the cost is:

- \$50 per month to support an in-person student
- \$20 per month to support and online student



Please give payments to any elder or office staff.

Please Pray

Kyle Teat is undergoing radiation treatment for skin cancer on his leg... Kannika Bun, friend of Scott Ratcliff, is a Navy service women on a difficult mission and in need of prayers for strength and safety.