

CYBERCOLUMN by John Duncan: The swarm of bees_62804

June 25, 2004

Posted: 6/25/04

CYBERCOLUMN: The swarm of bees

By John Duncan

I'm sitting here under the old oak tree, thinking of bees. Bees bumble and buzz in these hazy, lazy days of summer. Yellowjackets have built a nest on my front porch. Studying their flight, work and movements causes me to think of bees.

When I was a boy visiting my grandmother in the mountains of North Carolina, we attended an after-church picnic. The picnics were the kind to love because you could eat all the fried chicken and homemade food you desire.

John Duncan

You would also meet all the relatives you never knew and many whose names you will never remember. I loved it when my aunt would say, "She's your cousin on your grandmother's side, once removed." I loved the picnics, the people, the pizzaz.

That evening, the guys went back to the church to play basketball. After we finished hoops, a bee buzzed—a hornet zoomed from the eave of the fellowship hall roof, made a nosedive for me and stung me behind my ear. Ouch! I cried tears of a little boy stung by the pain of life. Have you ever been attacked by a zooming bee?

Just the other day at my house, I saw something I had never seen before—a swarm of bees. The bees moved in concert while buzzing in harmony like a big see-through beach ball. The wind carried them past my mailbox, through the driveway, up over the trees and into the field behind my house. Not one stray bee left the symphony abuzz. I guess bees understand the joy of teamwork.

Recently, I read a book by Sue Monk Kidd titled “The Secret Life of Bees.” She talks about bees building a nest in her home as a child, about her relationship with her mother and the sting of a painful life. She uses fabulous quotes like, “There is nothing perfect; there is only life.” Kidd has a great quote about bees: “When a bee flies, a soul will rise.” I am not sure what the quote means, but it rolls easy off the tongue and sounds good.

Then I found myself thinking about the Apostle Paul. Was he ever stung behind the ear by a nose-diving hornet? Did he ever battle a swarm of bees? Did his soul rise when a bee would fly? I am not so sure, but he did give young Timothy sound advice for ministry and for life, “Therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus” (II Timothy 2:1).

That’s what’s buzzing in my brain today. Be strong. Be strong in God’s grace. Be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.

John Duncan is pastor of Lakeside Baptist Church in Granbury, Texas, and the writer of numerous articles in various journals and magazines

News of religion, faith, missions, Bible study and Christian ministry among Texas Baptist churches, in the BGCT, the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) and around the world.