



October 7, 2024

Gotcha Day

John 20:26–29: Then he said, “Put your finger here and look at my hands, then reach out your hand and put it in my side. Stop your doubting and believe. Thomas answered him, “My Lord and My God!” Jesus then said to him, “Do you believe because you see me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe.”

October 8th is Gotcha’ Day in our household, the day Lynne “got” (adopted) our 6-month old baby girl in Mao Ming China, in 1997. I must admit that I was a bit skeptical of the Chinese children adoption process. The adoption process had been elongated from a stated period of 6–10 weeks to 2 years, waiting for an adoption. I remember being angry at God in the Christmas season of 1996. We were supposed to be celebrating the birth of baby Jesus, but I still had no baby girl to hold in my arms. (Little did I know that my soon to be daughter Bethany was “in the making” at the time but would not yet be born until March 1997.) During the interview process, I was asked by the social worker what I admired about Dad. I told the story of how Dad, after receiving a telegram from Martin Luther King to go to Alabama and join the civil rights struggle. He answered that call, and yet I was discouraged from including that story as the Chinese government might frown on such a story about civil rights. I grew weary of work colleagues asking me about how the adoption process was going. I became discouraged and wondering whether it would ever happen.

Lynne, on the other hand, was excited and eager to go to China, accompanied by her father, to meet our new daughter. (I stayed home to supervise our 16-year-old son living at home.) Lynne had no hesitation about signing the final adoption papers in China before she had even met Bethany. Yikes!

Once the adoption process had been finalized in China, Lynne called me to tell me all is well and about our wonderful new baby girl, Bethany. When I heard

Bethany cooing in the background, my heart started pounding! Oh my God, I have a baby daughter! After the call, I fell to my knees and praised God for this wonderful gift from above. Hearing the cooing of baby Bethany was my way of placing my fingers into Jesus' side and believing. We often hear the expression, "seeing is believing, but in my case, hearing and listening made me a believer that the miracle of adoption had taken place. This experience led me to a richer and fuller belief and faith in God and to develop a deep gratitude for this gift.

As we go through this faith journey together, let us remember that God answers prayers on his/her timeframe, not ours. Though some of us filter daily data through our senses, others process it through their intuition, and therefore are going to approach such challenges very differently. God wants us to be patiently persistent in our daily walk with our Creator.

One could make the case that as Christians, we have all been adopted by God at one point in our lives. As we continue along this faith journey, may we be mindful of our "Gotcha Day" with God, and pray for those who have not yet experienced being touched and loved by God. Faith Matters!

~Written by Tom Webster

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