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Honolulu, 96822
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Dear Mike,

I did appreciate the good letter I received last week. Seeing it concerned you pretty much by yourself, I'll address this letter to you individually.

Mother is still in Micronesia; Truk to be exact at this particular time. If all goes according to schedule she will be here at 7:00 a.m. on Friday.

Having the Olympics on in the evening eased the sense of being alone to a considerable extent. The first couple of days I had sort of a hollow feeling in the pit of my stomach. On Friday we will have been married for 39 years. That is a lot of history together.

The way I interpreted your letter you have eliminated a degree in nursing in order to enter that field in the area of teaching. To get a degree in education or its equivalent, or to get your further degree in theology are the two possibilities which appeal to you the most. I heard you say that Mary Ann wondered whether you really could go back to Seminary after your experience at Fuller and with the three denominations. Right?

I gather that continuing in sales would not be your choice of a profession, altho you are now involved in that and have done fairly well.

May I say that I have found a lot of "junk" in the arena of the church. In fact, right now, I would rather be retired than in the situation that I am in. However, I have made a commitment to see the church through this interim period and that promise I will keep.

The interim here did not make his position absolutely clear on his availability to consider a more permanent call, altho he signed a contract for 6 to 9 mos. with the possibility of 3 more. He is a good preacher and has a very warm, affirming personality. Thus when we were ready to call a new minister there were people who said "I will vote against anyone whom the Search Committee recommends in order to keep Dr. so and so." There was also a petition to keep him presented on the very night of the Congregational meeting to vote on the Search Committee's nominee.

To make a long story short, the proposed candidate did not make the 2/3 vote necessary. Then people began to plot that they would allow the interim to go back to the Mainland for a month, and then they would issue a call. That came out in the open yesterday at a Congregational Forum following the service.

Personally this really drains me and I would prefer out. Right now, as of this Thursday, I will be the only ordained minister on the premises. The interim left last Thursday, and Dr. Rose leaves this Thursday, so everything is tossed in my lap.

I feel the interim has been less than candid; in fact, I would label it a breach in ministerial ethics. In turn, some people in the Congregation--the same people who caused the mess back in 1975 are at it again--pushing the interim to be the permanent minister.

What I am saying is that this "calling" is not all roses. It wasn't in the days of the O.T. prophets, nor of the apostles anymore than it has been since. It was Matthew Henry who said, "the ministry is a glorious calling, but a wretched trade." Some have advised to keep out of it if one possibly can.

Yet, for all the crap, to sense that God's word is becoming alive under your ministry is a wonderful affirmation. Only the person, himself or herself, can in the final analysis make the decision.

If you are inclined toward teaching and this would be the shorter process, you ought to give it a good, hard look. Again, in that field there is a lot of politics, favoritism, and heartaches.

If you are thinking seriously of giving a hand in Micronesia after the kids are in college, I would think that either field of pursuit would be suitable.

You will recall that we came here to Hawaii, and later to Micronesia with just a M.A. in theology, not the regular theological degree. If the Micronesian issued you a call, I am sure there are churches here in Hawaii and/or Micronesia which would ordain you as is.

However, Micronesia is not entirely a bed of roses. There are all kinds of sects, and splinter groups there now competing for these not very well founded.

I am saying that every profession has its ups and downs. You must be convinced that you are in the one you ought to be in in order to stick it out when the going gets tough.

Whatever you carefully think through and are convinced you ought to do, I would be willing to listen to your proposal and give you support in your undertaking.

Purposely, I have not tried to sell you on one area over against another. You must make that decision. I would be very willing to continue this dialogue with you on the whole matter.

I am glad you did not have bitterness ~~at~~ the last time you went to church. Remember that we have this glorious message in earthen vessels, and these vessels are human, with plenty of warts and faults. Yet, the good Lord remains faithful even though the human vessels and institutions are far less than perfect.

Blessings on all of you. I hope Mary Ann has had good news from her company, and that you as a family are continuing to have some extra curricular activities which give you a lift.

Much love,