

# Daily View

*“But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called ‘today’” Hebrews 3:13*

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December 1, 2020

## Best Friends

**“A man of many companions may come to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.” Proverbs 18:24**

So many of the Proverbs speak to us and bring back memories, like the one above. I’ve had some friends in my life that stick “closer than a brother.” Unfortunately, I’ve lost touch with many of them.

In 1967, I met a young man my age, John Seymour, and we became fast friends. We shared a small apartment on Ocean Front Walk in Venice, California for a year or so. I can’t remember where we met but it wasn’t at church; there were no kids my age at the church I attended and John wasn’t a church-goer, anyway. *[Side story: I attended the church in Venice on the Sundays I was in LA. The preacher there at the time was Bill Mosley, the same preacher I followed here at Folsom 27 years later. I didn’t realize that until several years after I moved here.]*

John was from New Jersey (which he called a “suburb of Philadelphia”) and had moved to LA to take a job as a computer operator for Atlantic Richfield (Arco). He had snow white hair; he told me that, back home, they called him “Snowflake.” He also said to me once, “one day they’ll put a huge computer in Kansas and keep track of everything everyone does every day.” *Hmmm... how do you spell “Google”?*

He said that moving to California was a dream come true; his friends in New Jersey would sit around and when the Mamas & Papa’s “California Dreamin’” came on the radio, they would almost cry. Going to California was a dream of all of them shared.

John and I had a lot of things in common, including a love for cars. I had a red 1967 Firebird and John had a red 1965 Sunbeam Tiger convertible with a Ford 289 V8 engine and a four-barrel carburetor. The car was designed in part by American car designer Carroll Shelby. It was very small, very light and *very fast*. We would drive it, top down, through the winding, Cahuenga Pass highway, from LA to the San Fernando Valley. On other occasions, when we wanted to cruise Sunset Blvd. in Hollywood, we would take the Firebird.

*“...the good ol’ days.”*

John and I also shared a love of music. We attended a lot of concerts — there were plenty of those in LA, of course. We even went to organ recitals that were held in church buildings

in the area. We both played the guitar back then, too. John was better at it than me but I could play well enough to sing along with him. He worked the swing shift at Arco, I worked 9-5 for a magazine publishing firm. Even though I had to get up at 7:30 AM to go to work, I would wait up for John to get home at 12:30 AM and we would play guitar until 2 AM, sometimes later. He was Eric Clapton, I was Paul Simon.

*“...the good ol’ days.”*

“He is one of those people with whom you cross paths and wish you had kept in touch. But it’s more difficult when your main points of commonality are cars and guitars instead of Christ and the church.”

The last time I saw John was on September 5th, 1969, at our wedding. I kept in touch with him while I was in the army and, after Christie and I were engaged, he was the first guy I asked to be one of my groomsmen. He

couldn’t commit to it because he wasn’t sure he could get the time off to drive to northern California. But, he surprised me and showed up on that day.

*[Another interesting side story is that in one of our few photos from the wedding, a white-haired guy is standing in the background holding his sports jacket over his shoulder. For about 46-47 years, I thought that it was Snowflake — it looks just like him and he would often hold his jacket like that. I was sure it was him. Turns out, it was actually Donna Thompson’s brother and Donna confirmed it. Small world.]*

John was my best friend for awhile and there are some good memories that I cherish from that relationship. He is one of those people with whom you cross paths and wish you had kept in touch. But it’s more difficult when your main points of commonality are cars and guitars instead of Christ and the church.

Now, I’m married to my best friend and I have some close friends, all of them centered in Christ. I can imagine that if John Seymour had been a *Christian* friend, it would have been a life-long friendship. He had some Christ-like qualities as nearly all people do.

There is no question that a relationship in Christ is so much more satisfying than any other relationship. In the end, we all want to be in the place of Abraham who *“believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness”*—and he was called a friend of God (James 2:23). I wish I could convince all of our young people to choose friends who will help them become a friend of God.