

## “You Want Me to Do Whaaat?!”

Yep, that is pretty much how the conversation went with my wife the other day. Now I don't normally talk about my marital issues in the public eye, but you know, sometimes a man's just gotta get some things off his chest. So, I'm like just sitting there, drinking coffee, relaxing, having just returned home from the SC Baptist Convention. When out of the blue, Kim says, “Our insurance rep called and said she found a cheaper home owner's policy that can save us a few hundred dollars a year.” To which I said, “Ah, man...awesome...gotta love Ms. Dena...bless her...she rocks!” But then as Kim said the next thing, I knew the conversation was going in the wrong direction fast and that my jubilation was misplaced. Then she said, “But, Ms. Dena also said you have to finish putting the sheet metal up on the barn by 20 December before the new company will insure it,” I was...silent...stone cold, dead...silent!

“Wait a minute...you want me to do whaaat?!” Kim repeated herself in her quiet and graceful way...but don't let that fool ya...she's one tough woman! In fact, Kim always said I was one whupp'n shy of a good up-raisen...and over the last 35 years of marriage she's been wanting to give me that last whupp'n...to finish what my Mama left unfinished! Anyways, Kim's been trying to get me to put the last siding up on that barn for 18 years, but now she's got backup...Ms. Dena! And, “they” are telling me it needs to be up by 20 December! What in the world is that woman thinking? Has she lost her mind? Has she forgotten what season it is? What planet is she on? I mean...really!!! Uh...hello...it's still deer season, and she wants me to stop hunt'n and put siding up on the barn...during deer season?! I think we need some marital intervention...some marriage counseling...from a redneck man counselor...who is also a fellow deer hunter...do any of those even exist...just say'n!

Now I'm thinking in overdrive, so I say something like, “You mean you want me to forego putting delicious, grass (and acorn) fed venison away that will feed us and all our grands for the next year, saving us hundreds of dollars (I process my own), in order for me to save us hundreds of dollars by putting up sheet metal on the barn?” To which she says, “Yep, that's kinda what I'm talk'n 'bout.” We looked at each other and neither of us said anything...you know, it was one of those moments you have in marriage, where the next thing you say can make the difference in the moment and for hours, days, yes, even weeks to come. I didn't know about those moments 35 years ago, but over the course of being married for 35 years, I've learned that what you say in those moments matter. So she said, “It'll save us money plus it will make the place look better.” So I said, “But if I keep hunt'n, it'll save us money and put delicious food on the table.” So, another moment ensued where nothing was said. So I did what every man who has been happily married for 35 years would have done, I said, “Yep, I agree with you and I'll get right on it!” Must have worked cause she made me some homemade chocolate chip cookies that night...just say'n! No sirreee...I didn't fall off the watermelon truck yesterday!

All is good! I have me some vacay time anyways so I reckon I know how I will use it. So now, I will get the barn finished and continue deer hunt'n...yep, that's just how I roll. But, in that moment, I couldn't see past the immediate nature of what was

being asked. I couldn't see the future possibilities of doing both, so my reaction was, “You want me to do whaaat?!” And quite frankly, we have a lot of those kinda moments in life.

Like when that unexpected baby is found in Mommy's tummy and Mom tells Dad, and Dad says, “We're going to have a whaaat?!” Or when Bryant was President of the Convention and he said he wanted me to be the Convention Parliamentarian, I said, “You want me to do whaaat?!” Or when your daughter makes the President's List for her grades and you say, “You did whaaat?!” Yep, there are a lot of “Whaaat?!” moments in life. Already this season someone said, “Man, the neighbors are already putting up their Christmas decorations!” And you said, “They're doing whaaat?!” Yep, it happens all the time!

The Bible has some of those “Whaaat?!” moments in them. Like when God said to Noah, “I want you to build an ark this big.” To which Noah said, “You want me to do whaaat?!” (DWL Paraphrase...work with me here!) Or when God said to Jonah, “Go to Ninevah.” And Jonah said, “Do whaaat...you want me to go where?!” Or when God told Abraham to take his son Isaac up on the mountain and sacrifice him there. Man, I'm sorry, but if God had of told me to do that, I promise you I woulda said, “Now wait, I don't think I heard you correctly...you want me to do whaaat?!”

Yep, you see, all throughout the Bible, God gives His people things to do that seem near 'bouts impossible. Again, I can see Moses' reaction when God told him to head towards the Red Sea with Israel following him and another nation of angry soldiers chasing him and God wants him to back himself up to the Red Sea with no way of escape...“you want me to do whaaat?!” Should Moses actually have said that, Moses would not have been taking into account God's incredibly omnipotent power!

Or here's one! What do you think Mary and Joseph's heart response was when the angel told them that even before they had married or been together, that Mary was great with child, but not with just any child...the very son of God, the only begotten son of God. I can hear Joseph thinking out loud...“Wait, hold on, Mary is whaaat?!” But they didn't know God's greater plan...in that moment.

Yes, sometimes God tells us to do stuff that in the moment doesn't fit our schedule or plans and seems impossible. Like, “Go ye therefore into all the world.” “Wait, you want us to do whaaat?! There are no planes, trains, or cars, no internet, no yada yada yada...all we have is our feet and our parchment.” To which God basically said, “You go...let me worry about the rest.”

This Thanksgiving and Christmas season, remember that God is in the “doing the impossible” business. And one day He is coming again to separate the wheat from the tares, the sheep from the goats. And in that day, He will ask of us, “What did you do with the talents I gave to you?” You see, God expects us to be “wowed” by His demands of us...to say, “You want us to do whaaat?!” But then He also expects us to break out the hammer and start building the ark, or to put our toe in the Red Sea, or to load up our donkey and head to Bethlehem where it was foretold the Christ child would be born.

Yep, this season of thanksgiving and celebration, thank God for

the “whaaat?!” moments of our lives, cause in those moments our faith is stretched, and in turn we are able to see the awesome power of a miracle working, omnipotent God. This Christmas season, may you be “wowed” by God...again...when you think of who that babe wrapped in swaddling clothes actually is...and say again, “God...you did whaaat?! for me?”

Merry Christmas y'all!