

Lesson of the Rainbow

There's hardly anything more breathtaking than a rainbow. Add in the beautiful autumn colors of the bluffs and the sparkling blue hue of the river, and it makes for an even more amazing picture. For me to photograph the described scene, the rainbow would have to occur in the morning. But morning rainbows aren't quite as common as those that appear late in the afternoon, so I haven't had many chances to capture such a sight.

One particular day last fall, the morning forecast called for a mix of sun and clouds, with a chance of a few sprinkles. "Perfect rainbow weather," I thought. Always trying to be prepared, I carry my camera with me when I head out to the pasture to check on our cows. I usually use the telephoto lens to better capture any animal or bird that I happen to come across.

As I rode out on the four-wheeler, I felt a couple of raindrops on my face. "Maybe I should go back and take the wide angle lens along in case there *is* a rainbow," I thought. Instead, I continued on and admired the beautiful sky and the interesting cloud formations. Once again, I thought I should go back and get the other lens to take it all in. But I was in a hurry to get my job done and to get back to the house before it really did rain, so I put it out of my mind.

When I reached the far part of the pasture, I noticed a streak of color appearing in the sky. It started out as a small beam, with just a hint of an arc. But then it grew and grew, until it stretched across the sky and landed on another point on the horizon, making it a full arched rainbow. Never had I seen a more perfect rainbow that reached so high into the heavens! I snapped a few pictures with the telephoto lens, but it was impossible to get more than a small portion into the frame. Even my wide angle lens wouldn't capture the entire rainbow, but it certainly would be better than what I had.

I sped back on the four-wheeler to go and get the other lens, hoping I would have enough time. I looked back and saw that the rainbow was starting to fade. By the time I returned, it was gone. Disappeared forever. Because I hadn't heeded the warnings, or even my own instincts, I missed my chance at an amazing photo. God gave me this wonderful opportunity, but I didn't take advantage of it. I ignored all the signs. I felt terrible.

Then a thought occurred to me that made me feel even worse. How many times had God given me opportunities to share his Word with others, and I failed? Opportunities that are now gone forever?

Time is fleeting. God's Word reminds us how we are living in the last days. We are reminded of the urgency to tell others about our salvation - how Jesus came down from heaven to live a perfect life for us and how he died for us in order to take away all of our sins. But how many times are we in a hurry going about our daily tasks, that we put off sharing the gospel, thinking that we have more time? Do we ignore all the signs? Do we even leave God's Word behind us, like I had that wide angle lens?

I missed my chance at that rainbow that day. And I have missed chances at sharing the gospel with others. But every morning, I have the opportunity to look out into the world to see if there is a new chance at a rainbow. And new chances to share God's promise of salvation. I will be sure to be prepared and bring along the right equipment. I will equip myself with God's Word.

Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have.

1 Peter 3:15

