

## THE LESSOR OF TWO WEEVILS

**"...choose you this day whom ye will serve... as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD."**

Joshua 24:16

In the movie *Master and Commander*, the plastered Captain Aubrey was dining with his officers aboard ship. Weevils crawled from the hardtack and started moving around on the plate. He asked the surgeon which of the two weevils would he choose. The surgeon replied, "There is not a scrap of difference. They are the same species of *curculio*, and there is nothing to choose between them." The Captain went on to say, "But suppose you had to choose." The surgeon said, "Then I should choose the right-hand weevil; it has a perceptible advantage in both length and breadth." The Captain's response was, "There I have you, don't you know that in the Navy you must always choose the **'lessor of two weevils'**."

While serving on the hill, the routine was to accompany two rifle squads on a kill team for a couple of nights in a row, followed by one night on the hill. Every third night I slept on a cot in a hooch; took a cold shower; appointed volunteers for crapper burning details; and made rounds to make sure our Marines were taking their malaria pills and salt tablets, keeping their feet dry to avoid immersion foot, and keeping jungle rot under control. As one of the new green guys, I also felt an obligation to inspect our crude chow hall. The mess sergeant was a kind and gentle giant who never caved to pressure. When I told him that we would have to close down due to weevils in the bread, grits, gravy, fruit, and everything else; he led me to the storage area and said, "Doc, let me show you what we have to work with." He opened several barrels, crates, and burlap bags for inspection, and they all contained copious numbers of weevils. The choices were to continue to have hot meals or supplement them with cold C-rations. The chow hall remained open. Experience was eventually added to knowledge, and I looked forward to indulging in the staff sergeant's 'protein enriched' rolls and pastries. I'm glad that I chose the **'lessor of two weevils'** and continued to have hot meals.

Life is a series of choices. We can be adamant about our beliefs and choose with confidence what God says about life and eternity. No false religion, cult, sect, or self-conceived theology can change God's Word on the spiritual subjects that confuse our society today. We can also be adamant about our beliefs and choose with confidence what God says about a vast array of social deformities. No government, legislation, agency, or popular opinion can change God's Word on the controversial subjects that plague our sin-sick society.

From our beginning we were born in sin and headed in the wrong direction. Sin (the root) is what we are by nature, and sins (the fruit) are the things we do because of our fallen spiritual state. We do what we do because we are what we are. The solution is not self-reformation. That is the never-ending task of cutting off the weeds at the surface. The root remains and a new weed will spring up.

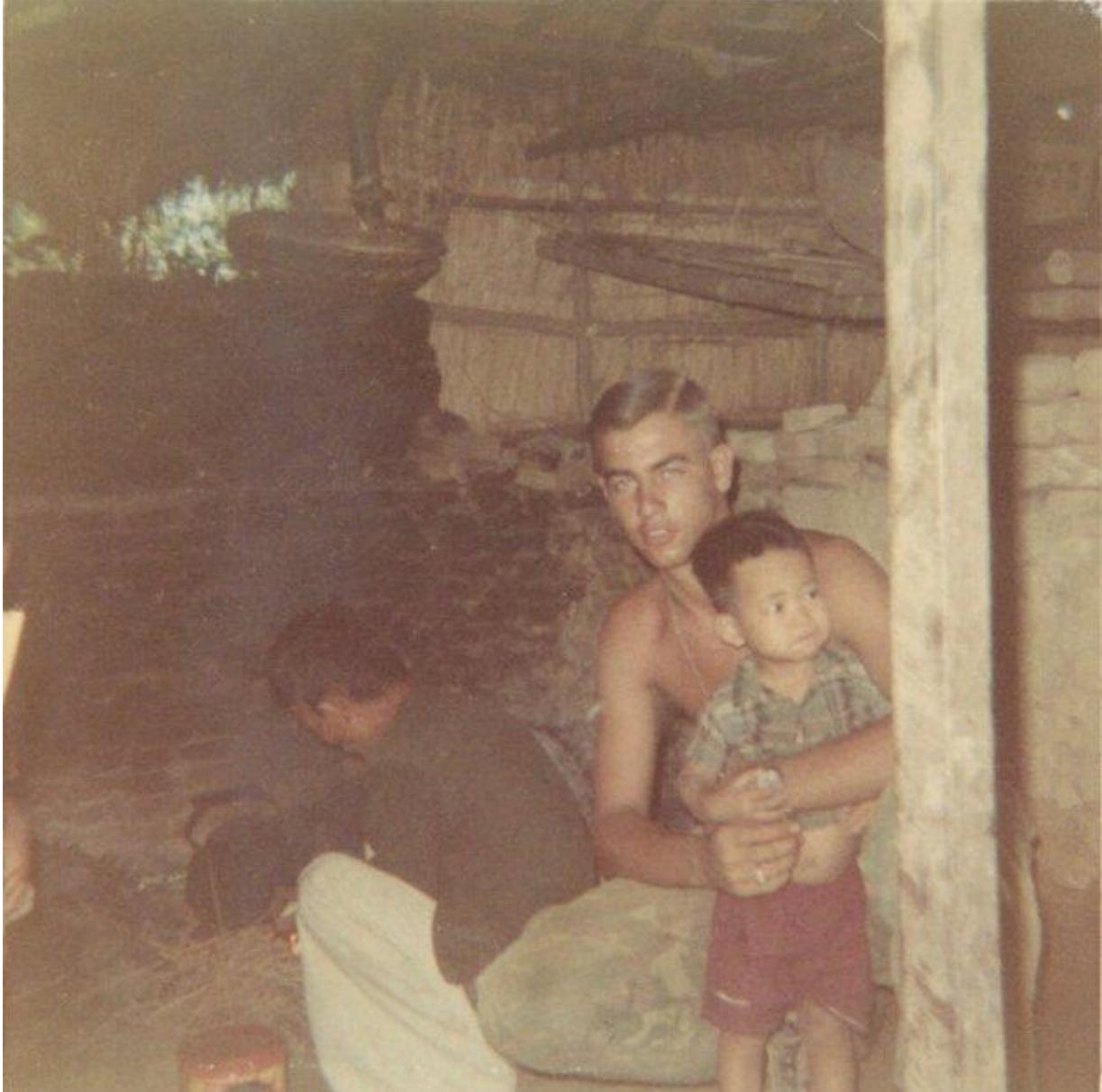
*"... the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: every tree therefore which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire. For a good tree bringeth not forth corrupt fruit; neither doth a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. For every tree is known by his own fruit." Luke 6:37-49*

The heart is the tree, and the words and actions are fruit according to the nature of the tree. Someone asked me if I would like a pear. I said sure, so he flipped me two birds. If self-reformation is not the answer, then how can the corrupt tree be changed? The solution is redemption by grace through faith. Faith and repentance are Siamese twins and always found together. Repentance is a military term. It means to do an 'about face'. When you turn to God (believing) from sin (repentance) you are facing the opposite direction and on the right road that leads to quality of life now, and quantity of life that is eternal. The heart is changed! You will no longer crave the old rotten fruit that was full of worms, and you will detour from the wrong road that leads to an eternity where the worm dieth not. Your old nature is not eradicated. You will still have the capacity and propensity to sin, but the basic direction of life will be Godward because you have been given a new nature. There is a new root (a new nature) that is dominant over the old root (the old nature that remains), and the tree (your heart) is changed and brings forth good fruit. Someone said, "I'm not your judge but I am the fruit inspector." Life is a series of choices. A life of faith is not always easy, but it is most assuredly, the **'lessor of two weevils.'**

MERRY CHRISTMAS MARINES!

Semper Fidelis,

*Chaplain Ron*



Chaplain Ron waiting for a weevil enriched breakfast