

Preg Checking: Open! Bred! I Ain't Sure!!

Whoever heard of a cow, a woman or anything else being a little pregnant or almost pregnant? While some cows may be what we call 'short bred' (in the first trimester of their pregnancy) and others may be 'heavy bred' (in their last trimester), both groups are still pregnant. There are only two options: she is pregnant or she is open! Somehow, I always end up with a few "I ain't sures", but in the end, they are always, without exception, either pregnant or open.

Pregnancy testing is always something that I both look forward to and dread. There are always one or two really good young ones that I just do not want to let go because they are open. So instead of doing the pregnancy testing early and culling based on the results as I should have, this year I put it off until closer to breeding time. This way, if the really good one is open, I can more easily rationalize keeping her since we are so close to breeding season.

I find that I am sometimes more comfortable not knowing for sure. It is easier to just assume or hope that she is bred so that I do not have to make the difficult decision to cull a really good cow that did not get pregnant. I know she was in the presence of the bull for an extended period of time and has had every opportunity to be bred, but I notice that she is not 'uddering up' (milk has not dropped). She has shown some signs of bulling from time to time since the bull was removed. But, I still find a way to hope for the best, to put off the inevitable. One day, I know in the back of my mind, that I will have to face the issue, but right now I can just enjoy looking at how nice she is, anticipating all the earning potential that she has, and hope that she will be the exception; she will be one of the rare ones that continues to come into heat even though she is pregnant.

You know, this is the same way we often approach other issues in our lives, especially our salvation, our relationship with the Lord, and even our relationships with others. We may know that our relationship with the Lord Jesus is where it needs to be and that we are indeed a Christian living in the center of His will. We may know just the opposite to be true. Or, we may not really know if we are saved or not and are just hoping or assuming that we must be and that everything will work out okay in the end. We often put off making that decision until later, assuming that we will have another opportunity when it will be more convenient or less costly.

The truth is, either we have an intimate personal relationship with the Lord Jesus, have placed our faith in Him for our salvation and we belong to Him and are walking in His ways, or we do not have that relationship, have put our faith in other things to make ourselves acceptable, whether it be works, position, possessions or a good name, and we are still lost in our sins. In the end, we are either a Christian and are saved from our sin and have eternal life, or we are lost in our sin and headed for eternity in a place of suffering called Hell. There is not another sorting pen, another destination, or another condition for the 'ain't sures'.

In the cow pens, I can sort them like I want to. I can call them pregnant, call them open, and I can even call them “I ain’t sure”, but the way I sort them does not change what they really are. The same is true with our salvation. No matter what we call ourselves or what others call us, the truth is that only we and God know for sure, but just like the cows, we are one or the other; either saved or lost! There is no middle ground and we cannot be a little saved, almost saved, hopefully saved or just saved enough.

When asked about their relationship with the Lord, so many people respond with remarks such as; “I am not a good Christian, but I am a Christian” or “I know I am not where I need to be, but I am not as bad as I used to be or as bad as someone else I know” or, “Oh yeah, I believe in God, in Jesus and all that stuff”, or “I think I am a good person and I try to treat people right” and perhaps the most deceptive position and response; “Oh, I have been an active member of _____ church all of my life”.

Very few people tell me or even refer to how they met Jesus, what He has done in their lives and how He has saved them and has transformed and is continuing to transform their lives into something pleasing to Him and useful for His purposes. Few mention how He has forgiven and delivered them from a life of sin and how they now find joy and contentment in His presence, in serving Him and sharing Him with others. Most people try to convince me that they are good people or apologize and/or make excuses for not being so.

With cows, we assume that just because they have been in the presence of the bull and have had one or more intimate experiences with him, that it took and that they conceived. The same is true with people, even those who are in church every Sunday. Just being in His presence, learning about Him and having occasional experiences with Him does not make us a Christian. We have to have a point in time when we experience Him and when by faith and repentance we accept for ourselves what He has to offer us. Just like the vital calf fetus, our experience has to grow and develop into an intimate relationship with Him that changes the way we live, the way we think, the way we treat others, and even the very essence of our being. This living relationship that develops as we walk with Him and spend time with Him and in His Word, will not only transform our lives, but will extend eternal life and hope to others.

The cattle herd grows when our cows conceive, give birth, nurture the babies as they grow into maturity, and then breed back and repeat the process. Those baby calves grow, breed and raise calves of their own. This process repeats itself year after year and our herd multiplies. Every open cow hinders the process and ends up on the kill floor. The way the church grows is the same way. We have to individually accept Christ’s forgiveness and allow Him to grow us into spiritual maturity. If we are alive and growing spiritually, we will be fruitful and multiply giving spiritual birth to others.

Are you saved or are you lost? The decision is yours. The way is Jesus. The righteous Judge will call it the way it is, not the way you hope it to be. Accept Him and eternal life today!