

# Daily View

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

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October 15, 2020



I have no idea what this is, but there's a lot of iron in it. I took this photo at the Folsom Power Station in 2019.

## That “iron sharpens iron” thing is a good thing!

A couple of weeks ago, I shared Christie's favorite Proverb: *“But the path of the righteous is like the light of dawn, which shines brighter and brighter until full day”* (4:18). I have many favorites but one of them is Proverbs 27:17, *“Iron sharpens iron, and one man sharpens another.”* There are a lot of things I enjoy: reading, watching baseball or football, traveling. But some of my most enjoyable times have been when I sit with another Christian, or a Christian couple, and visit with them, primarily about spiritual matters.

These conversations energize, edify and encourage me. The conversations are even more helpful when there is a little friendly “thrust and parry.” That's an idiom borrowed from fencing that means to engage in a verbal duel with someone, in which both parties continuously exchange arguments, quips, and retorts. I'm not talking about a heated exchange where there is a wide gulf in perspective or ideology. Those conversations are necessary sometimes but always fall somewhere between uncomfortable and agonizing. But the friendly exchange of ideas with another, even when not 100% on the same page is edifying. I have learned more from those discussions than I ever learned from a lecture.

Looking back in time, some of the preachers where I attended were better at this sharpening thing than others. I would have benefited from such discussions, especially when I was younger. When older adults spoke to me in a non-condescending manner, it made me feel that I had something of value to offer. And that made me feel good.

In my discussions with young people — some of them *decades* younger than me — I'm pretty sure my iron is getting sharpened much more than theirs. Some of the questions and comments from young people reveal maturity far beyond their years. I love hearing a young person's view on life. The insights I gain from those discussions sharpens my perspective and those of us who are older need to understand other perspectives or we can't be effective in helping anyone outside our peer group.

Iron sharpening, through solid conversation built around God's word (even if not directly quoting it), is one of the best ways to become fruitful in God's kingdom.

*Postscript:* It is beyond valuable to have a “sharp” spouse who sharpens you, someone who is a great Bible student and an independent thinker, not a blind follower. So, to the young — *marry someone that will make you appreciate this proverb.*

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