

MONDAY

Bible verses through the Gospel of John

JOHN 6:1-4 *After this, Jesus went across the Sea of Galilee (some call it Tiberias). A huge crowd followed him, attracted by the miracles they had seen him do among the sick. When he got to the other side, he climbed a hill and sat down, surrounded by his disciples. It was nearly time for the Feast of Passover, kept annually by the Jews.*

* * * * *

'Don't worry about the world coming to an end today. It's already tomorrow in Australia!' *DMX*

* * * * *

"It used to be, when I was growing up, there was the Pastor's Study. Now everything is the Pastor's Office. Just the nuance of the word makes a difference. Study was a time when you prepare before God, a quiet time. Office was for administration and business. I think a pastor has to get back to that moment where we protect our time--not to let the urgent scream so loud that it blares out and we end up on Saturday night saying, 'Oh my goodness, what do I do tomorrow?'"

Ralph Douglas West via Preaching Now

* * * * *

A study showed that churches and synagogues contribute more than any other non-governmental institutions to America's social services. Donations top nineteen billion dollars a year, with another six billion dollars' worth of volunteer effort being offered annually.

Lee Strobel, 'God's Outrageous Claims', arr.

* * * * *

"It is amazing how big a \$20 donation to God's work is but how little it is when we spend it on entertainment." It is said that, "Fewer than 10% of Christians tithe." What a slap in the face this is to God.

NOTE: When tithing and giving offerings, we need to make sure we are giving responsibly to what is truly God's work and not to some religious program or fringe, irrelevant, self-seeking pseudo religious charity that may have an appearance of doing God's work but lacking any real substance. *Daily Encounter*

* * * * *

Every newspaper in New York sent a reporter and a staff photographer to the office of a local ophthalmologist when it was learned that he recently performed a successful sight-saving operation on the wife of the country's most celebrated mural artist, who, in addition to paying the doctor's usual fee, had gratefully insisted on painting one of his contemporary masterpieces across an entire wall of the doctor's waiting room.

The mural turned out to be an immense multicolored picture of a human eye, in the center of which stood a perfect miniature likeness of the good doctor himself.

While cameras clicked and most of the newsmen crowded around the famous artist for his comments, one cub reporter drew the eye specialist aside and asked: "Tell me, if you can, Doctor-what was your first reaction on seeing this fantastic artistic achievement covering an entire wall of your office?"

"To tell the truth," the physician replied, "my first thought was, thank goodness I'm not a hemorrhoid specialist!" *Humor*

* * * * *

Dear Lord, thank You for being the God Who Is Near. Thank You for meeting with me wherever and whenever I seek You. Thank You for Your word, which speaks to me, reminding me of Your promises and refilling my soul. I need Your living water, Lord. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Encouragement for Today

TUESDAY

John 6:5-7 *When Jesus looked out and saw that a large crowd had arrived, he said to Philip, "Where can we buy bread to feed these people?" He said this to stretch Philip's faith. He already knew what he was going to do. Philip answered, "Two hundred silver pieces wouldn't be enough to buy bread for each person to get a piece."*

* * * * *

Recently I overheard a Father and daughter in their last moments together at the airport. They had announced the departure.

Standing near the security gate, they hugged and the Father said, 'I love you, and I wish you enough.'

The daughter replied, 'Dad, our life together has been more than enough. Your love is all I ever needed. I wish you enough, too, Dad.'

They kissed and the daughter left. The Father walked over to the window where I was seated. Standing there I could see he wanted and needed to cry. I tried not to intrude on his privacy, but he welcomed me in by asking, 'Did you ever say good-bye to someone knowing it would be forever?'

'Yes, I have,' I replied. 'Forgive me for asking, but why is this a forever good-bye?'

'I am old, and she lives so far away. I have challenges ahead and the reality is - the next trip back will be for my funeral,' he said.

'When you were saying good-bye, I heard you say, 'I wish you enough.' May I ask what that means?'

He began to smile. 'That's a wish that has been handed down from other generations. My parents used to say it to everyone..' He paused a moment and looked up as if trying to remember it in detail, and he smiled even more. 'When we said, 'I wish you enough,' we were wanting the other person to have a life filled with just enough good things to sustain them.' Then turning toward me, he shared the following as if he were reciting it from memory.

I wish you enough sun to keep your attitude bright no matter how gray the day may appear.

I wish you enough rain to appreciate the sun even more.

I wish you enough happiness to keep your spirit alive and everlasting.

I wish you enough pain so that even the smallest of joys in life may appear bigger.

I wish you enough gain to satisfy your wanting.

I wish you enough loss to appreciate all that you possess.

I wish you enough hellos to get you through the final good-bye.

He then began to cry and walked away.

They say it takes a minute to find a special person, an hour to appreciate them, a day to love them; but then an entire life to forget them. *Mike Luskey*

* * * * *

Yesterday, I was being seated at a St. Petersburg restaurant when the host reached over and shook my hand. "I want to thank you for giving time and your life to our country." he said. At the age of 80 I was quite surprised and a bit mystified at his greeting. Then, it dawned on me - I was wearing a ball cap featuring a navy destroyer! I am a veteran, but with the Army Air Corps. The cap that gave me away as a vet was a gift of my son who served in the Navy. *Chaplain Moore*

WEDNESDAY

John 6:8-9 *One of the disciples—it was Andrew, brother to Simon Peter—said, "There's a little boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish. But that's a drop in the bucket for a crowd like this."*

* * * * *

An unusual Soldiers' Song. Copy to a search engine, if necessary. As a veteran, I recommend hearing this: (<http://www.andiesisle.com/ifidiebeforeyouwake.html>)

* * * * *

A WOMAN was flying from Melbourne to Brisbane. Unexpectedly, the plane was diverted to Sydney along the way. The flight attendant explained that there would be a delay, and if the passengers wanted to get off the aircraft the plane would re-board in 50 minutes.

Everybody got off the plane except one lady who was Blind. A man had noticed her as he walked by and could tell the lady was blind because her Guide Dog lay quietly underneath the seats in front of her throughout the entire flight. He could also tell she had flown this very flight before because the pilot approached her, and calling her by name, said, 'Kathy, we are in Sydney for almost an hour. Would you like to get off and stretch your legs?'

The blind lady replied, 'No thanks, but maybe Buddy would like to stretch his legs.'

Picture this: All the people in the gate area came to a complete standstill when they looked up and saw the pilot, wearing dark sunglasses, walk off the plane with a Guide dog!

People scattered. They not only tried to change planes, but they tried to change airlines!

LFRAZAR

* * * * *

An angel appears at a faculty meeting and tells the dean that in return for his unselfish and exemplary behavior, the Lord will reward him with his choice of infinite wealth, infinite wisdom, or infinite beauty. Without hesitating, the dean selects infinite wisdom.

"Done!" says the angel, and disappears in a cloud of smoke and a bolt of lightning.

Now, all heads turn toward the dean, who sits surrounded by a faint halo of light. At length, one of his colleagues whispers, "Say something."

The dean sighs and says, "I should have taken the money." *Humor*

* * * * *

"We can easily forgive a child who is afraid of the dark: the real tragedy of life is when men are afraid of the light." - *Plato*

* * * * *

Prayer becomes our heavenly GPS system. A GPS indicates where you are on a map, and directions to places you want to go! An earthly GPS system contains atomic clocks that are accurate to a billionth of a second! No matter where you are, it can find your location and give you direction.

Think about this: The God of the Universe is greater than any earthly GPS. God knows where you are, where you are headed emotionally, and how to recalculate so that you can find your way back to sanity, peace, and even to joy. If Jesus found prayer to be a refuge as well as a resource, then I doubly need to use it in times of uncertainty, concern and fear. *Encouragement for Today, arr.*

THURSDAY

John 6:10-11 *Jesus said, "Make the people sit down." There was a nice carpet of green grass in this place. They sat down, about five thousand of them. Then Jesus took the bread and, having given thanks, gave it to those who were seated. He did the same with the fish. All ate as much as they wanted.*

* * * * *

A nurse took the tired, anxious serviceman to the bedside. "Your son is here," she said to the old man. She had to repeat the words several times before the patient's eyes opened.

Heavily sedated because of the pain of his heart attack, he dimly saw the young uniformed Marine standing outside the oxygen tent. He reached out his hand. The Marine wrapped his toughened fingers around the old man's limp ones, squeezing a message of love and encouragement.

The nurse brought a chair so that the Marine could sit beside the bed. All through the night the young Marine sat there in the poorly lighted ward, holding the old man's hand and offering him words of love and strength. Occasionally, the nurse suggested that the Marine move away and rest awhile. He refused. Whenever the nurse came into the ward, the Marine was oblivious of her and of the night noises of the hospital - the clanking of the oxygen tank, the laughter of the night staff members exchanging greetings, the cries and moans of the other patients. Now and then she heard him say a few gentle words. The dying man said nothing, only held tightly to his son all through the night.

Along towards dawn, the old man died. The Marine released the now lifeless hand he had been holding and went to tell the nurse. While she did what she had to do, he waited. Finally, she returned. She started to offer words of sympathy, but the Marine interrupted her.

"Who was that man?" he asked.

The nurse was startled, "He was your father," she answered.

"No, he wasn't," the Marine replied. "I never saw him before in my life."

"Then why didn't you say something when I took you to him?"

"I knew right away there had been a mistake, but I also knew he needed his son, and his son just wasn't here. When I realized that he was too sick to tell whether or not I was his son, knowing how much he needed me, I stayed. I came here tonight to find a Mr. William Grey. His Son was Killed in Iraq today, and I was sent to inform him. What was this Gentleman's Name?"

The Nurse with Tears in Her Eyes Answered, "Mr. William Grey....." *James Hamilton*

* * * * *

Thoughtless, actual headlines:

"Typhoon Rips through Cemetery; Hundreds Dead"

"Hospitals are Sued by 7 Foot Doctors "

"Man Kills Self Before Shooting Wife and Daughter "

This one was caught in the SAG Tribune the other day and the Editorial Room was called and asked who wrote this. It took two or three readings before the editor realized that what he was reading was impossible!!! They put in a correction the next day. *LFRAZAR*

* * * * *

When you are 50 and heading towards 70 or beyond, you sometimes get people calling at 9 PM (or 9 AM), asking, 'Did I wake you?' *Mike Luskey*

FRIDAY

John 6:12-13 *When the people had eaten their fill, he said to his disciples, "Gather the leftovers so nothing is wasted." They went to work and filled twelve large baskets with leftovers from the five barley loaves.*

* * * * *

The shorter an airline pilot's turbulence message is, the worse the turbulence will likely be. If he turns on the Fasten Seat Belt sign and simply says, "Flight attendants take your seats," it would be a good time to put your affairs in order. *Bill in Portland Maine via Humor Digest*

* * * * *

Florida Bumper Stickers (The retirement state):
The only trouble with retirement...
You never get a day off.

I was at the Beauty Shop for nearly two hours.
That was only for the estimate.

You know you're getting old when...
You throw a wild party, and the neighbors don't even realize it.

Sometimes I wake up grumpy...
And some days I let him sleep.

I'm not old.
I'm chronologically gifted

I'm so old...all my friends in heaven
will think I didn't make it.

One good thing about Alzheimer's...
You get to meet new people every day.

Chaplain Linda Sahlin

* * * * *

My brother got off the plane with a child in each arm, and two trailing behind. He'd gone to Africa for three children - orphaned by civil war in Liberia - and came home with four.

A chance encounter in a poverty stricken village left him with a choice to make: rescue a starving baby or leave her to die. So when the young mother thrust her child into his arms, he promised that he would be a father to her. He made the decision without weighing the pros and cons or even consulting his wife.
Mercy!

He spent the next two weeks spoon feeding his emaciated child, changing malaria-ridden diapers, and carrying her around in a baby sling. Not to mention keeping the other three children in tow. When he finally arrived in Nashville, a crowd of fifty friends and family greeted him with tears and applause. To see mercy first hand is to weep.

Today my niece is a beautiful, healthy five-year-old with no memories of her near death experience. The starvation and malaria that threatened to claim her are long gone. She laughs and dances and believes that her daddy is the kindest man on earth. But for a single act of mercy, her story could have ended in the dust of Africa. *Encouragement for Today*

* * * * *

If God had really intended men to fly, surely he'd make it easier to get to the airport.

George Winters