

MONDAY

Bible verses through the Gospel of John

JOHN 10:31-32 *Again the Jews picked up rocks to throw at him. 32 Jesus said, "I have made a present to you from the Father of a great many good actions. For which of these acts do you stone me?"*

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The Preacher's Task - Sermon Preparation

I don't advise that anyone try my method, but it works for me. I look at the Liturgical Calendar for the recommended verses. I read each of them carefully and usually choose something else. I pick one of the ideas I have floating around in my head and research what the Bible says about the subject.

I carefully write the sermon, groaning and sweating to get each word, sentence, paragraph and idea in the right order and in the right place. Then I edit it several times on-screen and then print out a copy which I then edit again. I print out the final copy and edit it again Sunday morning before services.

On the way to the church I think about it, come up with new ideas, order of paragraphs, etc. I set my much edited copy on the pulpit. When the time comes I read the verses selected, walk away from the pulpit and preach. Sometimes I go back and sneak a peek at what I've written, but the spoken sermon never matches the carefully edited and printed copy. Seems to work. I'm still there after 13 years.
Bob Simes, Vians Valley Presbyterian Church Loafers Glory, NC

Pastor contributions needed to keep this Sermon Preparation item in ChapNotes

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A man got a home visit from his doctor. The Dr. said, "I'm sorry to tell you, 'you've only got 24 hours to live."

Distraught, the man laid in bed pondering his life and the short time in which he had to live. He shared the information with his wife and the cried together for a few minutes before she left and went downstairs.

After a few minutes of lying there, thinking about his life, the man could smell something really good coming from downstairs. After a few more quick sniffs he thought to himself, "My wife loves me so much, she has gone down to the kitchen and is baking me some of those chocolate chip cookies I love so much."

So he climbs out of bed and quietly tiptoes down the stairs and sure enough, she is baking away. There on the cooling rack is one of those cookies he loves so much. He reaches over to take the biggest cookies, and the wife pops his hand with her wooden spoon and says, "Leave those cookies alone! Those are for the reception after the funeral."

Dave Bailey, Toney, AL

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-CORRECTIONS-

IMPORTANT NOTICE: If you are one of hundreds of parachuting enthusiasts who bought our Easy Sky Diving book, please make the following correction: on page 8, line 7, the words "state zip code" should have read "pull rip cord."

- Apology: I originally wrote, "Woodrow Wilson's wife grazed sheep on front lawn of the White House." I'm sorry that typesetting inadvertently left out the word "sheep."

- In one edition of today's Food Section, an inaccurate number of jalapeno peppers was given for Jeanette Crowley's South-western chicken salad recipe. The recipe should call for two, not 21, jalapeno peppers.

- In the City Beat section of Friday's paper, firefighter Dwight Brady was misidentified. His nickname in the department is "Dewey." Another firefighter is nicknamed "Weirdo." We apologize for our mistake.

- Our article about Jewish burial customs contained an error: Mourners' clothing is rent -- that is, torn -- not rented.

- The marriage of Miss Freda van Amburg and Willie Branton, which was announced in this paper a few weeks ago, was a mistake which we wish to correct.

- In Frank Washburn's March column, Rebecca Varney was erroneously identified as a bookmaker. She is a typesetter.

Clean Laugh



TUESDAY

John 10:33 *The Jews said, "We're not stoning you for anything good you did, but for what you said—this blasphemy of calling yourself God."*

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While attending a Marriage Seminar dealing with communication, Tom and his wife Grace listened to the instructor, "It is essential that husbands and wives know each other's likes and dislikes."

He addressed the man, "Can you name your wife's favorite flower?"

Tom leaned over, touched his wife's arm gently and whispered, "It's Pillsbury, isn't it?"

Laugh & Lift

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Dr. Alfred Adler, international psychiatrist, based the following conclusions on a careful analysis of thousands of patients: "The most important task imposed by religion has always been, 'Love your neighbor....' It is the individual who is not interested in his fellow man who has the greatest difficulties in life and provides the greatest injury to others. It is from among such individuals that all human failures spring."

True, Jesus did say that we were to love our neighbor as we love our own self, but as somebody else said, "Heaven help your neighbor if you hate yourself." If I happen to hate myself, I will tend to project my feelings of self-hatred onto my neighbor, and while I may not hate him, I will find it difficult, if not impossible, to love him. This is because I can only love and accept others to the degree that I have learned to love and accept myself--in a healthy way that is.

So, if we are to follow Jesus' example and admonition to love our neighbor (all people), we need to resolve our damaged and negative emotions that block or hinder our loving ourselves so we can be free to love others.

While we are working towards that goal, we can choose to do the loving thing to others even if we don't fully feel that love yet. And what an impact we Christians would make in our homes, places of business, schools, cities, and nation if every one of us would make the commitment every day to love our neighbor, mean it, and practice it. It's still important to do right whether we feel like doing it or not.

Daily Encounter

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If Shirley Jones married Tom Ewell, then Johnny Rotten, then Nathan Hale, she'd be Shirley Ewell Rotten Hale. *Humor Digest*

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Arthur Ashe, the legendary Wimbledon player was dying of AIDS which he got due to infected blood he received during a heart surgery in 1983. From world over, he received letters from his fans, one of which conveyed: "Why does GOD have to select you for such a bad disease"?

To this Arthur Ashe replied: "The world over -- 50 million children start playing tennis, 5 million learn to play tennis, 500,000 learn professional tennis, 50,000 come to the circuit, 5000 reach the grand slam, 50 reach Wimbledon, 4 to semi final, 2 to the finals, when I was holding a cup I never asked GOD 'Why me ?'. And today in pain I should not be asking GOD 'Why me ?' "

Malladi Murthy

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Hymns for Everyone

The Pilot's Hymn: I'll Fly Away

The Gossip's Hymn: Pass It On

The Electrician's Hymn: Send the Light

The Judge's Hymn: Almost Persuaded

The Shopper's Hymn: Sweet By and By

The Paramedic's Hymn: Revive Us Again

The Realtor's Hymn: I've got a Mansion Just over the Hilltop

Laugh & Lift



WEDNESDAY

John 10:34-36 *Jesus said, "I'm only quoting your inspired Scriptures, where God said, 'I tell you—you are gods.' 35 If God called your ancestors 'gods'—and Scripture doesn't lie— 36why do you yell, 'Blasphemer! Blasphemer!' at the unique One the Father consecrated and sent into the world, just because I said, 'I am the Son of God'?"*

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People are often unreasonable, illogical and self-centered; Forgive them anyway

Give the world the best you have, and it may never be enough; Give the world the best you've got anyway.

You see, in the final analysis, it is between you and God; It was never between you and them anyway.
Mother Teresa via Terry L Horn , Sr.

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The early bird may get the worm, but the second mouse gets the cheese in the trap.
Hoover

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Ok, what is the deal with "The early bird gets the worm"? He gets up early, and all he gets is a worm? It says "the worm," which means one single worm. That seems not very fair, for a bird that goes through the trouble of getting up early.

What's the deal with the early worm? He gets up early, to get a start on the day, because he has loads of work to do, and he gets eaten by a bird! Where is the moral of the story, when the lazy worms don't get eaten? Isn't that hypocritical? Seems to me that all the smart worms either work nights, or sleep late and get up after lunch. Isn't that sending the wrong message to our kids?
Chris Long

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My first year in college I was a five-letter man. Those letters were F-L-U-N-K.

I was in the restroom of a popular restaurant and I noticed that someone had written, "What Would Jesus Do?" on the wall. Below that another person wrote, "Wash His Hands." And below that a third person had scribbled, "And Your Feet."

My plumber said he couldn't put in the bathroom fixtures until next month. That's a shower stall if I've ever heard one.

I ran across a new diet plan that was so good it promised to take my breadth away.

I saw an online ad: "For Sale - One York Peppermint Patty. Mint Condition."

A friend of mine walked into a bar and ordered a double. The bartender brought out a guy who looked just like my friend.

If God had a favorite dog food, I bet it would be IAMS.

Mark's Musings

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In 1873, a Belgian Catholic priest named Joseph Damien De Veuster was sent to minister to lepers on the Hawaiian island of Molokai. He arrived in high spirits, hoping to build a friendship with each of the lepers. People shunned him, however, at every turn.

He built a chapel, began worship services, poured his heart out to the lepers, but all seemed futile. No one responded to his ministry, and after twelve years of struggling, Father Damien decided to leave. As he stood in dejection on the dock waiting to board the ship, he looked down at the hands he was wringing and noticed some mysterious white spots on them. Feeling some numbness, he knew immediately what was happening -- he had contacted leprosy!

Father Damien returned to the leper colony and to his work. Word spread quickly and within hours, hundreds gathered outside his hut, fully identifying with his plight. A bigger surprise came the following Sunday. When he arrived at the chapel, he found it full! Father Damien began to preach from the empathy of love rather than the distance of theology and ideas, and his ministry became enormously successful. *Chaplain Sam Spence*



THURSDAY

John 10:37-38 *-If I don't do the things my Father does, well and good; don't believe me. 38But if I am doing them, put aside for a moment what you hear me say about myself and just take the evidence of the actions that are right before your eyes. Then perhaps things will come together for you, and you'll see that not only are we doing the same thing, we are the same—Father and Son. He is in me; I am in him."*

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I was meeting a friend in a restaurant and as I went in, I noticed two pretty girls looking at me. "Nine," I heard one whisper as I passed. Feeling pleased with myself, I swaggered over to my buddy and told him a girl had just rated me a nine out of ten.

"I don't want to ruin it for you," he said, "but when I walked in, they were speaking German."
(Nien means, 'No') *GCFL*

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A very gentle Southern lady was driving across the Savannah River Bridge in Georgia one day. As she neared the top of the bridge, she noticed a young man fixin' to jump. She stopped her car, rolled down the window and said, "Please don't jump, think of your dear mother and father."

He replied, "Mom and Dad are both dead; I'm going to jump."

She said, "Well, think of your wife and children."

He replied, "I'm not married and I don't have any kids."

She said, "Well, think of Robert E. Lee."

He replied, "Who's Robert E. Lee?"

She replied, "Well, bless your heart, you just go ahead and jump, you dumb Yankee."

Humor Digest

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The Internet is still the domain of the pornographers, and there is little chance of that changing soon. Furthermore, any device with a Web browser can still download porn. The digital world is rife with sexually explicit material, and this includes many musical and film offerings through Apple's iTunes store. Still, the "no porn" decision for the Apple Store is remarkable on its own.

While Wall Street, Hollywood, and Silicon Valley do their best to interpret what all this means, one dimension of this development is clear - parenthood matters.

Steve Jobs made this clear in his retort to Ryan Tate that he "might care more about porn when you have kids." No kidding. Parenthood changes everything about one's outlook on life and its challenges. A parent lacks the luxury of believing the world is all about himself or herself as individuals. Parents necessarily and understandably begin to think of the world in terms of how their children, and by extension the children of others as well, engage the world. This concern extends to the digital world, where the generation of young "digital natives" will spend much of their lives.

Ryan Tate got more than he bargained for when he made his protest to Steve Jobs. In a strange way, we are now all in his debt, because the response from Steve Jobs now puts Apple on the line. In the end, the real meaning of this media eruption is less about computers and "apps" and more about parents and kids.

Parenthood matters. Just ask Steve Jobs.

Christian Living Update

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"God loves to decorate. God HAS to decorate. Let Him live long enough in a heart, and that heart will begin to change. Portraits of hurt will be replaced by landscapes of grace. Walls of anger will be demolished and shaky foundations restored. God can no more leave a life unchanged than a mother can leave her child's tear untouched. It's not enough for Him to own you; He wants to change you."

- Max Lucado



FRIDAY

John 10:39-42 They tried yet again to arrest him, but he slipped through their fingers. 40He went back across the Jordan to the place where John first baptized, and stayed there. 41A lot of people followed him over. They were saying, "John did no miracles, but everything he said about this man has come true." 42 Many believed in him then and there.

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Things Only a Mom Can Teach

My mother taught me FORESIGHT: "Make sure you wear clean underwear, in case you're in an accident."

My mother taught me about the science of OSMOSIS: "Shut your mouth and eat your supper!"

My mother taught me about WEATHER: "It looks as if a tornado swept through your room."

My mother taught me THE CIRCLE OF LIFE: "I brought you into this world, and I can take you out."

My mother taught me about BEHAVIOR MODIFICATION: "Stop acting like your father!"

My Mother taught me about my ROOTS: "Do you think you were born in a barn?"

My mother taught me about ENVY: "There are millions of less fortunate children in this world who don't have wonderful parents like you do!"

(Mikey's Funnies) and Preaching Now

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Travel Agent Stories

I got a call from a woman who wanted to go to Cape Town. I started to explain the length of the flight and the passport information when she interrupted me with "I'm not trying to make you look stupid, but Cape Town is in Massachusetts." Without trying to make her look stupid, I calmly explained, "Cape Cod is in Massachusetts, Cape Town is in Africa." Her response....click went her telephone.

A man called, furious about a Florida package we did. I asked what was wrong with the vacation in Orlando. He said he was expecting an ocean-view room. I tried to explain that is not possible since Orlando is in the middle of the state. He replied "Don't lie to me. I looked on the map and Florida is a very thin state."

I got a call from a man who asked "Is it possible to see England from Canada?" I said "No" He said "But they look so close on the map."

Another man called and asked if he could rent a car in Dallas. When I pulled up the reservation, I noticed he had a 1 hour lay-over in Dallas. When I asked him why he wanted to rent a car, he said "I heard Dallas was a big airport and I need a car to drive between the gates to save time."

A business man called and had a question about the documents he needed in order to fly to China. After a lengthy discussion about passports, I reminded him he needed a visa. "Oh no I don't, I've been to China many times and never had to have one of those." I double checked and sure enough, his stay required a visa. When I told him this he said, "Look, I've been to China four times and every time they have accepted my American Express!"

A woman called to make reservations "I want to go from Chicago to Hippopotamus, New York" The agent was at a loss for words. Finally, the agent asked "Are you sure that's the name of the town?" "Yes, what flights do you have?" replied the customer. After some searching, the agent came back with "I'm sorry, ma'am, I've looked up every airport code in the country and can't find a Hippopotamus anywhere" The customer retorted, "Oh don't be silly! Everyone knows where it is. Check your map!" The agent scoured a map of the state of New York and finally offered "You don't mean Buffalo, do you?" "That's it! I knew it was a big animal" was the reply.

Clean Laugh

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My friend Dan bought his wife one those mood rings. When she's happy, the ring turns green. When she's relaxed, the ring is blue. And when she's angry, the ring leaves a bright red mark on Dan's forehead.

Mark's Musings