

MONDAY

JOHN 12:24-25 *"Listen carefully: Unless a grain of wheat is buried in the ground, dead to the world, it is never any more than a grain of wheat. But if it is buried, it sprouts and reproduces itself many times over. ²⁵ In the same way, anyone who holds on to life just as it destroys that life. But if you let it go, reckless in your love, you'll have it forever, real and eternal.*

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Life changing Prayers of the New Testament.

Read them through slowly from time to time but start one at a time to memorize!

(This is the last of this series.)

Jude 24 Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy, 25 to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.

Suggested by FCAP

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A pastor had been on a long flight between church conferences. The first warning of the approaching problems came when the sign on the airplane flashed on: Fasten Your Seat Belts. Then, after a while, a calm voice said, "We shall not be serving the beverages at this time as we are expecting a little turbulence. Please be sure your seat belt is fastened."

As the pastor looked around the aircraft, it became obvious that many of the passengers were becoming apprehensive. Later, the voice on the intercom said, "We are so sorry that we are unable to serve the meal at this time. The turbulence is still ahead of us." . . . And then the storm broke . . .

The ominous cracks of thunder could be heard even above the roar of the engines. Lightning lit up the darkening skies, and within moments that great plane was like a cork tossed around on a celestial ocean. One moment the airplane was lifted on terrific currents of air; the next, it dropped as if it were about to crash.

The pastor confessed that he shared the discomfort and fear of those around him. He said, "As I looked around the plane, I could see that nearly all the passengers were upset and alarmed. Some were praying. The future seemed ominous and many were wondering if they would make it through the storm.

"Then, I suddenly saw a little girl. Apparently the storm meant nothing to her. She had tucked her feet beneath her as she sat on her seat; she was reading a book and every- thing within her small world was calm and orderly. "Sometimes she closed her eyes, then she would read again; then she would straighten her legs, but worry and fear were not in her world.

When the plane was being buffeted by the terrible storm when it lurched this way and that, as it rose and fell with frightening severity, when all the adults were scared half to death, that marvelous child was completely composed and unafraid." The minister could hardly believe his eyes.

It was not surprising therefore, that when the plane finally reached its destination and all the passengers were hurrying to disembark, our pastor lingered to speak to the girl whom he had watched for such a

long time. Having commented about the storm and the behavior of the plane, he asked why she had not been afraid. The child replied, "Cause my Daddy's the pilot, and he's taking me home."

Mr. Mom's Mailing List

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YOU MIGHT BE A FLORIDIAN IF... Your winter coat is made of denim, You were twelve before you ever saw snow or you still haven't. *Chad Moore*

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Lessons from Life

Doctors' Law: If you don't feel well and make an appointment to go to the doctor, by the time you get there you'll feel better. Don't make an appointment and you'll stay sick.

Law of Marketing Strategy: As soon as you find a product that you really like, they will stop making it. Phone Law: If you dial a wrong number, you never get a busy signal and someone always answers.

Preaching Now

TUESDAY

John 12:26 *"If any of you wants to serve me, then follow me. Then you'll be where I am, ready to serve at a moment's notice. The Father will honor and reward anyone who serves me."*

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A nurse on the pediatric ward, before listening to the little ones' chests, would plug the stethoscope into their ears and let them listen to their own heart. Their eyes would always light up with awe, but she never got a response equal to four-year old David's comment.

Gently she tucked the stethoscope into his ears and placed the disk over his heart. 'Listen', she said...'What do you suppose that is?' He drew his eyebrows together in a puzzled line and looked up as if lost in the mystery of the strange tap - tap - tapping deep in his chest. Then his face broke out in a wondrous grin and he asked, 'Is that Jesus knocking?'

Chaplain (and RN) Susan Moore

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Since a group of Nuns were experiencing bad habits, their convent was closed down. The property was then bought by a business who built Dry Cleaners in the same location. *Humor Digest*

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Most of us cannot remember learning our first word, but Helen Keller recalled that event in her life with a flashing vividness. She remembered because she was deaf, mute, and blind from the age of nineteen months and did not learn her first word until she was seven. When Helen was six, an extraordinary teacher named Anne Sullivan (1866-1936) entered her life.

The miracle that Anne Sullivan worked was to give Helen Keller language. Day after day, month after month, the teacher spelled words into Helen's hand. Finally, when Helen was seven years old and working with her teacher in the presence of water, she spoke her first word.

Years later she described that moment in *The Story of My Life* (1902): "Somehow the mystery of language was revealed to me. I knew then that 'w-a-t-e-r' meant that wonderful cool something that was flowing over my hand. That living word awakened my soul, gave it light, hope, joy, set it free! . . .

"I left the well-house eager to learn. Everything had a name, and each name gave birth to a new thought." Anne Sullivan described the moment this way: "My heart is singing for joy this morning! A miracle has happened! The light of understanding has shone upon my little pupil's mind, And behold, all things are changed!"

Not only did Helen Keller learn to speak, write, and understand the English language. She graduated cum laude from Radcliffe College and went on to become a distinguished lecturer and writer. But perhaps the most poignant moment in her life came when, at the age of nine, she was able to say to her teacher, Anne Sullivan: "I am not dumb now."

Richard Lederer via Humor Digest

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If you don't send this e-mail to at least 144,000 people in the next 70 minutes, a large dove with diarrhea will land on your head at 5:00 p.m. tomorrow afternoon, and the fleas from 120 camels will infest your back, causing you to grow a hairy hump. I know this will occur because it actually happened to a friend of my next door neighbor's ex-mother-in-law's second husband's cousin's best friend's beautician . . . *Rosemary Westbrook*

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Jacob Johnson, a raging hypochondriac, was convinced that the pain on his left side was appendicitis.

Mrs. Johnson explained that the appendix is on the right.

"So, aha! THAT's why it hurts so much," said Jacob.

"My appendix is on the wrong side!" *Laugh & Lift*

WEDNESDAY

John 12:27-28 *"Right now I am storm-tossed. And what am I going to say? 'Father, get me out of this'? No, this is why I came in the first place. ²⁸ I'll say, 'Father, put your glory on display.'" A voice came out of the sky: "I have glorified it, and I'll glorify it again."*

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Do you have a relationship with your loved ones after they die? Yes. We have been given two precious gifts that will help you through your grief journey. The first one is love; the love you had for your loved one will never leave you. At the beginning of your grief journey it may be very difficult to think about the love that was between the two of you; it might be too painful to remember.

The second gift is one of memory; we will never forget them. One of the myths of grieving is that we should become detached from the person we love, that over time the memories will fade and the love is removed from our life.

Anderson McQueen's 'Crossings'

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Will Rogers said, "There are three kinds of men: the one that learns by reading, the few who learn by observation and, the rest of them have to touch the electric fence for themselves." This reminds me of an experience that happened to my oldest children, years ago, back in a Virginia rural pastorate.

Son Mark was six and daughter Marci was four. They came across an electric fence, not knowing if it was charged or not. Mark's opinion was that it wasn't charged. And it didn't look any different than any other fence – just fewer strands of barbed wire. He went on convincing Sis that it was harmless, and said, "Go ahead and touch it for yourself."

When Marci believed it to be free of electric power, she reached out one finger to touch it and received a convincing electric shock for her efforts. And what was Mark doing at this time? Just holding his belly, laughing.

We heard the story only when these two came back into the house after their 'adventure.'

Chaplain Moore

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When I was a kid, my mom liked to make breakfast food for dinner every now and then. And I remember one night in particular when she had made breakfast after a long, hard day at work. On that evening so long ago, my mom placed a plate of eggs, sausage and extremely burned biscuits in front of my dad. I remember waiting to see if anyone noticed! Yet all my dad did was reach for his biscuit, smile at my mom and ask me how my day was at school. I don't remember what I told him that night, but I do remember watching him smear butter and jelly on that biscuit and eat every bite!

When I got up from the table that evening, I remember hearing my mom apologize to my dad for burning the biscuits. And I'll never forget what he said: "Honey, I love burned biscuits."

Later that night, I went to kiss Daddy good night and I asked him if he really liked his biscuits burned. He wrapped me in his arms and said, "Your Momma put in a hard day at work today and she's real tired. And besides - a little burnt biscuit never hurt anyone!"

You know, life is full of imperfect things.....and imperfect people. I'm not the best at hardly anything, and I forget birthdays and anniversaries just like everyone else.

What I've learned over the years is that learning to accept each others faults - and choosing to celebrate each others differences - is one of the most important keys to creating a healthy, growing, and lasting relationship. *Mr. Mom's Mailing List*

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After a recent college basketball game, the coach spotted a cell phone lying on the floor. He picked it up, took a quick look at the screen, then handed it to one of the referees, saying, "Here's your phone."

"What makes you think it's mine?" the ref asked.

"Easy," the coach replied. "It says you missed 13 calls." *The Good Clean Funnies*

THURSDAY

John 12:29 *After God answered Jesus' plea by a thunder-like sound from the sky, the listening crowd said, "Thunder!" Others said, "An angel spoke to him!"*

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The bride was escorted down the aisle and when she reached the altar, the groom was standing there with his golf bag and clubs at his side. She said: "What are your golf clubs doing here?" He looked her right in the eye and said, "This isn't going to take all day,` is it?"

James Hamilton

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Dr. Jerome Walker, of Brooklyn, told how President Lincoln once administered to him a mild rebuke. The doctor was showing Mr. Lincoln through the hospital at City Point.

"Finally, after visiting the wards occupied by our invalid and convalescing soldiers," said Dr. Walker, "we came to three wards occupied by sick and wounded Southern prisoners. With a feeling of patriotic duty, I said: 'Mr. President, you won't want to go in there; they are only rebels.'

"I will never forget how he stopped and gently laid his large hand upon my shoulder and quietly answered, 'You mean Confederates!' And I have meant Confederates ever since.

"There was nothing left for me to do after the President's remark but to go with him through these three wards; and I could not see but that he was just as kind, his hand-shakings just as hearty, his interest just as real for the welfare of the men, as when he was among our own soldiers."

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A taxi passenger tapped the driver on the shoulder to ask him something. The driver screamed, lost control of the car, nearly hit a bus, went up on the footpath, and stopped centimeters from a shop window. For a second everything went quiet in the cab, then the driver said "Look friend, don't ever do that again. You scared the daylights out of me!" The passenger apologized and said he didn't realize that a little tap could scare him so much.

The driver replied "Sorry, it's not really your fault. Today is my first day as a cab driver - I've been driving hearses for the last 25 years." *Laugh & Lift*

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Bumper sticker for Christians: "Tithe if you love Jesus! Anyone can honk!"

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When I meditate on the word Guidance, I keep seeing "dance" at the end of the word. I remember reading that doing God's will is a lot like dancing. When two people try to lead, nothing feels right. The movement doesn't flow with the music, and everything is quite uncomfortable and jerky.

When one person realizes that, and lets the other lead, both bodies begin to flow with the music. One gives gentle cues, perhaps with a nudge to the back or by pressing lightly in one direction or another. It's as if two become one body, moving beautifully. The dance takes surrender, willingness, and attentiveness from one person and gentle guidance and skill from the other.

My eyes drew back to the word Guidance. When I saw "G": I thought of God, followed by "u" and "i". "God, "u" and "i" dance." God, you, and I dance. Then I lowered my head, I became willing to trust that I would get guidance about my life. Once again, I became willing to let God lead.

My prayer for you today is that God's blessings and mercies are upon you on this day and every day. May you abide in God, as God abides in you. Dance together with God, trusting God to lead and to guide you through each season of your life. *shared by DMX*

FRIDAY

John 12:30-33 *Jesus said, "The voice didn't come for me but for you." ³¹ At this moment the world is in crisis. Now Satan, the ruler of this world, will be thrown out. ³² And I, as I am lifted up from the earth, will attract everyone to me and gather them around me." ³³ He put it this way to show how he was going to be put to death.*

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Author and lecturer Leo Buscaglia once talked about a contest he was asked to judge. The purpose of the contest was to find the most caring child. The winner was a four year old child whose next door neighbor was an elderly gentleman who had recently lost his wife.

Upon seeing the man cry, the little boy went into the old gentleman's yard, climbed onto his lap, and just sat there. When his Mother asked him what he had said to the neighbor, the little boy said, "Nothing, I just helped him cry." *Roger Knapp*

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At a clearance sale, the wife of a federal district court judge found a green tie that was a perfect match for one of her husband's sports jackets. Soon after, while the couple was vacationing at a resort complex to get his mind off a rather complicated cocaine conspiracy case, he noticed a small, round disc sewn into the design of the tie.

The judge showed it to a local FBI agent, who was equally suspicious that it might be a 'bug' planted by the conspiracy defendants. The agent sent the device to FBI headquarters in Washington, DC for analysis.

Two weeks later, the judge phoned the Washington office to learn the results of their tests. "We're not sure where the disc came from," the FBI told him, "but we discovered that when you press it, it plays 'Jingle Bells.'" *Humor*

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The sheriff of a small town was also the town's veterinarian. One night the phone rang, and his wife answered. An agitated voice inquired, "Is your husband there?"

"Do you require his services as a sheriff or as a vet?" the wife asked.

"Both!" was the reply. "We can't get our dog's mouth open, and there's a burglar in it."
Humor

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One Saturday night my boss and her family came to our house to play cards. As they were driving away at the end of the evening, I discovered that she had left her purse in a corner next to the dining room hutch. I was about to call her house, intending to leave a message on the answer phone, when my son reminded me that they had a cell phone.

As I dialed the number, I marveled at the technology that would alert them before they had driven all the way home. A few seconds later the purse began to ring.

Patty Dunham

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Students at Iowa State University proved once and for all that the computer just can't replace human calculations'. They held an "IBM" mixer" danced, where each student fed his vital statistics and interests into a computer and was then paired off with a member of the opposite sex who, the computer said, was most suited to him.

Imagine the chagrin of one coed who ended up with her twin brother.

Jim Champion

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When a fellow piano tuner was ill, I took over his assignment of tuning a piano in a girl's boarding house. While I was at work, several of the girls strolled casually through the room in various states of undress. The climax came when a young lady in near nudity appeared to pay the bill.

As I was writing the receipt, she suddenly gave me a bewildered look, then fled screaming, "That's not our blind tuner!"

Alex Burns