

St. Mark's Episcopal Church Newsletter
January-February, 2015
Supplement

Other Articles on Faith and Other Things

I'll be waiting on the porch! From April Collett, church member

On the first day, God created the dog and said, "Sit all day by the door of your house and bark at anyone who comes in or walks past. For this, I will give you a life span of twenty years."

The dog said, "That's a long time to be barking. How about only ten years and I'll give you back the other ten?" And God saw that it was good.

On the second day, God created the monkey and said, "Entertain people, do tricks, and make them laugh. For this, I'll give you a twenty-year life span." The monkey said, "Monkey tricks for twenty years? That's a pretty long time to perform. How about I give you back ten like the dog did?" And God, again saw that it was good.

On the third day, God created the cow and said, "You must go into the field with the farmer all day long and suffer under the sun, have calves and give milk to support the farmer's family. For this, I will give you a life span of sixty years." The cow said, "That's kind of a tough life you want me to live for sixty years. How about twenty and I'll give back the other forty?" And God agreed that it was good.

On the fourth day, God created humans and said, "Eat, sleep, play, marry and enjoy your life. For this, I'll give you twenty years." But the human said, "Only twenty years? Could you possibly give me my twenty, the forty the cow gave back, the ten the monkey gave back and the ten the dog gave back; that makes eighty, okay?" "Okay," said God, "You asked for it."

So that is why for our first twenty years, we eat, sleep, play, and enjoy ourselves. For the next forty years, we slave in the sun to support our family. For the next ten years, we do monkey tricks to entertain the grandchildren. And for the last ten years, we sit on the front porch and bark at everyone. Life has now been explained to you. There is no need to thank me for this valuable information. I'm doing it as a public service. If you are looking for me, I will be on the front porch!

The Top Reasons the Magi were Late

As everyone knows, we celebrate the arrival of the Magi to the manger on January 6th, the Feast of the Epiphany. Well, unless your only contact with the Christmas story is an annual pageant in which case you believe they arrived right after the shepherds on Christmas Eve.

Don't get me started on the way we jumble the story at pageants (the shepherds and wise men never meet!). But I sure won't be the one to tell the pageant director (and the parents) that there won't be any frankincense this year.

The reality is that, according to Scripture, the Magi arrived twelve days later. Perhaps by then Jesus was sleeping through the night (let's face it, that first night might have been holy but, as any parent knows, there was surely nothing "silent" about it).

Anyway, this got me wondering about what kept the three kings from making an on-time arrival. I scoured many sources at the Vatican library and came up with the following possibilities:

1. Balthazar took forever doing his hair while Caspar and Melchior sat on their camels and stewed.
2. The holiday traffic on the way into Bethlehem was dreadful.
3. Four words: goats in the road.
4. The Star of Bethlehem (the original GPS) kept saying "recalculating" and they found themselves in a sketchy part of town.
5. Caspar drank way too much water at the first oasis which meant an extra long stop at the Molly Pitcher rest stop.
6. Untying fancy sandals to go through the TSA checkpoint took a long time. Retying them took forever.
7. Due to poor behavior on the part of the other two kings, Melchior had to pull over more than once to yell, "If you don't stop fighting I'm going to turn this caravan right around!"
8. Stopping at the Holiday Inn slowed them down because, in a precursor to today's "culture wars," Balthazar kept insisting the name should be changed to "Christmas Inn."
9. "I told you that stop at Herod's house was a waste of time."
10. They took a vote and decided to take their sweet time getting to the manger so they would have a day all to themselves on the Church calendar.

Prepare to groan... from April Collett, church member

1. Two antennas met on a roof, fell in love and got married. The ceremony wasn't much, but the reception was excellent.
2. A jumper cable walks into a bar. The bartender says, "I'll serve you, but don't start anything."
3. Two peanuts walk into a bar, and one was a salted.
4. A dyslexic man walked into a bra.
5. A man walks into a bar with a slab of asphalt under his arm, and says: "A beer please, and one for the road."
6. Two cannibals are eating a clown. One says to the other: "Does this taste funny to you?"
7. "Doc, I can't stop singing The Green, Green Grass of Home."
"That sounds like Tom Jones Syndrome."
"Is it common?"
"Well, It's Not Unusual."
8. Two cows are standing next to each other in a field. Daisy says to Dolly, "I was artificially inseminated this morning."
"I don't believe you," says Dolly.
"It's true; no bull!" exclaims Daisy.
9. An invisible man marries an invisible woman. The kids were nothing to look at either.
10. Deja Moo: The feeling that you've heard this bull before.
11. I went to buy some camouflage trousers the other day,

but I couldn't find any.

12. A man woke up in a hospital after a serious accident. He shouted, "Doctor, doctor, I can't feel my legs!" The doctor replied, "I know, I amputated your arms!"

13. I went to a seafood disco last week... and pulled a mussel.

14. What do you call a fish with no eyes? A fsh.

15. Two fish swim into a concrete wall. The one turns to the other and says, "Dam!"

16. Two men sitting in a kayak were chilly, so they lit a fire in the craft. Not surprisingly it sank, proving once again that you can't have your kayak and heat it, too.

17. A group of chess enthusiasts checked into a hotel, and were standing in the lobby discussing their recent tournament victories. After about an hour, the manager came out of the office and asked them to disperse. "But why," they asked, as they moved off. "Because," he said. "I can't stand chess-nuts boasting in an open foyer."

18. A woman has twins, and gives them up for adoption. One of them goes to a family in Egypt, and is named 'Ahmal.' The other goes to a family in Spain; they name him 'Juan.' Years later, Juan sends a picture of himself to his birth mother. Upon receiving the picture, she tells her husband that she wishes she also had a picture of Ahmal. Her husband responds: "They're twins! If you've seen Juan, you've seen Ahmal."

19. Mahatma Gandhi, as you know, walked barefoot most of the time, which produced an impressive set of calluses on his feet. He also ate very little, which made him rather frail and with his odd diet, he suffered from bad breath. This made him (oh, man, this is so bad, it's good)... a super-calloused fragile mystic hexed by halitosis.

20. A dwarf, who was a mystic, escaped from jail. The call went out that there was a small medium at large.

21. And finally, there was the person who sent ten different puns to her friends, with the hope that at least one of the puns would make them laugh. No pun in ten did.

8 Things Christians SHOULD Be Known For By Jarrid Wilson

Although there are plenty of things God has called us to turn our backs to, here are eight things we should be known FOR. It seems that today's Christians are more known by what they are against than for. And although there are plenty of things God has called us to turn our backs to, I strongly believe our holy anthem should be chorused by what we are for.

1. Love (1 John 4:8)

Love is an intrinsic value for any who call themselves Christ followers. In reality, I don't believe that any can truly call themselves Bible-believing Christians and not showcase the act of love. No matter the circumstance, offering a helping hand of love is what sets us apart from the rest of the world. God loves us, even when we don't reflect the same image in return. We owe it to others to offer them this same reality.

2. Grace (Ephesians 4:32)

The Grace of God has covered a multitude of sins, and the sacrifice made on the cross has paid the penalty for them. We are surely blessed. Although we don't deserve the grace we have been generously handed, Jesus continues to extend a helping hand of it regardless of our situation. In the same way, we as Christians should be known for the grace and forgiveness that we show others. It may not always be deserved, but we must always remember that neither was ours.

3. Purity (Philippians 4:8)

When Christians discuss the word "purity," one must understand that we are implying more than just the topic of sex. Not only should we be known for our pureness in relationships, but in our speech, actions and motives, as well.

4. Patience (Galatians 5:22)

In today's fast-paced, drive-thru, entrepreneurial world, patience is key. And while the rest of the world may like quick-fixes and turnkey circumstances, the Word of God has called us to be patient amidst all things. This may not always be the easiest task, but it will always be the right path to choose.

5. Sacrifice (John 3:16)

The sacrifice made on the cross showcases the immeasurable amount of sacrifice that God presented toward his people. And while we will never be able to match the magnificent sacrifice that took place almost 2,000 years ago, this isn't to say we must not continue the legacy set before us. Christians should be known for their selflessness and sacrifice. A quality that will reflect an image of our Father in heaven.

6. Selflessness (Philippians 2:4)

Do you give only to hopefully receive, or do you give out of the abundance of your heart? The idea of selflessness presents a picture that says, "Whatever you need, I'm here to give it to you." Selflessness is an attribute that puts others before yourself, and God before everyone else. Although it may not always be the easiest of tasks, showcasing selflessness says more about your heart than you might think. Everything we have was never really ours to begin with.

7. Commitment (Matthew 5:37)

When we as Christians say we will do something, we should make sure we follow through with the act. Although we all make mistakes and fall short, reflecting an image of Jesus' commitment to others showcases one of His greatest attributes. In the ways of Christ, we must show the world we can be trusted, and that our word will not be broken.

8. Respect (1 Peter 2:17)

We may come across people with differing views than us, but this doesn't mean we can't be respectful in our action of disagreement. Today's media coverage feeds off of disrespectful Christians, highlighting stories that provoke many of us to stand back and say, "I would never do that!" We must be known as a community of respectful people, who even in disagreement can show love and grace.