



The PARAKLETE

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BARRIERS TO HAPPINESS

I have done enough counselling to know that there are a lot of unhappy people in the world and in the Lord's Church as well. Even sadder is the fact that they keep doing the things that will keep them from being happy. It is much like the man who complained about his lunch being packed with peanut butter sandwiches every day. When asked, "Why don't you tell your wife to pack something else?" He replied that he packed his own lunch.

I have listed some things that prevent true happiness in one's life. For example a REBELLIOUS SPIRIT of Jonah. God wanted to use him by sending him to Nineveh. God said "go" but Jonah said "no." The blessings of God were cut off, not by God but by Jonah himself. The Scriptures tell us "*If you want to enter life keep my commandments*" Matt. 19:17, and "*...blessed (happy) are those who keep my ways,*" Prov. 8:32.

Many are unhappy because they want to go to heaven but refuse to serve in the Lord's Church.

Then there is the WORLDLY SPIRIT of Demas. It appears he was charmed by Paul but not by Jesus. This is akin to the rebellious spirit in that rather than serve the Kingdom some serve clubs, leagues, teams, and sports with great energy.

"Demas has forsaken me, having loved this present world." 2 Tim. 4:10. There are many pleasures in the world and many we Christians can enjoy with a clear conscience. However, some of those pleasures are forbidden. Glitz, glamor, and temporary pleasures steal long term happiness.

A COVETOUS SPIRIT like that of Achan in Joshua Chapter 7 can provide short term pleasure but that is all. One of the original Ten Commandments is "*thou shall not covet.*" Yet, Achan did exactly that. It costed him not only his happiness but it cost him and his family their lives. Money is a tool we can use to worship God, to help others less fortunate and the necessities of life. It can also be stolen from God according to Mal. 3:8. Wanting what we don't have or what others do have can and does become a barrier to happiness.

A PRAYERLESS SPIRIT is another way to assure us of a loss of happiness. James 4:2 tells us "*You have not because you ask not.*" This text is not speaking of the childish "Lord give me a bicycle" but the sincere adult prayer of "Lord lead me in your ways."



We choke the channel of blessings from God by neglecting our prayer life. It is like a young man starving to death in his rich father's attic. Lack of pray can cost us our happiness.

An UNFORGIVING SPIRIT is another sure way to barricade ourselves from godly happiness. Regardless of the offense we need to remember how Jesus was abused yet asked, "*Father forgive them...*" Luke 23:24. There is a story of a slave master who asked his slave "What can God do for you?" to which the slave replied, "He can teach me to forgive my master." If the story is true, then the slave's attitude brought him happiness in a bad situation.

A CRITICAL SPIRIT robs us of happiness also. It is so easy to be critical of others. The preacher, church members, neighbors, and friends like us all have faults. We must remember that it was the unjustified Pharisee who said that he was glad he was not like the sinner who was justified. Again, happiness is lost in every critical word that could be a word of praise and blessing to others.

An INDIFFERENT SPIRIT like that spoken of Gallio, "*But Gallio showed no concern whatever,*" Acts 18:17. He was not concerned when a fellow human being (Paul) was mistreated or misjudged.

We miss real happiness by not getting involved in the lives of others who need our help, concern, or encouragement. Being truly concerned about others actually purchases for us true joy and happiness.

A pig seldom looks up to see where the apples are falling from. Just so a person who is not concerned about others forgets where his blessings fall from. Living in a bubble robs us of true happiness.

A SPIRIT OF SELF GLORY is vain and steals much happiness. I will not spend much ink on this

BARRIERS TO HAPPINESS (cont'd)

but to say: To God all service and rank are the same. Self-glory repels those who can often does bring blessings and happiness to us. This spirit is not one that robs as much as it prevents happiness.

While these are barriers to the blessings of God which bring joy and happiness, these thoughts would not be complete unless we look on the positive side. That is, not what bars blessings but what guarantees happiness.

In Matthew Chapter five we have recorded what is called the Sermon on the Mount because Jesus delivered it on a mountainside. He addressed many things in this sermon but He began by giving us The Beatitudes. He lists nine things that bring us bliss or happiness and begins each with the word "Blessed." Blessed in English means blissful, happy, joyful and, in short, blessings. They are the opposite of what has been written to this point.

"Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." That would be the opposite of the spirit of self-glory.

"Blessed are those who mourn for they will be comforted." This does not seem to contrast to those spirits directly but promises comfort in trial.

"Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth." Again this is the opposite of self-glory.

"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled." This is the opposite of a prayer-less spirit.

"Blessed are the merciful for they will be shown mercy." This is the opposite of an indifferent spirit.

"Blessed are the pure in heart for they will see God." This could be the opposite of a critical spirit.

"Blessed are peacemakers, for they will be called the children of God." This is opposed to the unforgiving spirit.

"Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." This too could be the opposite of a prayer-less spirit.

There is a danger in seeking happiness in ways God can't bless. But the promise in the beatitudes end with these words: ***"Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you."***

In all of life's doings remember the words He adds: ***"blessed are you."*** When we walk with the Lord, happiness always follows.

DENNY'S SCHEDULE

Gallipolis, OH 740/446-6929

April 7-10 - Revival, Fairview Church of Christ, Hillsboro, OH, Don Thomas, Evangelist.

DANNY EVANS' SCHEDULE

Huntington, WBW 304/633-5908 (c) 304/736/2677

March 3 - Supply preach at Central Christian Church, Portsmouth, Denny Dawes, Evangelist.

SOME RANDOM THOUGHTS

No one ever says "It's only a game," when their team is winning.

~

I have reached the age when "happy hour" is a nap.

~

Pet a dog and you have a permanent job.

~

There are no new sins; the old ones just get more publicity now days.

~

There are worse things than getting a call at 4:00 a.m. and it being the wrong number. For example, it could be the right number.

~

Life is not tied with a bow, but it's still a gift.

A LITTLE HUMOR

Two mothers were talking about their sons. The first said, "My son is such a saint. He works hard, doesn't smoke, and he hasn't so much as looked at a woman in over two years."

The other woman said, "Well, my son is a saint himself. Not only hasn't he not looked at a woman in over three years, but he hasn't touch a drop of liquor in all that time."

"My word," the first mother said. "you must be so proud."

"I am," the second mother replied. "And when he's paroled next month, I'm going to throw him a big party."

BILLBOARD SIGNS FROM GOD

Let's meet at my house before the game.

What part of "thou shalt not" don't you understand?

We need to talk.

That "love your neighbor thing...I meant it "Big bang? Yes, I said it and bang, it happened.

You think it's hot here?

I have a "best seller," have you read it? Keep using my name in vain and things will get worse.

I'm coming, ready or not.

You know my Son owns that church don't you? I think it's important, don't you?

- .DOTS AND DASHES FROM DANNY. -

Recently I attended the Church Leaders' Seminar in Cambridge, Ohio sponsored by Person to Person Ministries in Hillsboro, Ohio. Everyone is familiar with the Family Camp that they sponsor in July each year but not as many are familiar with this seminar. I have to confess this was my first time to attend and for that I am very sorry I missed others.

The sessions were well organized and the speakers brought a wealth of material in printed form and each shared personal experiences with vivid illustrations and for all that I am thankful. Jerry Paul shared a topic that interested me and I'm sure benefited others. He spoke on what happens to a church when there is no preacher? I've preached for years but never thought of that before. Some churches have to backup plan when that happens. He brought up the fact that most congregation never consider that their preacher might get ill or called home to Jesus.

There are times the preacher might go on vacation, have a family crisis or have to be gone and most churches panic because the "King Pin" is gone.

He is the "go to" guy in most matters when situations arise. The leadership needs to have a plan in place when these situations come up.

One most interesting thing that was presented was that the church is full of people that are not using their gifts and talents. There are several reasons for this. Some members just want to warm a pew, some are never asked to participate. The volunteer system is not working. Taking the initiative in preparing the members for service and encouraging them to take part is the Bible means.

Ephesians 4:11-13, gives us the plan. "And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the status which belongs to the fullness of Christ."

Looking back on my ministry, I really lacked in this area. Why train people to serve when it is so much easier to do it myself? Churches today need to plan so that if the preacher is taken out of the picture the church continues to function properly. Preaching regular teaching should continue. Youth groups should still be active as well as worship services. All of this is to be assured by the leadership and members whether the preacher is there or not.

So my naïve eyes were opened tremendously by attending this seminar and I would like to encourage each church and leadership to think seriously about what happens if their preacher is taken out of the picture. The church must continue normally and it should do so in a very organized fashion. Don't wait! At your next leadership meeting this could be a topic that is on the agenda. If this seems to be a matter that is of no interest then don't be alarmed if something happens and everyone is standing around wringing their hands and saying, "What are we going to do?"

HENRY AND SWEETIE SAY:



S: Henry, we are going to start a study of the book of Revelation in Sunday school next week. Have you read the book of Revelation lately and are you ready for the study.

H: Well I have read it but not lately.

S: Do you think you need to start reading it to be up for Sunday school?

H: One if the things I remember reading is that there are streets of gold in heaven. Do you reckon we'll have trouble standing in heaven?

S: What do you mean?

H: Well if the streets are paved in gold and you know how slick that will be, I'll probably break my neck. You know how I am on slick linoleum.

S: Henry, if you don't fall down here on earth, we won't have any trouble standing in heaven.

H: Sweetie, you are so right. The slippery slope is down here and not in heaven.

"Therefore, my brothers, you whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, that is how you should stand firm in the Lord, dear friends!" Philippians 4:1.

THE WORD

When you are troubled, torn and blue
There is God's word to comfort you.
When the world feels like work and toil
Jesus' word applies healing oil.
There is something in this book of mine.
That sets at rest a worried mind.
I do not know how it works, nor do I care
I am just happy that it is there.

Terry Kreiner
Homeville Christian Church
West Mifflin, PA

ABOUT VISITORS

Fish and visitors smell in three days – Ben Franklin
Staying with people consists in you not having your
own way, and they not having they're way –

Maarten Maartns.

Visitors always give pleasure, is not the arrival, the
departure. – Portuguese Proverb.

THE EMPTY HOUSE

By Denny Coburn

TEXT: Matt. 12:38-45, Luke 11:24-26

INTRO: Jesus was telling a parable addressed to the Pharisees. He was talking about their nation (Israel) and the then generation, v45. His point addressed their abstinence and unbelief which in reality was neutrality. He was painting a picture of Jewish history. He spoke of Jonah, Solomon and the Queen of Sheba and the demonic activity, yet they would not believe. He was not trying to prove demonology but was speaking of their lack of harmony with reality. Even Satan had taken his stand. Verse 30 sums it up with **"He who is not with me is against me."** Then He speaks of the empty house in verse 43.

I.

THE EMPTY HOUSE (43)

A. UNCLEAN SPIRIT LEAVES.

1. Not cast out, but "gone out" voluntarily.
2. But then returns (45).
3. Uncleaness: adultery, lying, killing, cheating, stealing (gross sins) return.
4. Sins committed externally.
5. Christianity is internal governing the external.

B. EVIL SPIRITS DO NOT REST

1. **"They sleep not unless they have done mischief..."** Prov. 4:16.
2. Evil is unhappy if someone is happy and content they are not.
3. They must find a place to do evil.
4. An empty house is an uncommitted house
5. A house swept is just reform
6. A house garnished is just ornamental

C. CLEAN BUT UNCOMMITTED

1. Busy but not **"seek ye first the kingdom"**
2. Afraid to stand (rather than the biblical "fear not")
3. Desire to be along with no fellowship
4. Old ways not a new creation
5. Pleasure but not denying self.
6. Creating spiritual vacuum w/no master.

II.

THE EVIL SPIRIT RETURNS

A. THE HOUSE WAS READY FOR HIM

1. No occupant, so he took friends w/him.
2. Seven friends, pride, unbelief, greed, selfishness, hypocrisy, formality, apathy, etc. No forced entry was necessary.
3. Story: An old man just set by the fire, nothing more. When he died, he left only the empty chair, but he's still by a fire.

B. WORSE THAN BEFORE

1. Read 2 Peter 2:20. If entangled again THEY ARE WORSE OFF AT THE END.
2. Jesus' warning of John 5:14 **"Stop sinning or something worse may happen..."**
3. For Israel there were bad things before but none as bad as after Jesus left. Same is true individually.

CONCLUSION: Jesus always leaves us with a word of hope. In verse 50 of our text we read: **"For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother."** Jesus wants a close family relationship not just a cleanup in our external life. He said: **"Take my yoke,"** indicating work. He is the Good Shepherd which indicates being lead. He knocks at our door indicating we must give Him admission.

We can reform but that is not a permanent change. He told us in John 15:5 **"...apart from me you can do nothing."** Is your house ready? It may be empty and it may be cleaned and decorated. But the real question is this: Is Jesus living there?

There is no more serious question than this one. If He is ruling in your heart you are most blessed.

CORRECTION

In the lead article on the front page of the January-February Paraklete I gave a wrong Scripture text relating to the fact that we are **"fearfully and wonderfully made."** I gave the text Psa. 139:4 which should have been Psa. 139:14.

Thanks to my friend and fellow preacher Roy Worsham. Roy is the evangelist at the Roof Garden Christian Church in Somerset, PA. Thanks Roy.

QUOTES FOR HERE AND THERE

"Keep away from people who try to belittle your ambitions. Small people always do that, but the really great make you feel that you too can become great." – Mark Twain

"Holding a grudge is letting someone live rent free in your head" – Unknown

"If the grass is greener on the other side of the fence, take the time to water your side." Unknown

"Never speak before you think. **T**-is it true? **H**-is it helpful? **I**-is it inspiring? **N**-is it necessary? and **K**-is it kind?" **THINK!** Again the speaker is unknown but this is a good one.

MAKING FUN OF OURSELVES

Just think, if it weren't for marriage, men would go through life thinking they had no faults at all.

~

Women will never be equal to men until they can walk down the street with a bald head and a big gut, and still think they are attractive.

~

I did not call you stupid but when I asked you how to spell Mississippi and you asked me if that was the state or the river. it just kind of caught me off guard.

LAUGHING

We laugh because God created us, not animals, capable of it.

We laugh because we are capable of seeing humor in life.

We laugh because our hearts are light and happy. We laugh because anxiety and gloom were nailed to the cross.

"Laughter does good like medicine"

–The Holy Spirit

Laughter is the most beautiful and beneficial therapy God ever granted humanity.

So...Laugh when an occasion calls for it and be unapologetic about it.

BARN-a-book (a Barnabas Ministries study series)

A series of studies in encouragement by Denny Coburn

Study Number one hundred-three – When Hurt Turns to Anger and then to Discouragement

I would like to address the subject of anger. Anger can and often does lead to depression and discouragement. Most anger can find no satisfaction. It only hurts the one who is angry. I suppose every Christian at some time is confused about anger, is it all right to be angry or is it always wrong. When we are down, or simply hurt the human heart sometimes becomes angry. Sometimes we are angry at the situation and at other times when people are involve we can become angry at them. Because some are uncertain of the biblical way to handle anger they mishandle it.

CAMOUFLAGING ANGER

Sometimes we camouflage anger so we fake it and handle it so others won't know we are really angry. Deep down we may resent our own deception which can be labeled "peace at any cost." But within we have a smoldering anger. This robs us of our peace of mind and is not peace at all.

Others see themselves as martyrs. They may think they are living out the beatitudes but within there is resentment burning however but they bravely suffer through it because "it is the Christian thing to do" they think. They accumulate hurts like a coin collector saving up each grievance, annoyance, or irritation thinking they are being the "bigger person."

A third form of camouflaged anger is the silent approach. They retreat into any icy silence when things bother them. If asked, they deny there is anything wrong but most people who know them know they are upset. They know this because of grumpy remarks or terse comments.

There is a camouflage of anger by becoming a critic. They resort to sarcasm or pouting. Regardless of the joy others display they will find something about their behavior that is wrong. If you like some food they will tell you that too much is dangerous, etc. White becomes black to them and they will keep you waiting just so you will be as unhappy as they.

Repressed anger over time causes a person to actually believe they are not angry and may appear calm, cool, and collected. Such a person can repress their anger to the point that they become completely numb to their own feelings but deep within there is a flaming fire of anger. When someone blows up at their anger, it is often resolved within though others may be harmed by the emotional blast. I call them "cheer leaders" simply because they remind me of the girl on the ballfield with a megaphone shouting but in the angry one's case there is little cheer, if any. The opposite of that is the "clam" who keeps it all in. You can beat on the shell but they just close up all the more. However, later it will cause more harm when they do act on their feelings than the one who blows up. Both are harmful but the clam tortures themselves first.

BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES

How do we explain Scriptures that seem to be contradictory? Please take special note of the word "seem." Scriptures NEVER contradict themselves. Some verses do say that anger is wrong, such as Ephesians 4:31 "**Let all...anger...be put away.**" Psalm 37:8 says, "**Cease from anger,**" and the Sermon on the Mount teaches, "**Anyone who is angry with his brother will be subject to judgment.**" A careful examination shows that in those texts it is addressing an anger that intends to harm.

On the other hand, some parts of the Bible seem to condone anger. Perhaps the most striking verses to this effect are Psalm 4:4 and Ephesians 4:26. Psalm 4:4 states, "**Be angry, but sin not.**" The same thought is repeated in Ephesians 4:26, "**be angry and yet do not sin.**" One commentator writes, "The words 'be ye angry' are a present imperative in the Greek text, commanding a continuous action." (*Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament for the English Reader*, page 114). This can almost be construed as a command to be angry under certain conditions.

A careful study of the Bible will reveal that most of the important characters in in got angry. Moses was without

A careful study of important characters in the Bible reveals they all got angry. Moses was a man whom God had blessed greatly however he became extremely angry. For example, when Moses returned from receiving the Ten Commandments and the Law from God on Mount Sinai, he discovered that in his absence the Israelites had started worshipping idols. He became so enraged that he smashed the stone tablets on which the Law was written, Exodus 32:19. David was described as a man after God's own heart, Acts 13:22, yet he became angry at God when a man was killed trying to protect the ark of God, 2 Samuel 6:6-8.

Other verses could be cited in which men of God got angry. However, we still might not be able to conclude anything, because it could be argued that they were sinning in each case. For example, one could argue that Moses should indeed have reprimanded the Israelites, he should not have let himself get so carried away that he smashed the sacred Law of God. One could also argue that David should certainly not have shaken his fist at the heavens and argued with God, 2 Samuel 6:8. Nevertheless, there are two Personages in the Bible whom we cannot accuse of sinning when they got angry.

If we reread the Scriptures we will discover that it was not the Pharisees, nor the Philistines, nor any assorted heathen who got angry the most. It was God Himself, God, who is without sin. The Hebrew word for anger appears approximately 455 times in the Old Testament, and of those, 375 times it is referring to the anger of God.

It is also recorded for us that Jesus became quite angry at times. He got upset when He saw the hardened, callous hearts of the people as He was about to heal the man with a paralyzed hand, Mark 3:1-5. In Mark 11:15-17 we see Him driving out the parasitic money changers in the temple with a whip, shouting after them, ***"Is it not written, My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations? But you have made it a robbers' den."*** In Matthew 23 He lashed out at the smug hypocritical Pharisees, calling them ***"white-washed tombs...full of dead men's bones!"*** So how can we reconcile this seeming contradiction?

LOGIC DETERMINATION

The logical conclusion to me seems to be is that "anger" is used in neutral, negative, or positive ways and we must look to the context to determine how it is used in each case. Anger, in and of itself is neutral, it is neither right nor wrong, appropriate nor inappropriate, holy or sinful. It is what the anger is based on and how the anger is expressed that determines whether it is right or wrong.

BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES

The scriptures offer some guidelines for handling anger properly. First of all, it should be understood that feelings of anger, as well as feelings of all kinds, are God-given gifts. God in His wisdom, created us in His own image. And that He created us with the ability to get angry. James reminds us in 5:17 that godly men of old, like Elijah, were human beings with feelings like our own. He has also taught us how to control our emotions. To deny our anger we may well be sinning by speaking falsely. Ephesians 4:25 teaches that is wrong.

It is crucial that we listen to our feelings but never be controlled by them, James 1:19. Proverbs 16:32 teaches a man who is slow to anger is ***"better than the mighty and who rules his spirit than he who captures a city."*** This principle is echoed in Eccl. 7:9 and Prov. 15:18. Nor should we delay dealing with it so long that it festers within. Remember the "clam" above.

We should not carry anger too long because it not only harms us by making us vulnerable to sin. It also makes us vulnerable to others as well. When we do not handle anger properly we stir up strife without and may abound in transgressions, Prov. 29:22. If we nurse anger it will give way to bitterness and resentment which leads to depression and discouragement.

A biblical principle that might be shocking is that in some cases anger may be righteous and its absence may displease God. 1 Samuel 11:6 reads, ***"Then the Spirit of God came upon Saul mightily when he heard this, and he became very angry."*** His anger was the result of the people of Israel considering the abandonment of the man of God. A prophet became angry at God's people because of sin in Nehemiah 5:6-9. God commanded Moses to be angry at the Midianites in Numbers 25:16-17. In each case they were angry at sin, not some personal dislike of their own.

It is my personal belief that church leaders today should be angry at indifference within the Church of Christ and not be angry over some of the petty matters in the local body. This same attitude should prevail personally with each of us. In both cases it would result in righteousness before God.

REDNECK DICTIONARY

VITAMIN, *v. and n.* To formally request the presence of a male in an enclosed structure or gathering. "He's your friend, so if you want him at the party, you vitamin."

URINAL, *n. and v.* A declaration concerning the current status or location of the person being spoken to. "If you think urinal lot of trouble now, just wait till Daddy gets home."

SUMMIT, *v and n.* To review a number of thoughts or themes and size them into a single unifying concert. "Well, to summit all up, he's an idiot."

SADIST, *adj.* The highest degree of sorrow or unhappiness. "It makes me sad when somebody hurts me, but it makes me sadist when I hurt somebody else."

Jeff Foxworthy's *Learning to Talk More
Gooder Fastly Redneck Dictionary III*,

SOME CHURCH SIGNS

- Friends don't let friends die without Jesus.
- True independence is dependence on Jesus.
- Choose the "Bread of Life" or you are toast.
- Some who seek Jesus at 11:00 die at 10:30.
- ETERNITY: Smoking or non-smoking?
- Need a new life? God accepts trade-ins.
- Lost? Try GPS – God's Plan of Salvation.
- Jesus is an investment that never loses.
- Faithbook: Jesus has friended you.
- Jesus loves you and He approves this massage.
- Church is like fudge, sweet but full of nuts.
- Autumn leaves, Jesus doesn't.

THE EXEGESIS OF GOD

In John 1:18 we read in a literal translation and paraphrase, "*God in his invisible essence no one has ever yet seen. The only begotten God who is constantly in the bosom of the Father, that one has fully explained him.*" The words "*only begotten God*" are in the best manuscripts. What a tremendous thought. To think that the eternal God and Savior Jesus Christ, the One who has no beginning, the Ancient of Days, yet was begotten.

He proceeds by eternal generation from the Father as the Son, and because eternal that birth never took place it always was. Our Lord never started to be God's only begotten Son. He always was His Son. He possesses the same essences as God the Father, and therefore He can in His incarnation fully explain God. The word "declared" in our English version is from a Greek word which means "to lead out." God the Son in His incarnation led the Father out from behind the curtain of His invisibility into full view. The Greek word here comes into the English language in the word "exegesis." Exegesis is the method of Bible study in which we fully explain every detail of the text. Jesus Christ has in His incarnation, fully explained in finite terms, so far as finite minds can grasp, all the details of the Person of God the Father. He said, "*He that has seen me has seen the Father.*" Thus Jesus Christ is the exegesis of God.

-GOLDEN NUGGETS From the Greek New Testament by Kenneth S. Wuest, LL.D.

TOP 10 SIGNS YOU ARE NOT READING YOUR BIBLE

10. The Preacher announces the sermon is from Galatians and you check the table of contents to find the text.
9. You think Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob may have had a few hit songs during the 60's.
8. You open the Gospel of Luke and a WWII U.S. savings bond falls out.
7. Your favorite Old Testament patriarch is Hercules.
6. Your favorite Bible verse is "Cleanliness is next to godliness."
5. You become frustrated because Charlton Heston isn't listed in the concordance or the table of contents.
4. You catch the kids reading the Song of Solomon, and demand, "Who gives you this stuff?"
3. You think the Minor Prophets worked in the quarries.
2. You keep falling for it every time when the preacher tells you to turn to First Condominiums.
1. The kids keep asking too many questions about your usual bedtime story: "Jonah the Shepherd Boy and His Ark of Many Colors."

OTHERS THOUGHT IT BEFORE YOU DID.

"I don't make jokes. I just watch the government and report the facts." - Will Rogers.
"If you think health care is expensive now, wait until you see what it costs when it's free" – R. J. O'Rourke

OPPORTUNITIES

May 16-18 – PREACHING CAMP – Person to Person Ministries, Hillsboro, OH – Kerry Allen.

THE TONGUE

Years ago my friend and brother Don SeEVERS was in his first ministry. He is still preaching at 88 years of age in the Sandhill Church of Christ in South Shore, KY. In that first ministry there was an issue of gossip causing problems, as it usually does. Don also worked at a secular job to supplement his salary. One night while closing the store he saw a cow's tongue in the meat section. He asked if he could have it. Given permission he took it home and kept it on ice until early Sunday morning. He took it to the church building and put it under the pulpit.

At the appropriate time Don produced the tongue for all to see. He then told the congregation of the damage done within the body by gossiping tongues. I don't know exactly what he said but knowing him I'm sure he was not shy in the use of his words. We need preachers like him today...telling it like it is, preaching salvation messages rather than the social gospel.

"If anyone considers himself religious and yet does not keep a tight rein on his tongue, he deceives himself and his religion is worthless," James 1:26. We have within our mouths a weapon to destroy and yet it can be used to heal. Use it wisely.

JUST THINK

The problem is not guns!
It is hearts without God.
Homes without discipline.
Schools without prayer and
Courts without justice.

MUCH TOO COUNTRY FOR DIVORCE

A judge was interviewing a chicken farmer regarding his pending divorce, and asked, "What are the grounds of your divorce?"

He replied, "Four acres and a little home in the middle of the property with a stream running by."

"No," the judge said, "I mean what is the foundation of this case?" "It is made of concrete, brick and mortar," he replied. "I mean what are your relations like," the judge asked.

"I have an uncle living down the road and my wife's parents are in town," replied the farmer. The frustrated judge then asked, "Do you have a grudge?"

"No," the man said, "We have a two-car carport which we don't use and of course we have a barn, a shed, and smoke house." The judge said, "Please, is there any infidelity in your marriage?" "Yes, both my son and daughter have stereos. We don't necessarily like the music, but the answer to your questions we have two."

Finally, about to lose his grip the judge said, "Sir, why do you want a divorce?" "Oh, I don't want a divorce," he replies, "I've never wanted a divorce. My wife does. She claims she's having difficulty communicating with me."

OUR DEFENSE AGAINST SATAN

We Christians can be thankful God has made provisions for our defense against Satan and his fallen angels.

Jesus lives in heaven to make intercession for us, Romans 8:34; Hebrews 7:25, praying for us on a regular basis, John 17:15. God has provided spiritual armor for our defense as well, Ephesians 6:11-18. Wearing this armor means that our lives will be characterized by such things as righteousness, obedience to the will of God, faith in Him, and an effective use of the Word of God.

Scripture instructs us that each believer must be informed and alert to the attacks of Satan, 1 Peter 5:8. Paul warns us, "*so that we would not be outwitted by Satan; for we are not ignorant of his designs,*" 2 Corinthians 2:11. James 4:7 teaches us to "*Resist the devil, and he will flee,*" We are to "*stand firm*" against the devil, Ephesians 6:13-14.

We need to depend on the Holy Spirit, remembering that "*he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world,*" 1 John 4:4. And remind ourselves that God has assigned His angels to watch over us, Psalm 91:9-11. We have many defenses...use them.

DOCTRINAL STATEMENT

What BARNABAS MINISTRIES believes

BIBLE: The only inspired record of God's revelation to us

SIN: The only thing standing between God and man

JESUS CHRIST: The only perfect One who paid for sin

THE GOSPEL: The only record of Jesus' life

SALVATION: The only hope of man

FAITH: is only "saving faith" if it includes repentance, confession of Jesus Christ as the Son of God and being baptized for the remission of sin.