

# The PARAKLETE

A publication of BARNABAS MINISTRIES, 135 Mitchell Road, Gallipolis, OH – Denny Coburn –  
Director

OFFICE OR FAX: 740/446-6929, Residence: 740/446-7318

Email: [barnabasohio@att.net](mailto:barnabasohio@att.net), Web page: [www.barnabasohio.com](http://www.barnabasohio.com)

Volume No. 23

Issue 4

July-Aug. 2024

## WHAT TO DO WHEN YOU WANT TO QUIT

Have you ever felt like quitting? It would be a rare person who has never felt that urge. There is a story in the Bible about a man who felt like quitting. Jeremiah wanted to quit, as recorded in Chapters nine and twenty of the book that bears his name. He developed a bad attitude toward people and even accused God of lying to him. He wanted to quit, but found out he couldn't.

He had a feeling he called a "fire in my bones." Yet, he found what all great people do he rallied because he learned how to get back "up" when he was "down." Life is full of "ups" and "downs." There are "highs" and "lows" in every life. But, what are we to do about that?

One of the first things we must realize is that "downs" are normal. They come to everyone and we are told they will in the Bible, 1 Peter 4:12-19. We must understand that we are not unique. We live in a negative world filled with problems. It is not the low times that are the real problems, but it is our reaction to them.

Next we have to realize the bad times are not the whole story. We don't have all "downs" all the time. They are not permanent so ***Let us not become weary in doing good for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up,*** Gal. 6:9.

Also know that down times make life interesting. How do we know when times are good if we never experience bad times? That may sound trite but give it some thought. Looking back we might see that victories are appreciated most by us because we know what it is to have lost. Spoiled children are those who have been sheltered from disappointment, like the "down" of being told "no," and their little hearts are broken.

One of the most idiotic recent practices is "everyone gets a trophy." I'm sure you have heard the theory that we have to protect those who lose by cheapening the reward for winning. If everyone

gets a trophy then two bad things happen. First, the winner who labored receives recognition for his effort gets no more than those who just showed up. The second bad thing is all others are robbed of the lesson of life that there is "no free lunch." This later is a lesson that those have excelled in life learned early. "Down" is no fun, but it can, and usually does lead to a life that is "up." So, what do we do rather than quit?

## WHAT TO DO WITH "I QUIT" TIMES

Accept temporary heartbreaks. Accept them as you do day and the night. You can handle it, the down times are not the whole book, simply a page or two in the book. Bad times are not fatal, unless you surrender to them.

Down times do not stop success. We have all read about successful people in sports, music, business and in the Bible. We hear of people who celebrate 50 years of marriage. When asked how they made it that long they typically say, "We had our bad times, but we just hung in there," and then they chuckle. They just plowed through.

We can and must choose to look "up" even in bad times. We may ask, "How do you feel?" when the better question is "How do you choose to feel?" Life is what we choose it to be. We can't keep bad things from happening. But, by the same token we can't gripe about conditions in the world and blame those conditions on our attitude.

## IT IS POSSIBLE TO SET OURSELVES UP FOR RESIGNATION

We set our minds on this world only. Colossians 3:2 states it ***Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.*** In this world we will meet with rejection, disrespect, and all other forms of heartbreak. God had one Son who was without sin, but He was also a ***man of sorrows*** Isaiah 53:1. He met with resistance at nearly every turn, but we have no record of Him considering quitting. For which we all praise God! (continued)

Never  
**GIVE**  
UP!

## WHAT TO DO WHEN YOU WANT TO QUIT

Retreating is not normally a good idea, except when the retreating is to our refuge in God. In Nahum 1:7 is our instruction, ***“The Lord is good, a refuge in times of trouble. He cares for those who trust in him...”*** When we become overwhelmed with too much pressure, responsibility, opposition or just life here on earth, we can depend on Him. He cares about us and He repays our trust positive, long term deliverance.

Regardless of what engulfs us if we do not over-react but wait on Him, it will work for good. That’s the promise of Romans 8:28, ***“And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.”*** It does not say all things are good, but in all things, He will work it for our good. Looking back I believe we can all see things that looked dark became light for us in the end.

He sees to it that our troubles strengthen rather than destroy us. In 2 Corinthians 4:8-9 Paul expressed his life of trouble this way ***“We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed.”*** If it doesn’t kill us, it will strengthen us. And if it is so severe that our lives are taken, we have a home with our Lord Jesus Christ.

God’s words to Isaiah should comfort us as well, He told the prophet, ***“So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand,”*** Isaiah 41:10.

When things go wrong as they sometimes will, When the road you’re trudging seems all up hill. When the funds are low and the debts are high and you want to smile, but you have to sigh. When care is pressing your down a bit, rest if you must, but don’t you quit.

Life is strange with its twists and turns, as everyone of us sometimes learns. And many a failure comes about when he might have won had he stuck it out. Don’t give up thought the pace seems slow, you may succeed with another blow.

Success is failure turned inside out, the silver tint of the clouds of doubt. And you never can tell just how close you are, it may be near when seems so far. So stick to the fight when you’re hardest hit. It’s when things seem worst that you must not quit.

For all the sad words of tongue or pen, the saddest are these: “It might have been.

– John Green Whittier (1807-1892)

***“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.”*** Proverbs 3:5-6. Don’t quit!

**Denny Coburn - Gallipolis, OH 740/446-6929**

**July 21** – Preach, Central Christian Church, Gallipolis, OH, Derek Stump, Evangelist

**July 22-25** – Attend only - Family Camp, Person to Person Ministries, Hillsboro, OH, Alex Eddy, Director

**Aug. 25** – Preach, Central Christian Church, Gallipolis, OH, Derek Stump, Evangelist

**Danny Evans, Associate. - Huntington, WV 304/633-5908.** Danny preaches often at congregations in his area as a supply preacher. He is available when needed.

## A NEW MINISTRY - FOR PREACHERS

The preaching ministry is a joy, a unique life and often a trying way of life. In one day, sometimes hours, they are central in happy times like weddings, new births, and sad times like deaths broken homes, and other heartbreaking times. They are often the recipients of criticism or blame. They feel hurt and disappointment.

99% of preachers do not complain for several reasons. They fear if they do some will interpret it as a lack of faith. Also, to whom share their feelings? If members of the congregation, they fear gossip may result. Few have a confidant.

Barnabas desires to be a private sounding board for preachers. We want to “be there” for preachers who wish to share their burden in confidence. We want to invite preachers to call Barnabas Ministries at 740-446-6929 for encouragement. Regardless of the information shared, elders will not be contacted. If they need to be informed, we will encourage the preacher to do the informing...we will not.

If the director or one of the trustees is able to meet the need, we will refer the preacher to those who can. We want to be a confidant and encouragement for any preacher who needs to talk openly about a problem, frustration, or just wants to get an unbiased opinion.

## DAFFY-NITIONS

**FLASHLIGHT** – a case for holding dead batteries.

**GOVERNMENT** – a necessity we can do without.

**HANGING** – a suspended sentence

**HANGOVER** – the wrath of grapes

**A WILL** – a dead giveaway

**HYPOCHONDRIAC** – won’t leave well enough alone

**LOTTERY** – a tax on people poor at math

**LYMPH** – to walk with a lisp

## A TRUTH

If you don’t watch TV you are uninformed, but if you do watch TV you are misinformed.

## ***DOTS AND DASHES FROM DANNY***

### **Something Light Hearted:**

Two men were on opposite sides of a river. The first man shouts to the second. "How do I get to the other side of the river?" The second man shouts back, "You are already on the other side of the river!"

---

### **THE RESTORATION MOVEMENT**

I know the little funny that I used to start this article may not be the funniest thing in print and maybe I didn't include it to be funny, I may have used it only to begin each of us thinking. The question I may want us to consider is what side are we on? Have you even thought of being on a certain side when it comes to a particular matter. No I am not just circling the drain or wasting ink, I have something I would like for you to think about. The subject is **THE RESTORATION MOVEMENT**. Recently I have read some material on the subject and I am trying to wrap my mind around the issue.

I have heard about this movement from my early years of life. The Restoration Movement was introduced to me in my childhood. The early 1960's was strongly influenced by the importance of being part of the movement. It was a joy to be part of this group and what it stood for. I guess I am way out of the loop today because I was recently informed, as I read one man's thoughts, that the Restoration Movement has not been in existence for over 100 years and it was a failure. Matter of fact, this movement just added to the disunity of Christianity. Rather than uniting churches, we just caused three more divisions. We split into three different groups, the Disciples, the Church of Christ (non-instrumental body) and the Christian Church. Unity has not been accomplished in these individual church groups to this day.

If the Movement had succeeded we would see people from denominations leaving those groups and would be coming to worship in our assemblies. We just have not united churches as we pledge to stand on Biblical truths. It is noted that in the

beginning the organizers had a declaration that they wanted to be "Christians Only". This was to emphasize that we were not going to follow traditions but only allow scripture to dictate what was taught and trusted in our assemblies and individual lives.

Today we are hearing from all points of the spiritual compass that we need to put our Biblical teaching aside, believe what you would like, but we should stand together to fight the fiery darts of the devil. Yes, we probably could be more Effective in our stand for Christianity if we worked together but that does not win souls. Did the Father not inspire writers of scripture to record ***His plan*** of salvation and how dare us just push it aside to prove some point and appear as united with people who make a mockery of what is written in those scriptures. We live in a horrible world right now. The devil is very much alive and he is influencing people left and right but we must stand strong on the Bible truths.

The Stone/Campbell leaders wanted to restore the New Testament church to how it appeared in scripture. Has that been done? Are we what God intended this Body to look like? I will admit that I was more convinced that it was about 50 or 60 years ago than it seems to be today. There is one fact that we still stress when we present God's plan and that is baptism by immersion for the remission of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit. However, to dampen the strength of that, over the recent years I am hearing statements that denounce the importance of even that.

Speaking for this writer and only for myself, I am proud to have been and still hold to the Restoration Movement. Are there areas that need to be revamped for there to be more success? Yes! Do we need to look at the Movement and see where its future lies? Yes! But to say there was never a Restoration Movement and that it was a failure, well no one will ever hear those words come out of my mouth. Pray that God will strengthen us as His People!!

**Danny Evans is an associate and trustee with  
Barnabas Ministries**

## BARRIERS TO HAPPINESS

Sermon by Denny

TEXT: Matthew 5:1-12

INTRO.: Most Bible students recognize this section of Scripture as the Beatitudes, that section which has the repeated two words, "Blessed are" as Jesus tells us how to be blessed. I will be breaking the rules of homiletics that allows the text to speak to us. Instead of reading how we will be blessed, I want to reverse the process and examine how we can create barriers to happiness. It's much like the boy who complained about his lunch being the same every day by saying "Apple butter, always apple butter, I'd like a change to peanut butter sandwiches." His friend said, "Why don't you tell your mother to make peanut butter?" The first boy said, "I make my own lunch." We often created our own barriers to happiness. How is that?

### I. A COVETOUS SPIRIT – ACHAN, Jos. 7

- A. We are taught in the Ten Commandments "thou shalt not covet"
- B. Many of us think or say "I wish I had..." It's alright to wish, but not to want what is not ours.
- C. That turns our mind from our divine purpose to things...leading to, jealousy, theft, even hating others...robs us of happiness with what we have.

### II. BY HAVING A REBELLIOUS SPIRIT JONAH

- A. God wanted Jonah to "Go," Jonah said "No."
- B. "Blessed are they who keep my commands," Rev.22:14
- C. I've heard some say "I don't care what the Bible says," only to see regret and tears...robbed of joy.

### III. BY HAVING A WORLDLY SPIRIT. – DEMAS

- A. Demas was charmed by preacher Paul, not by Jesus
- B. 2 Tim. 4:10 Demas loved this present world
- C. Social life: clubs, leagues, sport, etc. can crowd out Jesus. Leads to fun things and robbing of happiness

### IV. BY HAVING A LIFE OF NO PRAYER – TWELVE TRIBES

- A. James said "You have not because you ask not," James 4:2, to the twelve scattered tribes, 1:1.
- B. Prayer is out "life line" to our Creator.
- C. We can wear ourselves out trying to get what we want rather than pray to our Father for what he wants for us.

### V. BY HAVING AN UNFORGIVING SPIRIT – THE UNFORGIVING SERVANT – Matt. 18:21

- A. If we do not forgive, we will not be forgiven and we rob ourselves of happiness...by holding a grudge.
- B. Jesus prayed "Father forgive them." If we do not forgive offenses against us, we think we are greater?

### VI. HAVING A CRITICAL SPIRIT -PHARISEE

- A. A person who is always critical is lousy company
- B. We even are critical of actions in others we commit
- C. Pharisee said "I think God I'm not like..." Lk 19:11

### VII. AN INDIFFERENT SPIRIT - GALLIO

- A. He "cared for none of these things," Acts 18:17
- B. Like a pig eating, never looks up
- C. Some try to excuse themselves by being indifferent

### VIII. BY HAVING DISOBEDIENT SPIRIT – KING SAUL

- A. He lost his joy and kingdom by disobedience, 1 Sam 15:1ff.
- B. Many lose their happiness by forsaking the assembly, Heb. 10:25

**CONCLUSION:** 1 Peter 5:7 tell us to cast all our burdens on the Lord. Many carry burdens of their own making. Sad faces belong to those to create barrier to happiness. Self-inflicted sorrows are the worst kind of wounds

## FREE-

### Preacher Recruitment and Encouragement Seminar.

What Barnabas Ministries provides to a host church for these seminars: We will bear the cost of speakers, hotels if needed.

We will have speakers address such subjects as counseling, discouragement in ministry, do and don'ts, is a preacher born or made, and other matters relating to ministers and their wives. There will be two sessions just for the wives.

We will provide a binder for the material given out and a few other gifts for preachers and their wives.

The seminar schedule will be two speakers, a break, two more speakers, lunch and a final speaker. If this does not "fit" your plans, we are flexible. We are simply interested in encouraging preachers.

The host will assure that a lunch and snacks for break time. BARNABAS WILL REIMBURSE THE CHURCH FOR ANY EXPENDATURES.

To schedule a meeting call 740-446-6929 between 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. or 740-446-7319 after 4:00

To host this meeting it only costs your effort.

## GOD DISAGREES

You say: "Nobody loves me"

God says: "I love you" – John 3:16

You say: "I can't go on"

God says: "My grace is sufficient," 1 Cor. 12:9

## OPPORTUNITIES

**July 7 – 11** Delmarva Family Camp, Seaford, DE – Contact: [uccministermj@gmail.com](mailto:uccministtermj@gmail.com)

**July 29-Aug. 1** Riverbend Men's Camp, Sterling, MI – Con: [www.riverbendmenscamp](http://www.riverbendmenscamp)

**Aug. 30 – Sept. 1** Winning at Winchester, Winchester, VA Contact:

[ccmv4thebible@gmail.com](mailto:ccmv4thebible@gmail.com)

## DOCTRINAL STATEMENT

What BARNABAS MINISTRIES stands by:

**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 for sinful man

**FAITH** – is **only** "saving faith if it includes repentance, confession of Jesus Christ as the Son of God and being baptized as did every convert after the resurrection of Jesus

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

## A series of studies in encouragement by Denny Coburn

### Study Number One Hundred Thirty-five – Some Principles of Encouragement

In the past editions of BARN-A-BOOK I have shared my thoughts on some passages of Scriptures that deal with the subject of encouragement. In this paper I would like to just share some random thoughts about encouragement as well as discouragement that can't be cured by medication, alcohol or any human activity. It may be true that those things may cover the symptom of discouragement, or give one a temporary boldness, but they are not cures.

Discouragement is an attack of Satan who uses discouragement to draw individuals away from God. I believe the Lord has provided ways to fight back against the Devil and perhaps in the process you will become able to share the gift of encouragement with people around you that you meet every day. This is not a systematic study on the subject but the principles will assist you and prepare you to help others.

- Your past and present do not have to and need not continue into your future. A man was asked, "Have you lived here all your life?" To which he replied, "Not yet." Whatever reality that is happening in your life today does not have to be the reality tomorrow. If you are burdened by a load of guilt, hurt, or anger, you can receive forgiveness. Don't wallow in the mud puddle of confusion. God is full of compassion, wisdom and guidance. Spend time and conversation with Christian friends.
- God's love is unconditional and absolute. While it is true that salvation and blessings come from surrender to the will of God and obedience to the Gospel, God loves sinners without condition and His love is complete. If there is one place on earth we should all feel at rest and peace it is home. It is there we know we are accepted and loved and there should be no dread in returning there if we have wandered away. Though some homes do not provide this peace and protection, God always does. He loves you because He created you and because He chooses to love you, now and every moment of your life. ***"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us,"*** Romans 8:35, 37.
- No matter what sin you have committed, you can be cleansed by God. No matter how much guilt and shame you feel, you can be forgiven and have a newness of spirit. God's Word is absolute just as His love is absolute. The assurance of God's ever-present and free offer of forgiveness is one of the most encouraging truths that a person can ever receive or share with others. His forgiveness is offered to all, but it must be actively received. That's what the Bible is all about. God's offer of forgiveness is based upon the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ.

The supreme and definitive sacrifice for sin was made when God offered His own Son, Jesus Christ, on the cross. Jesus died on the cross, shedding His blood as a sin-free "lamb" without blemish taking on Himself the sins of the world. His sacrificial death eliminated the need for any further sacrifice. ***"Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life,"*** John 3:14-15.

- God takes away the old and gives the new. When we receive God's forgiveness, we are given a completely new nature. Our old spiritual nature with all its desires for self and sin is cleansed from us. Our hearts are made new, and our new spiritual nature has a desire for God. This is referred to by our Savior as being "born again." What Christians need to know is that when we sin after our salvation, there is a provision. That is found in 1 John 1:9, ***"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness."*** We can be renewed again.

*“Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one that sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life. Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers,” Galatians 6:7-10*

The law of sowing and reaping is unbreakable. The more one sows the more one will reap. A random act of kindness will have its reward, but it cannot compare with the joy of making encouragement a way of life. Those who encourage bountifully are blessed in the same manner.

- **CONTAGIOUSNESS** – When people respond in kind to human goodness, there is usually more than one beneficiary. The law of reciprocity starts a chain reaction that touches the lives of countless people. Like tossing a rock into a pond, the ripples of encouragement are far reaching. It is interesting to just think of how one act of compassion will multiply itself over and over again. Kindness is contagious, and unsuspecting souls are encouraged every day as a result of something that happened somewhere else between two people unknown to them directly. Who knows where love will lead? Every day, Christians find encouragement in an event that took place 2,000 years ago.

- **CONTENTMENT** – Finally, giving produces the blessing of inner-peace. It just makes a person feel better. It is a blessing to just think about the pleasure God takes in witnessing His children encouraging others through good deeds. Still, helping others live more courageously is its own reward. Human beings were created with a need to make a difference in other people’s lives, and encouragement fills that innate desire.

It is hard for an individual to think about his own problems while trying to minister to someone else. There is no room for discouragement in a mind filled with concern for improving the well-being of another. This alone should be sufficient incentive not to miss another opportunity to encourage.

Christian is more than sound doctrine and pious words. It is laying up treasures in heaven by investing in others’ lives here on earth. This is something that can be done anywhere, anytime, by anyone. It is not necessary to be wealthy, brilliant, powerful or famous. All that is needed is a caring heart.

Encouraging others is one of the safest investments a person can make. No one can take away the grateful smiles and words of appreciation that are accumulated over a lifetime and stored in the heart. Some people collect coins, or spoons, or stamps or dolls, but an encourager collects something much more precious. What could be more satisfying than saving up memories of playing a small but significant role in providing the supportive context people need for making lasting positive changes in lives?

No one admires an indolent, miserly or gluttonous person. Those who are hungry for power or pleasure are pitied for their skewed sense of values. Those who are most respected are always the ones who make it their life’s ambition to contribute to the happiness and well-being of those whose lives they touch.

## LEARNING with Larry

It was the month of December 1984 that my life changed. There was a preacher who kept coming to my house and pestering me about the Lord. His name was Hoyt Allen. He went to be with the Lord May 12<sup>th</sup>. Hoyt spent countless hours sharing the Word of God with me. He and his wife Shara were like parent to me. Hoyt became my mentor. He led many to Jesus and I'm blessed to be one of them.

From February to December 1984 I listened to the gospel. In December after Hoyt preached I began to experience emotions I never had before. I then began to feel guilt and shame for my sin and knew I had to make a decision about who would rule my life. I know that I was experiencing the power of conviction brought by the Holy Spirit.

I know what the people felt when Peter preached that first gospel message on the day of Pentecost, Acts 2:36-37, ***“Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified both Lord and Christ. When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, brothers what shall we do?”*** So I did what the 3000 did, I surrendered in repentance to the Lord Jesus and was baptized into Christ for the forgiveness of my sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Hoyt shared the word of life with me, but it was the powerful Holy Spirit that put that deep conviction in my heart that got me to want to change. In 1 Thess. 1:4-5 it states, ***“For we know brothers loved by, that he has chosen you because our gospel came to you not simply with words, but also with power, with the Holy Spirit and deep conviction.”***

The Greek word for conviction is also the same word reprove, ELENCHO. This word suggests putting the convicted person to shame. Muck like hearing the verdict of the jury: “guilty.” I knew I was guilty, it's like being caught with your hand in the cookie jar or the teacher seeing you as you look over the shoulder of your classmate to get the answer on a test.

Have you ever been driving down the highway and see flashing lights behind you and realizing you're going 75 in a 55-mile zone? You're caught, you're guilty. I praise God that my guilt of sin was exposed. I am a child of God today because Hoyt Allen shared the word of life with me, and the Holy Spirit convicted me of my guilt.

The Holy Spirit convicted me of my guilt. The Spirit's part is not just to condemn us in our sin, but also to convince us that we need Jesus desperately. Before Jesus was to go to the cross, He shared this with His disciples and with us. In John 16:5-11 “Now I am going to Him who sent me, yet none of you asked me, “Where are you going?” Because I have said these things you're filled with grief. But I tell you the truth it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you. When He comes, He will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgement; In regard to sin, because men do not believe in me; in regard to righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer, and in regard to judgment, because the prince of this world stands condemned.”

I've heard preachers say that the word of God works through the Holy Spirit to pierce the heart of souls to bring them to Christ. I am glad that Hoyt shared the word with me, and I was pronounced guilty. Then I responded in complete surrender to the Lord Jesus Christ.

God bless you until next time – Larry

### CHRISTIAN ONE LINERS

Some minds are like concrete, thoroughly mixed up and permanently set.

~

Some folks want to serve God, but only as advisors.

~

If the church wants a better preacher, it only needs to pray for the one it has.

~

I don't know why some people change churches, what difference does it make which one you stay home from?

### NEW SILENT PRAYER IS BACK IN SCHOOL

Now I lay me down in school, where prayer is against the rule.  
For this great nation under God finds mention of Him very odd.  
If Scripture now the class recites, it violates the Bill of Rights.  
Anytime my head I bow becomes a federal matter now.  
The law is specific; the law is precise, praying out loud is no longer nice.  
Praying aloud in a public hall upsets those who believe nothing at all.  
In silence alone we can meditate and if God should get the credit that will be a debate.  
They are bringing their guns; I don't dare bring my Bible. To do so might make me liable.  
So, now Oh Lord, this plea I make; should I be shot in school, my soul please take.

### **PAUSE WITH DAWES**

In the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Milton Wright was a Bishop in the Church Of The United Brethren. He attended the annual convention of the denomination one year. At that meeting, one of the leaders stood and shared his vision for the church and for society at large. He told the preachers and others in attendance that he believed that someday men would fly from place to place rather than just travel on horseback. This was too great a concept for Bishop Wright. He could not accept this and so he stood and in anger he protested: "Heresy, Heresy! Men will never fly because flight is reserved for the angels. If God had wanted men to fly, He would have given them wings." He just could not accept or grasp the vision of the speaker. When he had finished his protesting, he gathered his two sons and left the auditorium. The names of his two sons: Orville and Wilbur Wright. Yes, THOSE Wright Brothers.

It was the late, great New York Yankee, Yogi Berra, who said, "*If you don't know where you're going, you're likely to end up someplace else.*" Having a vision lets us know where we are going. Someone once asked Helen Keller if there was anything worse than being blind. Her answer is worth noting and remembering – "*The only thing worse than being blind is having sight but no vision.*"

Far too many churches have no vision. Sadly, they cannot see, and they have not prepared for anything beyond having worship next Lord's Day. We wonder why churches are struggling and declining and some even dying. Can it be there is no vision? What is the vision you have for the church today?

The most important matter that we need to consider when we are making our vision for the church is to be sure that our vision matches the vision of Jesus Christ.

When we are making our vision, there is a verse of Scripture that we need to consider – Ephesians 3:20-21 – *Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.*

There is no hope or dream or vision that is too great. Our God is not limited by what we might deem to be too difficult or impossible to do.

(Denny Dawes, Trustee Portsmouth, Ohio)

### **COURAGE**

Courage isn't having the strength to go on...it's going on when you haven't got the strength.

Courage isn't going just where the light is...it's following through the dark valleys.

Courage isn't being so brave that you're not afraid...it's trying when you are afraid.

Courage isn't accepting yourself when you get a pat on the back...it's accepting yourself when friends seem to turn away.

Courage isn't something that comes easily... its motivation without inspiration.

Courage is standing with God amidst opposition without feeling very courageous.

-Ken Harris

### **MOM IS NOT DUMB**

Bob wrote his mother; "Dear Mom, I'm not saying that you 'did' take the gravy ladle, I'm not saying that you 'did not' take the gravy ladle. But the fact remains that one has been missing since you were here."

Love, Bob

Several days later, Bob received an email back from his mother that read:

"Dear Son, I am not saying that you 'do' sleep with Jennifer, I'm not saying that you 'do not' sleep with Jennifer. But the fact remains that if Jennifer is sleeping in her own bed, she would have found the gravy ladle by now."

Love Mom

### **IN MY BIBLE**

I have shared this before, years ago, but I want to share it again. Pasted inside the front cover of my Bible is the following:

This book contains the mind of God, the state of man, the way of salvation, the doom of sinners, the happiness of believers. Its doctrines are holy its precepts are binding; its histories are true, and its decisions immutable. Read it to be wise, believe it to be safe, and practice it to be holy. It contains light to direct you, food to support you, and comfort to cheer you. It is the traveler's map, the pilgrim's staff, the pilot's compass, the soldier's sword, and the Christian's charter. Christ is its subject, our good its design, and the glory of God its end. It should fill the memory, rule the heart and guide the feet. Read it slowly, frequently and prayerfully. It is a mine of wealth, a paradise of glory, and a river of pleasure. It is given to you in life, will be open in the judgement, and be remembered forever. It involves the highest responsibility, rewards the greatest labor, and condemns all who trifle with its holy precepts.

-Author Unknown

Life isn't fair, but still good but too short to complain.