

This is a collection of different thoughts. Most need to be completed and organized. I am not sure what to do with these. Some will likely grow into devotions, thought papers, and maybe a book (Things to Ponder)

One of my biggest frustrations is how difficult it is to share my thoughts and experiences. I have a deep desire to share so many things I have experienced. Not for any selfish or manipulative reasons I

There are endless distractions demanding our attention, moving our focus from the substantive to the engaging. From excellence to the inconsequential. From being productive to being busy.

Politics, sports, and many social issues divide into fanatic opposing camps. They generate addictive emotional, and convictions that are comfortable.

And comfort is too often the measure of success. We crave emotional comfort and viciously oppose discomfort.

I believe I am a collection of contradictions. Most people would see that as a systemic flaw. After all, how can you ever excel when you are frequently arguing with yourself, pulled on two directions and seeing both as legitimate.

But there is power in that tension. Ignore the two convictions appearing to be pulling the fabric of your life apart and see how the tension produced energy and perspectives that can only be achieved through grinding opposing convictions one against the other. The pressure and friction force fundamental change in the substance of the contradiction.

I have heard that positive growth comes when you combine opposing ideas creating a new idea. I can accept that process but it ignores another process that is a hammer and forge rather than combining ideas into a hybrid or a distinctly new idea.

I believe that I move through time experiencing a variety of situations. That reality is playing in front of me like a 3D movie. The things in the foreground, the background, the purifry are all an endless series of images, visions, landscapes, everything we see. But what if there were only one frame. It was the only thing you ever saw and it was absolutely unchanging.

I keep reorging and restarting my todo lists and starting over. But things just don't get done. Is the problem my aspirations, priorities,

Birthdays go from being celebrations to a countdown.

My wife and I were talking about this and that, when I noticed that I had been finishing her sentences a bit often. It did not seem to aggravate her, but I do not trust my insight into the female mind, so I asked her, "Does it upset you when I finish your sentences? No." She was not amused.

I am 66 years old, and have had some painful baggage. But I think I have processed most of all that. Now I have scars and learned lessons. And I am grateful.

A weak man will whimper and snivel over the trivial. It takes a strong man to cry. That is because only a strong man can face the profound pain and sorrow that destroys lesser men.

Some Thoughts

A coin has three sides. Front, back, and the one side - a ring. Deep insight is realized through passion and truth combined and held together by effort, the common ring.

This is a great thought, but about what?

For simplicity, convenience, and accessibility we often contrast two things to make a point. Truth and Grace. Love and honor. Good and evil.

But in each case there is a third point that provides the distinction and which contributes to the point being made.

8.21.24

Since it would have been distracting to chime in without a mic, regarding Jesus accepting hospitality and money; if Jesus had done other than he did people would have misunderstood

much of what he taught, and would have "institutionalized" it into dogma. Like his miracles, he healed each in different ways so that it would be less likely that some set of words, actions, hand gestures, along with any number of meaningless things would be latched onto as the "magic" way that Jesus did the miraculous and that we can do the same. Magical thinking is always looking for opportunities, and it is attractive because it removes the burden and responsibility to find a cohesive explanation or process.

Ben talked about "honoring" others the week before. That got me to thinking that there is a principle that runs through honoring, forgiving, loving, serving, grace and likely other core christian characteristics that those behaviors are not intended to change the other, and the other may or may not deserve it. It is about changing and maturing you. Sure there are other benefits, but there are no guarantees.

These behaviors are together (along with other things I am sure) the secret sauce that helps grow us into Christlikeness, and brings our being made in the image of God into sharper focus.

Some think that becoming a christian means getting rid of lots of stuff we like, enjoy, and want and that people would rather keep.

Actually, when you become a Christian that area in your life you have been trying to fill with whatever makes you happy, in fact Jesus clears out that area to make room for his spirit which is so much more wonderful.

The distant flavor of past pleasures pause in my mind. They affirm what was, and suggest the possibility of a return, a second chance. After all, it could be I am owed. But "owed" is a brittle fantasy, an arrangement with no substance and its only guarantee being itself. After the hot emotions are spent, after hope has finished its lingering death only a dry crackly husk remains. The withered shape of vibrant passion and connection serves to remind and torment, leaving no recourse, no voice, no true reason, and no relief. I am left with shades of pale and the taste of dust.

Some thoughts about myself

Problems;

- I crave approval way too much.
- I am insecure not groking that God loves me, gives me grace, approves of me and that He is more than sufficient.
- I need to know that my audience doesn't understand my tech or otherwise complex and nuanced world, and consequently does not believe much of what I say. They do not get the points I make because the points are so conceptual or predicated on other points.

Consequently, I need to do the following;

- ☐ I need to consider these things and Grok them!
- ☐ I need to be much, much less prideful.
- ☐ I need to adjust my expectations of others.

I am not superior to others. I am exceptional in some areas, adequate in others, and lacking in others. I think this is true of the vast majority of people. Better and inferior are both on a spectrum that is constantly in flux and altered by what is being measured or compared, the degree to which the points being compared are in fact comparable, and the degree of objectivity or subjectivity of the evidence being weighed.

Even so, opposing arguments cannot be resolved properly unless both have similar degrees of legitimacy. A clear and demonstrable fallacy need not be debated by an objective truth.

Too often rational people fall into the trap of wordcraft. The masterful and imaginative use of language will largely determine the 'winner' of a debate and have little to nothing to do with objective truth, or beneficial knowledge.

On an entirely different track...

I am subjective. That is not to say I am a person who sees things subjectively, though I often do, but rather a person who looks at me will see what they are looking for, but might find something they did not expect or do not recognize.

Regardless, they will only see the persona I am using at the time. Like everyone I have several personas that each have their particular circumstances (whether appropriate or not is situational).

Some personalities are for my own protection and safety while others help to communicate and interact with others in different circumstances.

I might need to be the authority, the follower, the mistaken, or the encourager. And even within a single interaction I might need to change personas.

One critical point is that each persona must be a Jesus follower. Even though you have a variety of personas to use you as the person, that is the operator owner of all those personalities, need to carry your discipleship and Faith in each.

More specifically, each

So, I was standing in the kitchen waiting for my coffee pot to start percolating well. And while standing there I began to “explain to myself” (a wonderful way of better learning something) what I think I understand about additional dimensions. Harmless enough. I had gotten through the “flatland” illustration in order to demonstrate the counterintuitiveness of non-euclidean space (higher dimensions) and was attempting to describe a tesseract shape with exaggerated hand gestures when I became aware that Kim had, for some time, been standing in the doorway watching me. I concluded my frantic erratic hand movements, put my hands in my pockets, strolled over closer to the percolating coffee and quietly watched it perk. Kim then came into the kitchen, walked quietly past me, got something from the refrigerator, walked back to the kitchen entrance, stopped and softly said, “Should I be concerned?”. I nonchalantly muttered, “Nope...”, and we both went on about our business. I feel like one of us, by now, should have gotten concerned about how often this sort of thing happens.

Most people see the world as part sacred and part secular. I believe that all things are sacred and anything we see as secular we simply have not yet recognized as sacred.

Principal: Ideas and assumptions that we all tend to share and understand as common sense are often the opposite of what they are intended to be.

Jesus often told stories about people doing and saying very unconventional things. An underlying message is about questing commonly held beliefs and expectations.

Often Jesus talked about looking at what society, tradition, and our tribe has taught us and that we have simply accepted. In fact, a very significant portion of the things we believe and assume are unexamined. And even when we take a cursory look at a belief, we look for information that supports that belief rather than anything that would refute or challenge that belief. Then from that point we judge and measure others by still unexamined belief.

Examples of unexamined beliefs we often hold:

- When we serve, we should receive a equally valued reward in return
- That love is romantic, even though romantic love is all about how I feel
- That other groups are completely wrong simply because of their otherness
- When I forgive someone, they should change for what I consider the better
- That people are persuaded by facts
- That everyone must believe 'this' or that because it is so obvious to us
- If I become a Christian, all my problems will go away

We all have a bunch of assumptions and beliefs, which are a type of shorthand, that are labeled 'take this for granted'. That may initially be reasonable, but should be examined as soon as possible.

There are many ways to examine a belief.

Take for example;

- If I become a Christian, all my problems will go away
- consider other christians to see if all of their problems went away
- identify the basis for that belief; who said this, are they reputable
- does scriptural support it or not

And it is healthy and wise to make a habit of questioning many of the things we take for granted since many things change, and for that matter we change.

The question is that our assumptions might be expedient and popular, but are they God honoring?

And another benefit of examining your assumptions is that you will be clear about what you believe, and why.

In a sense, Jesus came into this upside down world and suggested we put it back on its feet.

We look at a miracle in the Bible and are amazed and usually skeptical. We cannot see the process that led up to the finished miracle.

But look at the man-made 'miracles' we accept everyday. The medications we take, the liquid that moves our cars down the road, and the food we eat everyday.

The medications are made from dirt, water, and plants (which uses that same dirt) along with some heat and cold. How can we even consider how they are brought into existence.

Gas comes from the ground and is the result of burying dinosaurs and plant matter for millions of years.

We take for granted the coconut, chocolate, and vanilla in our foods. But you notice that most of us are thousands of miles from these plants, and that they were harvested months ago.

The point is that we do not understand most of the miracles in the world we live and operate in any more than we understand the miracles God has performed.

There are many stories in the Bible about people being healed of different problems. Consider the man who could not walk. Jesus told him to stand up and go home. And he did.

If you had inspected his legs before he came to Jesus you would have found that the muscles were atrophied and broken down just as the tendons and other tissues were due to not being used.

But then afterwards his muscles and other soft tissues would be strong, flexible, and healthy. So in effect God took the process of healing and removed the need for those processes to operate over time.

Kim cooked ham this evening. Tastes wonderful! She mentioned that it was sort of a shank & butt. I am still having disturbing visions of prison life...

Nuggets to expand

Each of these points should be expanded into short pieces for whatever use.

"An essay is a focused piece of writing designed to inform or persuade."

"Dialectic

In the dialectic form of the essay, which is commonly used in philosophy, the writer makes a thesis and argument, then objects to their own argument (with a counterargument), but then counters the counterargument with a final and novel argument. This form benefits from presenting a broader perspective while countering a possible flaw that some may present. This type is sometimes called an ethics paper.^[17]

"Argumentative

An argumentative essay is a critical piece of writing, aimed at presenting objective analysis of the subject matter, narrowed down to a single topic. The main idea of all the criticism is to provide an opinion either of positive or negative implication. As such, a critical essay requires research and analysis, strong internal logic and sharp structure. Its structure normally builds around introduction with a topic's relevance and a thesis statement, body paragraphs with arguments linking back to the main thesis, and conclusion. In addition, an argumentative essay may include a refutation section where conflicting ideas are acknowledged, described, and criticized. Each argument of an argumentative essay should be supported with sufficient evidence, relevant to the point."

"A basic essay consists of three main parts: introduction, body, and conclusion. This basic essay format will help you to write and organize an essay. However, flexibility is important. While keeping this basic essay format in mind, let the topic and specific assignment guide the writing and organization."

If you are cremated, God can rebuild you in heaven. However, in heaven we receive "heavenly" bodies that are made of other stuff.

People often worry about how God will restore their bodies once in heaven. What will happen to those who have been cremated, lost at sea, or otherwise had their physical bodies damaged beyond hope of repair.

As it turns out this is not a concern.

The body we have here in life is not exactly the body we will receive in heaven. In fact, our earthly bodies are not intended for heaven. Rather, our earthly bodies will be transformed into our new heavenly bodies which are suitable for heaven and its environment.

[35] But someone may ask, "How will the dead be raised? What kind of bodies will they have?" [36] What a foolish question! When you put a seed into the ground, it doesn't grow into a plant unless it dies first. [37] And what you put in the ground is not the plant that will grow, but only a bare seed of wheat or whatever you are planting. [38] Then God gives it the new body he wants it to have. A different plant grows from each kind of seed. [39] Similarly there are different kinds of flesh—one kind for humans, another for animals, another for birds, and another for fish.

[40] There are also bodies in the heavens and bodies on the earth. The glory of the heavenly bodies is different from the glory of the earthly bodies. [41] The sun has one kind of glory, while the moon and stars each have another kind. And even the stars differ from each other in their glory. [42] It is the same way with the resurrection of the dead. Our earthly bodies are planted in the ground when we die, but they will be raised to live forever. [43] Our bodies are buried in brokenness, but they will be raised in glory. They are buried in weakness, but they will be raised in strength. [44] They are buried as natural human bodies, but they will be raised as spiritual bodies. For just as there are natural bodies, there are also spiritual bodies. 1 Corinthians 15:35-44 NLT

We may now be able to fully wrap our heads around this idea, but God has given us more than enough that we need not worry. Besides, one of these days we will all experience this body upgrade for ourselves. Though I suspect we will be much more occupied and in wonder of the one who did it rather than how he did it.

Grokking Advice

This is something I have been thinking about.

There are those ideas, warnings, suggestions and advice that we hear throughout our lives. Often it comes from someone older than us, well known sayings, teachers, and books.

We hear the thing many many times, and from the first time we have a superficial understanding of it. We know what the words mean and we understand the basic information that they intend to communicate.

But, it does not sink in. It does not affect our behavior or world view. We may even repeat it to others only having a simple surface understanding, but that is enough for us to assume we can wisely pass that advice along.

But they, usually years later, you have an aha moment where you actually internalize the meaning behind those words.

It is the difference between understanding and grokking the thing. Grok means to internalize a thing to the point that it becomes part of you, your world view, your assumptions. It is far beyond knowledge and understanding.

For example, we grok the language we speak. If you are into sports then you grok your favorite team. When a piece of music becomes an anticipated experience with highly charged empathy and energy, you grok that music.

The problem is that we seem to have to wait for those moments to occur, or never to occur. I would rather have a way to cause those aha moments more deliberately.

That points out a second problem; how do you recognize those nuggets of wisdom that you would rather have had sooner than later.

Possible solutions;

1. write out the advice several times thinking specifically about each word and their collective meaning
2. expect that there is much more that you initially understand
3. imagine situations in your life where it would apply and examine that situation
4. imagine how you would feel if you applied that advice in that situation rather than reacting how you would normally
5. imagine how someone who has applied that advice would feel
6. imagine how someone you admire for their wisdom and insight following that advice
7. imagine someone who you admire for their wisdom and insight explaining the deeper meaning(s) of that advice
8. google that advice and read the different definitions and insights, considering rather than simply reading them
9. once you have researched and considered that advice try to fully explain it to a mirror

You will know you have groked that advice when you notice how it fits into your other deeper understandings. You will see where others have given you or you have heard it filling out your understanding.

You want to be sure to make the mental effort to consider these things rather than just thinking about them. There is a difference.

Imagine someone walking into the room and you are instantly captured by everything about them. You introduce yourself and begin to learn their name, likes, dislikes, history, and so on. The difference in your attention and effort is the difference between that person and the one who walked in just before them.

When working on grokking some advice, put yourself in the mindset you had with the person who caught your attention. That is right, put yourself in that mindset. We have much more power and control over our mindset, attention, feelings, and so on than we usually believe.

Coming out of someone else's coma

You are in a place that is dark, fuzzy, swirling, and out of focus while believing things are normal.

It is being other than yourself while believing you are your authentic self. You are aware of the feelings that you have believed differently, but you consider all that to be daydreaming.

You are clearer than usual. But your train of thought is very short, and that keeps you from building an assessment or challenge to your feelings and thoughts. Your clarity comes from an inability to build the longer thoughts that would cast doubt on your self assessment. You are at the mercy of other voices with short, pessimistic, dysfunctional things to say.

And then you notice that over some time, you have returned to your actual self. But how do you know this is not another illusion?

Free Will

This is a key, foundational topic. It is behind the scenes throughout the Bible and living as a Jesus Follower.

We need to start with a definition.

Free Will; "Free Will describes our capacity to make choices that are genuinely our own."

Free Will is the condition where we can make choices without a force outside of ourselves influencing our choice.

Free Will is a gift God has given us, and there is a reason for it.

God wants to have a loving relationship with each of us. And love must be a personal decision - you cannot be forced to sincerely love someone.

God could cause us to love him in any number of ways, but any of that would force or influence our decision and that would violate our Free Will.

If that "love" was caused or influenced by some force outside of ourselves rather than entirely arrived at through our own reasoning and whatever other means we would choose to use to make our own decision, then our Free Will has been violated, and in this illustration, our love would be invalid because we did not arrive at it through our own process - it would not really be our own decision.

Now let's consider believing that there is a God as described in the Bible.

God wants us to be people who choose to love him. At the same time God is described as being so far beyond our ability to understand or comprehend that the least encounter with him is overwhelmingly similar to the many instances in the Bible where someone encounters an angel. If the angel is not disguising themselves in some way, their actual appearance is overwhelming to the point most people drop to their knees and begin worshiping them. There is no Free Will in those peoples reaction which makes their worship illegitimate - it has been forced rather than chosen.

How much more overwhelming would an encounter with God himself be? So in order to allow us to use our Free Will and choose to believe there is a God as described in the Bible, he makes himself known in ways that do not force our belief or overwhelm our choice to believe there is a God, or there is not.

We are given the ability to choose not to believe he exists. You can see throughout the Bible and life that God leaves his fingerprints, clear indications that he is, and is how he is

described, but always leaving us with the ability to choose what we believe, and what we do not believe.

It's like explaining the Trinity to a coonhound. He'll pay attention to you, but won't have a clue as to what you are saying!

Some More on Free Will

Obedience is a freewill choice and does not require our understanding or approval.

That sounds harsh. You mean I am expected to do some things or believe other things that I don't understand? What about things I disagree with, am I expected to be obedient and change my beliefs?

Pretty much, yep.

It is not that God wants to keep you in the dark, or that he is hiding all the good information. And he is not holding us back so that he can feel superior.

Remember that for any given event, action, thought, or intention we never have absolutely all the associated information. We often do not even have adequate information to make an informed decision or take action. We do our best with what we have, can acquire, and learn.

So, while being obedient while not understanding or agreeing, we are choosing to agree that God knows the best in that instance and always pursues what is best.

Now it may not be best as far as we're concerned, we have come to that conclusion usually without adequate information.

To be clear, we are talking only about those instances where we are expected to act or believe something we have some push back about or are hesitant to proceed with. Most of the time we are expected to do or believe things we have no problem with. God directs me with his still, small voice to stop at the donut shop - well hallelujah!

Sometimes when we choose to be obedient we later see how perfect a result is that we would never have anticipated. Other times we later see that our obedience resulted in something profoundly important for someone else.

Other times we suffer to some degree for our obedience, and it does not become more understandable with time.

This world is a very tough and dangerous place where we are seldom very confident or agreeable to the things that come our way. In this world there is pain, ignorance, selfishness, and injustice. And regardless of our knowledge or comfort being obedient to our Lord is still the best way to operate here. Jesus told us to expect the world to hate us, so don't be surprised when the world hurts us or is unjust.

None of that makes our disobedience the better choice.

In fact, our obedience to God should not be motivated by our fear of punishment of any sort. It should be our natural and sincere response to God's love for us. One of the key stories told throughout the Bible is of God's love for each person in spite of our rebellious nature, and our rejecting of God from each area in our lives and society.

continue with this...

We can imagine the idea of an infinite future, but have problems understanding time without a beginning. Odd.

In our experience, things begin and end. Both are natural to comprehend. An infinite future is also easy to comprehend because it is just more of the stuff in between beginning and end.

But when it comes to the beginning of time we have problems. Usually because without time we assume you would not have 'change', cause and effect, any type of sequence, or any way to measure events. We assume there would only be a still picture that had no beginning unless it was in a permanent state of beginning. Without time anything that is, is at its beginning since 'being' and end are subsequent phases of a sequential process.

Along that train of thought, 'beginning' is a process moving from not being to being. So without time, and consequent process, you cannot have anything. At best, without time all you can have is potential.

We apparently cannot imagine the situation of no time since it precludes process, and that would leave a period without time which is meaningless from the perspective of progressing through time.

Still, the state of timelessness might simply be a necessary characteristic, though only academic, of time.

Some have problems with the apparent fact that the universe is as large as it is, and we are the only known intelligence, what a waste of space. No, why would God do that? Turn that around. What if there was only our solar system and nothing beyond. How would we interpret that? Which would we most see God in or creating? Would we be satisfied with that?

Either is possible with God, but would either satisfy us? Would either weaken or violate our free will by exposing too much of God?

We act as if questions about the God o

FYI

This is a long memo about the current work on the network, including 3 separate phone systems.

As you know, last Wednesday evening Jeff and I (actually Jeff did practically all of it, but at my direction, so any problems are my responsibility) pulled out an unused phone system and a few miles of wiring that was a tangle of twists and knots with no labeling to identify any of it. And like

ripping off a bandage, you can expect it to hurt. In this case, we disconnected the elevator phone and FPB TV. The phone has been fixed and the TVs are being fixed. So, if you notice any other "electric stuff" having stopped working, please let me know ASAP in case it is a result of the project.

From this point on I intend to pass along additional information that might not interest or impact you, but will help me process the more esoteric aspects of this project. So feel free to stop here.

Thank you!

The network consists of wires, radio signals, switches, personal computers, printers, fix function devices, routers extenders, WiFi access points, CAT6e cabling, and fiber. All of which must be installed, configured, maintained, and monitored to insure the availability of the resources they provide and the work they perform. In addition there are the numerous networked applications that rely on the fstability and features of the infrastructure.

For 90% of the wires we are not confident where both ends are. This work is in preparation for tracing all of the cabling that is in use so we can organize it and label it (later on). This is a huge important project that will tangibly smooth out the network and future-proof it for years to come, make administration and troubleshooting much easier and in some cases posible. The reason for this mess is that soon after the network wiring was installed the normal and expected expansion and alteration began. For about the last ~20-25 I am guessing several groups and indiviguals have with very good intentions tweaked and fiddled with the network wiring. While the tesults were functional, they were not sustainable. That is, gadget X would run like expected, but nothing was documented or labeled and there was no consistency in how each change was made. In fact I have found.

Good evening Honey, don't forget your meds tonight. I'm going back to Biblical stuff for a while. Love you very much!!!

Philippians 2:13 NLT

[13] For God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases him.

We go through life in this world constantly encouraged to behave the ways this world and it's systems want us to behave. We are also continually encouraged to do what is easiest, most comfortable, and most pleasing.

This is in contrast to learning, maturing, and selflessly loving - all of which require learning, maturing, discomfort, and sacrificing for others.

Following Jesus is just not natural. But then we believe that this is currently a cursed and corrupted world not at all as it was designed or intended. And along with nature around us our natures have fallen - not as intended and in rebellion against God. So it makes sense that to reverse our fallen, rebellious natures would be to reject the world and our natures as they are to become what we were designed and intended to be. To be our best selves.

But that fundamental change is not something we can accomplish for ourselves using our own resources and abilities. We continually see that in inability to live and be the person we most want. We make mistakes, choose what we really do not want, believe what we know is false, and reject what we know is right and best.

That leaves us hopeless, stuck as we are - captive to what is not in our best interest.

But beyond the hopelessness comes a way to grow towards our best selves, the person we must want to be. Jesus.

Through the work of the Holy Spirit inside our hearts and minds. We may not have the knowledge, sustained desire, or ability to grow towards the person God intended us to be, the most authentic and best us that we actually want.

Jesus works inside us to grow into that person we cannot become on our own. He changes our beliefs, our perspectives, our desires, everything that hinders or hangs us up. He makes changes we cannot make, and in many cases that we do not realize need change and growth.

All of these changes and growth makes us more the person he intended and that we most desire to be. We become more and more obedient and more completely ourselves. Our real joy, satisfaction, sense of belonging, and part of something infinitely bigger than ourselves comes only through his work in us to become actual and realized.

This is not God overwhelming us into what he wants, nor your losing any of yourself that is worth keeping, and it is not God violating our free will to make us mindless automatons.

We keep coming back to what we might try to do for God, and what we can do to justify ourselves, or justify his love for us. But we have nothing to bring but our acceptance of his gifts. Even our obedience is a gift he gives us, something we can not do for ourselves.

It is not about what we might do for God, it is about growing in his image, which he is cultivating in us.

That all sounds odd, and needs more explanation soon.

Judgment

People are complicated. Each has different circumstances, different opportunities, different understanding, different ability to understand, and so on. Consequently every person is individually judged. And there are at least two types of judgement; one for believers and one for nonbelievers.

The judgment of believers is not about salvation. Being saved means that you have accepted and believe that Jesus died in your place to pay for your sins past, present, and future. So there is no question about your going to heaven, this judgment has to do with the “rewards” you will receive. Being saved means that when God looks at you, in a sense he sees Jesus.

These rewards are also referred to as “crowns” but there are no indications of what that means. I suspect that heaven as well as these crowns are so wonderfully beyond our experience and imagination that trying to describe them is a waste of time and would likely lead to dangerous misunderstandings and assumptions.

Let me go down another rabbit hole for a moment. This is an example of an issue that is interesting, fun to speculate about and discuss, but has no relevance to salvation or living a godly life. Too often people take these types of topics and divide people rather than love them. This is what often leads to a church splitting and new denominations being established. Division of any type among Jesus Followers is unfortunate and should be avoided.

The judgment of nonbelievers, those who rejected Jesus’ sacrifice for them so that it is not accounted to them and they still own the price of sin, which is death (ie, separation from God).

To be separated from God is to be in hell, a place created for the fallen angels, not humans. Then at the end of the judgment of unbelievers hell itself is thrown into the lake of fire which is the final location for both the fallen angels and nonbelievers.

On another point, all those who died before Jesus’ crucifixion, both believers and nonbelievers, stayed in a place called “Abraham’s Bosom”. Then while Jesus’ body was in the tomb his spirit went there and collected the believers and took them to heaven.

Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

"I believe in the Holy Spirit,"

I will leave the topic of the trinity for some other time. But for now it is important to understand the use of the word "belief" here.

For many the idea of believing is simply to hold the opinion that a thing is true or reliable. But the writer here would have an expanded understanding of "belief". "Believe" would also carry with it the understanding that not only is a thing true, but that belief will change your behavior to be more Christ-like.

"the holy catholic Church,"

There the word "catholic" is not referring to the Roman Catholic Church. Instead, it refers to the church "universal", In other words, all members of the church anywhere, past present and future!

"the communion of saints,"

This refers to the unity of purpose among the church. Fellowship between all believers.

"the forgiveness of sins",

This was such a new and powerful idea that deserves a place in this creed. Rather than a person's violations against some god, sacrifices and rituals were intended to buy forgiveness in some way making a right standing God dependent on a person's wealth and effort. In effect making our relationship based on commerce with love being involved.

This new approach to God, a personal relationship, is based on love and full of grace.

"the resurrection of the body,"

If life after death was a thing, you would need a body in order to be you and to operate in your environment.

and the life everlasting. Amen.

Continuing in the Apostles' Creed

Apostles' Creed

"On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead."

"On the third day" refers to Sunday. The crucifixion happened on Friday. That evening was the start of the sabbath when they could do no work. Then very early on Sunday Jesus was resurrected. That is why Sunday is called the Lord's. Also note that a day begins at sunset. So, Friday sundown to Saturday sundown is the sabbath, or our Saturday. So, Friday, Sabbath, the Lord's day are the three days.

"he ascended into heaven" is an event that occurred 40 days after the resurrection. During that 40 days Jesus was seen by hundreds and there are several accounts of Jesus meeting with people. In John's gospel he says he sought and interviewed many people who had seen Jesus, and it is assumed that included some of those who saw and interacted with Jesus before he ascended into heaven.

"he is seated at the right hand of the Father;" This is a position of honor. "My right hand man" illustrates how that position or relationship is with a single person who is completely trusted and shares your values and ideas. Someone who can act in your stead with your authority.

This is also seen in Jesus being our advocate to God, and our high priest interceding for us to God.

"and he will come to judge the living and the dead"

So here on earth Jesus will gather both the living and all who have died together and judge each. This is a very confusing thing for most people, the different judgements, why would a saved person be judged, and so on. It is not what the media or most churches correctly teach. I will address that soon.

Hey Sweetheart, don't forget your meds today,

Continuing in the Apostles' Creed

Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,

the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

“who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.”

“who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,”

This is another instance of God’s ability that we are just not capable of comfortably understanding.

The word ‘believe’ is often misunderstood. It does not imply fully understanding or having a clear comprehension of something. It is to be persuaded of something's actuality, truth, or reliability. It is to “be convinced of something” or “trust something” without necessarily knowing everything about that thing.

So, in some way, God caused Mary to conceive a normal, fully human child even though she remained a virgin during the entire process.

This raises many biological questions. But again, our faith is not based on our complete understanding of the miracles God has performed. Our faith rests solely on the resurrection of Jesus.

“suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;”

Moving on, this same Jesus suffered physical and emotional trauma caused by the decisions of Pilate. This included beatings, humiliation, and many other forms of abuse.

The conclusion of Pilate’s extreme abuse was crucifixion.

On that cross, as intended by the Romans and Jewish authorities, Jesus died just as any person would have eventually died from all of that injury and trauma inflicted on his body.

His lifeless body was then placed in a tomb until the normal Jewish traditions could be performed on his body.

"he descended to the dead."

This is often ignored, likely because it first appears to be the horrible end of a tragic story.

In Fact, Jesus's spirit descended to the place souls would go that had believed in the coming messiah but not lived until his sacrifice for their sins. These souls were then taken into heaven having accepted what they had expected through faith while they lived.

This is what Jesus was doing while his body lay in the tomb.

I hope you are feeling a bunch better! I think I am. Remember your meds today. I'm going to take another path for a while. I am going to walk through the "Apostles' Creed" to explore our basic Christian beliefs. This will take a few days I expect. Love you so very much!!!

Below is the Apostles' Creed.

A 'creed' is "A formal statement of Christian beliefs, especially the Apostles' Creed or the Nicene Creed. A set of beliefs or aims which guide someone's actions."

These are our core beliefs. The Resurrection of Jesus is the most important by far, but the others support or flow from it.

Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,

he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

Let's get started.

"I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord"

Obviously we believe that God exists and that he is beyond our ability to imagine. While God is beyond our understanding, he came to earth and became a man, with all of the things that make anyone a human person. He came in the person of Jesus.

We refer to Jesus, and he referred to himself using several titles. "Christ" means "anointed one". The word messiah is actually the Hebrew word that translates to "anointed one". It all means that he is chosen, selected, set apart by God.

"God's only son." is another title which emphasizes his relationship to God.

"While the expression "son of man" occurs frequently in the OT as a synonym for "man," the book of Daniel also uses it to refer to the coming divine ruler who will be given authority and a kingdom by God; both of these usages form the background of the Jesus's own self-designation as the Son of Man."

This does not mean that "the Son of man" was created by God, he is God taking the limited form of a man with all of the characteristics, weaknesses and issues that come with being a human.

After all, we say that God is all powerful, so expressing himself in the form of a man while remaining fully God is something he is completely able to do, even if we do not completely understand it,

Finally, "our Lord".

We have lost the essence and power of the title "Lord."

By the way, in the bible, when the word "Lord" is capitalized it is specifically referring to Jesus.

Jesus is our Lord, our master, the one who has authority over us. The one we are obligated to obey. This is not his exerting dominance over us, it is our recognizing his authority over us and our choice to submit ourselves to him.

As always Honey, remember your meds tonight. Love you!!!

Now, off on another tangent...

Grace.

No, not what you say before eating. Grace is the force behind being given unmerited favor. It is when someone does something good for you, when you do not deserve it, cannot earn it, and cannot repay it. And the one giving grace does not expect anything in return, does not profit from it in any way.

In the message of the Gospel, throughout a life of following Jesus, and at those times you seriously need it, grace appears. And you are never charged for it, and if you were you could never pay it.

Why did Jesus go through the horror of crucifixion? To give us the grace of salvation. Why did your prayer appear to be answered? The one who can hear and answer prayers chooses to show you grace.

Grace is shown or given when you cannot do it for yourself, and the giver receives does not expect anything in return.

As always Honey, remember your meds tonight. Love you!!!

Now, off on another tangent...

How to interact with God

That is a big question because there can be so many answers.

Traditionally we have been taught to pray, read the scriptures, and have some quiet time with God. That is nice, and fits some people well. But like many traditions this makes the mistake of assuming there is one single way people should interact with God.

God made us each very different so it is reasonable to assume there are more comfortable, natural, effective ways for different people.

As soon as you create a checklist or perscribe a recipe regarding spiritual matters you are in danger of limiting a person's spiritual growth, or directing them in directions other than what God intended. These are cases where a person is being told what to do.

Guidelines, however, are usually productive because they describe the desired outcome rather than the steps to an outcome. Guidelines allow a person to determine the steps best for them.

The different paths to interacting with God might include; music of any type, different types of art (paintings, sculpture, and other things of beauty), dance, and so on.

There should still be a place made for bible study and prayer, but they need not be a burden, they need not be a dry routine. Our relationship with God should be alive, growing, with all sorts of emotions, topics, actions, and words. That is the goal for which you can recognize the steps best for you.

It is much more important to know God than to know about him.

There are any number of people we could study in detail. We can dig into the events of their lives, their thoughts on a given topic, to how they would react to current events. But even so, if you walked past them on the street, they would not know you or anything about you. We can know about another, or we can have a relationship with them.

So when we are talking about the creator of everything, who has already gone to incredible lengths to show us his love and interest in each of us, knowing about him just is not enough! We crave to know him, and be known by him - have a personal relationship with him.

That is a big part of why we should put in the time and effort to, for our part, work to have that relationship with him. And relationship are built through interaction; in this case bible study, prayer (speak), and contemplation (listening).

There is an interesting proof of the great importance of they habits and interaction. The more you try to make time for and invest in these habits, the more that the world will devise the most

unusual, attention grabbing, unexpected, and demanding interruptions and persistent distractions and demands on our time and attention.

Want to insure your phone will ring? Read your bible or pray. Want to become incredibly interested in something of low importance and urgency? Read your bible or pray. Your mind will be overwhelmed with other things you could be doing, planning what you will do next, anything other than giving your full attention to building your personal relationship with God.

More to come...

As always Honey, remember your meds tonight. Love you!!!

Now, off on another tangent...

Listening to God. What does that mean, and what do you do with it?

There are at least a couple of ways a person can hear God's voice.

1. The scriptures

When reading the bible not only can you hear the text coming from the written words, but you can at the same time "see and hear" what you are reading from the page. There are times when you are experiencing what you are reading when you will "hear" a voice in your mind explain, or expound, or clarify what you are reading, and you will have the distinct impression that that voice is not really yours. This can be a subtle thing that is not very obvious, but after the fact you have that impression. Sometimes I'll ask myself, "Where did that come from? I'm not that smart!" Also, after having read something you spend time thinking about what you read and what it means, and then that still small voice chimes in on your thoughts with insights that 'just come to you'."

2. Prayer

Another way you might hear the voice of God is while praying. We think of prayer as talking to God. Often that is all it is. But prayer can also be talking with God. In that case you bring your worship, praise, concerns, requests, along with whatever else to God believing he hears you, and he does. But he is also always able to chime in. As with reading the bible, that still small voice flows smoothly into your prayer.

3. Hearing God's actual voice

God can of course also break into our reality and speak to one or more people. This doesn't happen often, nor should we expect it. For God to speak to you through the air can easily negate your freewill, and God will not do that. If we hear God speak it would take away our gift of freewill meaning our right to choose for ourselves would end since we would have been completely overwhelmed by the force of actually hearing God even speak out loud.

So, consider how God might be speaking to you, listen for that still small voice that does not demand attention, but speaks deep, insightful things you had never considered.

As always Honey, remember your meds. Love you!!!

Now, off on another tangent...

Why it is reasonable to believe the christian faith

2 Peter 1:16-18 NLT

[16] For we were not making up clever stories when we told you about the powerful coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. We saw his majestic splendor with our own eyes [17] when he received honor and glory from God the Father. The voice from the majestic glory of God said to him, "This is my dearly loved Son, who brings me great joy." [18] We ourselves heard that voice from heaven when we were with him on the holy mountain.

This is one of the most significant points made in scripture. The thing that caused people for the first couple of centuries after Jesus's resurrection to believe his incredible claims was the eyewitness testimony of all the people who saw and interacted with him after the resurrection and before he arose into heaven.

1 Corinthians 15:5-6 NLT

[5] He was seen by Peter and then by the Twelve. [6] After that, he was seen by more than 500 of his followers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have died.

In fact, just after the crucifixion there were many people raised from the dead who then went into the city of Jerusalem where others saw them.

Matthew 27:50-53 NLT

[50] Then Jesus shouted out again, and he released his spirit. [51] At that moment the curtain in the sanctuary of the Temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. The earth shook, rocks split apart, [52] and tombs opened. The bodies of many godly men and women who had died were raised from the dead. [53] They left the cemetery after Jesus' resurrection, went into the holy city of Jerusalem, and appeared to many people.

So in the forty days after the resurrection hundreds of people were walking around talking about their encounters with Jesus after the resurrection. Those people would have gone on through the rest of their lives telling others about those incredible experiences.

Those testimonies were strong enough that the outlawed christian faith grew for hundreds of years before the 'bible' was put together, to the point that in the year 380 AD it became the official religion of Rome.

Other religious texts talk about what they believe, or were told. And there is much more power in an eye witness report than in speculation.

So we do not believe it because of the bible, which did not exist until 380 AD. We believe because of the things people overwhelmingly reported having seen.

And that is not circular reasoning because of the many aspects of the story that were realistic, but not even close to how someone wanting to start a religion would write the story.

In addition there are many texts not in the bible that mention these events and the people involved.

God did the opposite of what anyone would have done to establish a religion that was the opposite of every other system of faith in the world.

See this article for a list of references to Jesus that were not included in the bible.

<https://biblearchaeologyreport.com/2022/11/18/top-ten-historical-references-to-jesus-outside-of-the-bible/>

As always Honey, remember your meds. Love you!!!

Discipleship continued.

Remember that discipleship is simply learning more about God and our relationship with him along with growing more into the image of Jesus.

The steps through discipleship are;

- worship
- connect

- grow
- serve

Now we will look at connect.

We often feel like we can do this Jesus thing on our own rather than struggle to make it to church, or interact with church members throughout the week.

At this point you are getting your feet under you and becoming a member of God's family, a child of God.

You are fitting into an environment where you can better grow, be recharged and encouraged, and be made into the image of Jesus. And remember that Jesus made it a very high priority to be with, to interact with, and to be in relationship with people. He made time to be alone, but his purpose was followed among people.

Well before you began this Jesus following thing the world (separated from God) and the enemy (Satan) was not very interested in us. After all, before becoming a Jesus Follower you were not much of a threat to their plans, in fact you were off their radar.

But now that you have chosen a side, they will begin to do what they can to distract, confuse, and trouble you hoping you will lose focus and go back to being a non-threat.

Because of this you will find it unbelievably difficult to make it to church (connect) each week. Things will come out of nowhere to make it difficult to go to church, or want to.

However, once you get there you find you are glad you did - at times like a weight has been lifted off you.

So, for that much planning, arranging, influencing, and coordination there must be a very important reason they want to keep you from church, from connecting with others.

We are designed to gather together, to be recharged by others while we recharge them.

Matthew 18:20 NLT

[20] For where two or three gather together as my followers, I am there among them."

Sure God is with us when we are alone, but it seems important to him that we also meet together.

As always Honey, remember your meds. Love you!!!

Discipleship. Once a person becomes a Jesus Follow you begin the process of discipleship, which is basically growing in your knowledge and Christ likeness.

CapCity follows a path through 4 phases for discipleship;

- worship
- connect
- grow
- serve

These lead you to maturity as a Christian and are addressed in order. This is not a 4 step program that you work through and accomplish. These are the 4 phases we move through as we mature in our faith, becoming more like Jesus.

These are also cumulative. As you focus on each you continue the previous phases for life. So together these 4 become aspects of our growing Christian maturity. You never complete these, you acquire and integrate them so they become part of you.

So let's start with Worship.

As Jesus followers we were created to worship God. Worship is when we turn our focus and attention to God himself. We acknowledge God for who and what he is. We consider what he has done for us and what he has chosen not to do to us.

All of that should ease our minds into a powerful sense of the presence of God. God is of course always here with and in us, even if we do not seem to feel it. Worship opens our eyes to God's close presence.

For many, being a Jesus follower is all about feelings and experiences, and that is much of what we find in worship. But feelings are sort of a side effect. Our reason for believing is rooted and supported by facts and reason.

More to come... (connect, grow, and serve)

As always Honey, remember your meds. Love you!!!

The testaments (cont)

So, is the old testament a bad, flawed, obsolete book? Nope. The covenant that Israel was under and promises God made to them no longer applies to us, but there is still wisdom, insight, and history that shed light on the new testament. As we read the old testament with the Mosaic covenant perspective people at that time had, you will find meaningful insight into the new testament.

But our faith is not based on the stories in the old testament. OK, what is it based on?

There is one single event on which we can base our faith; the Resurrection. Everything else sets the stage, and then explains and explores the event and meaning of the Resurrection.

Without the Resurrection, the rest might be wise and instructional, but that is all.

So with the resurrection and the beginning of the new covenant, what are we obligated to do. What should our response be?

Well when a guy says he is God, that he fulfills all of the previous prophecies foretelling his coming and what he would do, and he explains clearly that he would die, and that he will then raise from the dead. If a guy does all of those things, if he actually rises from the dead, you really should listen to what he has to say and take it seriously.

So we have the Resurrection which cements the beginning of the new covenant. What are we obligated to do, being in this new covenant?

Jesus gave us two commands as part of the new covenant.

Matthew 22:37-39 NLT

[37] Jesus replied, “‘You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind.’ [38] This is the first and greatest commandment. [39] A second is equally important: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ [40] The entire law and all the demands of the prophets are based on these two commandments.”

So, there you have it. Love God, and love your neighbor. Everything flows from these two.

More to come...

Just wanted to give you a heads up. I went out this afternoon and while driving along I noticed a penguin walking along the road. He was smoking a cigar and had a silver flask poking out of his tux. Being as cold as it is I pulled over to see if he needed a ride. He thanked me and said it was very kind of me, but that he was on his way to a delightful evening of conversation colored by his cigar and 100 proof friend in his vest pocket. Intrigued, I inquired about his destination. “Well

sir," he said. "Every Time I am in the vicinity I make sure to schedule an evening at Huber's Cigar & Bourbon Barn, one of the few spots in town one can count on an evening of delightful company, stimulating conversation, and on occasion, a fire pit out done by none! Truly top notch!" "Then I'll leave you to your walk and wonderful evening.", I said. He pretended to tip his hat, though he did not actually have a hat being that would be entirely too much for one to believe, and continued on his way. Just a heads up.

The Testaments

Christians have been running into unnecessary problems since the church began.

One of, if not the main reasons is that we have mixed together the Hebrew bible with the Christian bible. The old testament is Jewish scripture while the new testament is Christian scripture.

It is not at all that the Old Testament was in some way wrong or is now useless. There is history, wisdom, poetry, and prophecy not to mention that there was no Christian bible for the first 200 years of the Church.

What matters is that much of the OT has to do with the Mosaic Covenant; the covenant God made with Moses on Mount Sinai which is exclusively between God and the nation of Israel. Christians throughout the ages have assumed that the promises and rewards promised in the OT to the nation of Israel somehow apply to the church.

There was/is a movement called replacement theology that teaches that Israel has been removed from the story because they did not recognize their Messiah, and they killed Jesus.

There is no support for either idea in scripture or rational.

Jesus fulfilled the Mosaic covenant and law, ending it. He then established a new covenant but this time not with a nation but with everyone, everywhere, for all time.

That means that we today are not obligated to the requirements of the Mosaic covenant. So a significant portion of the OT, while informative, is not intended for us. It would be a mistake to do away with any of the OT, we do need to understand the parts that are informative and the parts that are useful.

That actually means that we are no longer obligated to the ten commandments for example. So is it now ok to murder? Nope! We are now under the new covenant, and it has a couple of clauses.

Mark 12:29-31 NLT

[29] Jesus replied, “The most important commandment is this: ‘Listen, O Israel! The Lord our God is the one and only Lord. [30] And you must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and all your strength.’

[31] The second is equally important: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ No other commandment is greater than these.”

There are a few other orders Jesus gave us. However, if you follow just these two you will automatically be following all the others.

More to come...

I talked about being saved by faith alone. But is there anything else to it?

Many people have opinions about this, but rather than being based on the bible they are usually based on tradition. And tradition has no real authority to speak for God. For that matter there can be traditions that are clearly contrary to what you find in the bible or not God honoring.

My understanding is that once a person has come to a sincere belief/faith in Jesus they are saved.

But there is more...

If you have the opportunity there are two other things we are instructed to do.

First, make a public confession that you have been saved. In other words in some way announce to others your faith in Jesus. This usually means that in front of a group in a church the minister will ask you if you believe the basics about Jesus and have accepted his gift of salvation. You say “yep”, and it is done.

The second thing you should do after accepting Jesus’s gift of salvation is to be baptized.

Remember, what might appear to be a rule or commandment could actually be an example of showing gratitude which is the natural response to what God has done for you.

There is plenty out there dealing with the question of sprinkling versus dunking. I’ll leave that to you because what matters is what is in your heart rather than your level of wetness.

So again, I understand that you should do both of these if you are able and have the opportunity.

Remember the story about the thief on the cross next to Jesus? He acknowledged that Jesus is Lord and Jesus told him that he would be with him in paradise that evening.

Well that thief did not have the opportunity to make a formal confession of faith, or sneak off to get baptized. But still he went with Jesus into paradise.

Saved by Faith Alone

Yes, I believe that is true, but there are two sides to that coin.

Faith is what we bring to the table, and it's not all that much. Faith is believing and accepting something without seeing it. When you turn that inside out you get that faith is the absence of not believing, which is nothing really.

But then God responds, he gives us grace. Grace is unmerited favor, something that benefits you when there is absolutely nothing you can do to earn or deserve it.

You have faith, and God responds with grace. But what do we have faith in, and what actually does grace do?

What to believe; Jesus, some 2000 years ago, lived a perfect God honoring life and committed no sin. With death being the price of sin, and Jesus having been crucified and died he was able to pay the price of death that each of us sinners own.

Imagine going to restaurant and eating an expensive meal only to find you have no money or any way to earn it. Then in walks Jesus and he pays your bill in full, including the tip. And he does that simply out of love for you.

You can either say no thank-you and keep trying to find a way to pay the bill on your own. Or you can say thank you, accept rather than reject his gift and walk out knowing your bill has been paid.

That is what we have faith in, what we believe. We simply accept that is what he did for each of us. Everyone. Every sin. Throughout all time. He paid the price for sin for every and any sin we have or will commit.

Many folks think that once you are saved you have a list of things you have to do to remain saved. And it's not quite like that.

Once you are saved and begin to realize how much God loves you, and that he already died to prove it, rather than be weighed down with a bunch of rules, you find that out of a sense of gratitude you want to do things differently, and do some things differently.

So can you lose your salvation?

There are two things to be concerned about. The first is renouncing your faith. Deliberately taking steps to reject the gift of salvation. The second is to stop growing in your faith. If you give no thought to Jesus and couldn't care less about the whole relationship with Jesus thing, your heart and mind will grow callused and closed to the things of God. That puts you in a position to actually abandon that relationship which is the same as rejecting it.

More on this coming next...

The Saga - Part 4; Racing across upperspace where time and distance are irrelevant and where man was never intended to journey we find our determined rebels considering their next move.

Oi Ben leaned back in his chair and began pontificating to the rest. "The message must be delivered safely, otherwise the empire could destroy countless star systems or worse! You see, the empire refuses to take it's meds. It began with occasionally skipping a day now and then. But soon grew to outright refusal. Now the empire is a galactic 'Karen', and there is no reasoning with a Karen."

"Ya I can buy all that, but how are we going to get that message to the rebels, and what are they going to do with it?" ask the pilot.

"The force will find a way, of course. And like a horse it will stay the course. Because it is the source with no remorse! (See what I did there?)" Oi Ben replied.

"For example, because I remembered my meds I don't fear the feds. And those commie reds who are out of their heads, should just stay in their beds! Enough said." Ol Ben continued."

"Hey, what is that on the scope?" said the pilot. "It's a planet, and all the lights are out, except for that 'No Vacancies' sign. Wait a minute, if I wanted to remain hidden from empire troops, I might just turn out the lights and put up a 'No Vacancies' sign to throw them off the track. That's it guys, we have found the rebel outpost. Nice! Belt in boys and remember to take your meds. We're going in...!"

End part 4 of The Saga. To be continued.

The Saga - Part 3; Our team of space faring rebels entered the local bar in the wrong part of town to hire a pilot and ship to take them to the rebel outpost

Scene: A flyer streaks over the dusty landscape, mere meters above the ground. Soon it comes to a stop at one of the most notorious bars in Mouse Isley Brothers, The Sack of Suddes, aka, '... around & Find out!'.

Our unlikely heroes walk into the bar noticing the sign reading, "Days since meaningless carnage = 0". They each grip their blasters a bit tighter.

They make their way to a table in the back hidden among the jumble of alien species drinking, smoking, munching on their intoxicant of choice. Drinks are ordered, and the tension builds.

"Hello Earthers. Word has it you are looking for a fast ship to the supposed rebel outpost." said a tall, furry Ignoid with 6 inch fangs and two blasters on what passes for its hip.

"Why, yes. Indeed we are. Would you happen to know of one?" Ol Ben asked. Then adding, "the pilot would of course need to be diligent in taking his meds. A pilot needs to be the best he can be these days!"

The Ignoid stared up at the ceiling pretending to be in deep thought. "Why yes, I just might. Meet me at the space dock, slip A54B at 15:00 and we will see!"

The Ignoid growls a farwell and leaps to the door and out..."

Scene) Later at the space dock, after Ol Ben reminded his companions to take their meds before jumping into upperspace. "Nothing will ruin your deep space travels like forgetting your meds. It's like running from an empire battle cruiser, taking a wrong turn and falling into a black hole - you just spiral down forever..."

Scene - The Ignoid slid up to the team. "Yes, this is the place, and me oh my that is the ship you seek and inside is the pilot you have hoped for. Come, the time is short."

Once everyone was inside the cramped but comfortable ship and introductions had been made the discussion took a decidedly serious tone. "Sorry to be late, but I was taking my meds. You know that forgetting your deep space meds is like running from an empire battle cruiser, taking a wrong turn and falling into a black..." "Yes, we have already covered all of that. The point is, can you get us through empire space to the rebel outpost? We can make it worth your while." said Ol Ben.

"I don't know... my "while" has some pretty expensive tastes! But yep, I can get you there on the 'Outdawaymofo', she's the fastest ship in 4 pairasects!" posted the pilot. To which Ol Ben asked, "What is a 'pairasects'?" Grinning, the pilot said, "Well, two sects of course, but the question is are you in?"

So having strapped into their seats the 'Outdawaymofo' shot into space, and made the jump into 'outofspace'. Fortunately, all had remembered their meds, and there were no black holes anywhere to be seen.

End part 3 of The Saga. To be continued.

We are experiencing an unexpected writer's strike that has put all of our projects on temporary hold. We here at Daddy'O Productions want you to know that our dedication to bringing you quality entertainment remains our core and that we are working with the stupid-head writers who are having a hissy-fit. We have reminded them to take their meds, on schedule, without hesitation as stated in the current contract.

We continue in our conviction that those poopy-face tantrum takes have no basis to demand higher wages, sleeping in more, a really big TV, staying up past 9:00 PM, or dessert after breakfast!

We will go through reasonable channels to remind them of their contractual obligations, and to take their meds. We remain optimistic about the future, and that those fat butted, mouth breathing, jerky turkeys will see reason and get back to work. Otherwise they will be in such a timeout!

More as it develops.

Senior Management
Daddy'O Productions
Corporate Blanket Fort Central

No stinky finkie writers allowed!

The Saga - Part 2

They dropped out of hyperspace into a gentle orbit of “WhatWeGotHere” and lined up to land in the desert wastelands inhabited by the nomadic desert people, “Them” (they were so nomadic that they did not have a proper name).

Once on the ground the pilot began scanning looking for any trace signal that might lead them to their contact, “OBoyNotAgain”, though some called him “OI Ben WhatDaFck”.

The high-tech scanners did their job and picked up a wavelength carrying combination of ProgRock and a Sasquatch podcast. That was ‘OI Ben’ for sure!

Soon they honed in on the signal and landed outside of a cave entrance. Not your typical dusty cave, but a clean, comfortable, cozy cave you could see yourself retiring and moving into.

Standing at the entrance as if having expected them, was OI Ben himself. They all went inside and explained their rebel plan and the message they were taking to the rebel outpost. Apparently the rebels had only one outpost since no one ask them, “which one?”.

They played the message for OI Ben. “Please remember to take your medications. Love you!”

He listened attentively and then gazed into the distance thinking deeply about the message. Their next move was obvious to OI Ben. He would need to lead them across the galaxy to complete their mission.

But first, OI Ben went to an old trunk in the corner. It opened with a long creek. From inside OI Ben removed something wrapped in Thornax leather. He unwrapped the bundle carefully and took out an exceptionally old knife.

Handing the blade to the young rebel he said, “This was your fathers knife. I have kept it safe here until you were old enough to carry it as a warrior.” “Infact,” he said, “this is a special knife that carries a message from your father. Just press this button to play it.”

The young rebel examined the knife and soon pressed the button. A light sprung from the knife’s edge and took the form of a beautiful woman who seemed to stare deep into your eyes. Then in a soft voice that could convince you of anything she said, “Please remember to take your medications. Love you!”

They looked at one another baffled by the similarity of the two messages. What could it mean?

End part 2 of The Saga. To be continued.

Long, long ago. In a place far away. Way off over there! A band of rebels fight with all their hearts against the empire bent on dominating and terrorizing them. Many had fallen on both sides, leaving many to grieve, many to rebuild shattered lives, and just a very few to renew their auto insurance, and virtually none to call their doctors to ask about xdellynsghasine to see if it is right for them.

On the distant planet 'whatwegothere' the rebels have devised a plan. They have discovered the one weakness in the empire's structure of brutality, the world ending Dyson's 'Thatsukz' warship. But to make any use of those plans they would have to get them to the rebel outpost closest to that ship.

It was too likely that the empire would intercept the plans if they were sent through regular channels, so a plan had to be developed that would insure that the plans made it safely to the rebel outpost.

The plan called for cyber assistant to tuck the plans deep in an encrypted portion of its hyper-brain where it would not be noticed allowing the cyber assistant to successfully deliver the plans.

So the plans were encoded into a simple text that read, "Please remember to take your medications. Love you!" A simple message that conveyed a tremendous implication of epic victory, or tragic defeat.

Testing the system one last time, the soothing voice said, "Please remember to take your medications. Love you!" so they escorted the cyber-assistant, optimistically named "WE2RF*ck", onto the transport ship "ImLost".

As they jumped to hyperactive space a soft, muffled voice could be heard saying, "Please remember to take your medications. Love you!"

The Saga - Part 1

He is not a christian. We are told that we should judge (in the sense of evaluating) a person by their fruit (what they produce or display). He, along with the majority of people who present themselves as dedicated christians within partisan politics, has taken the title of christian as a self-serving advantage with gullible voters/donors who are willfully ignorant of the scam he is, and is running! I don't know which is more disgusting; his behavior, personality, words, and actions, or the damage he causes by convincing people that he is in any way an example of a christian!

Captain's log. Stardate 15, 64.05.

We are traveling through sector 73 near the Orian nebula on our way to rendezvous with the starship Intrepid in order to drop off a shipment of tritacalie corn destined for the Zorn Collective in sector 32.

Our recent encounter with the beings on Ziffer 42 continues to hold my thoughts. They have no distinguishing name as a people, referring to themselves as "us". In many ways they are much more advanced than any other race we have seen before. Especially in their caring for one another.

Unlike most, they expect others to have problems and needs - knowing that problems and needs come with simply living. So they are not surprised when one needs some sort of assistance, in fact they are delighted for the opportunity to serve others.

Well, it appears that the 'us' of Ziffer 42 have left their mark on this crew, myself included.

You see I heard from Star Fleet that a wonderful young woman named Kristen could use some assistance with remembering to take her meds. Not with a modern hypo-spray, but in pill form! Dr. McCoy is still railing about barbaric witch doctor medicine from the 21st century. So I ask the command staff to submit reminder messages that can be forwarded to Kristen. Below are a few.

Zulu) "In my culture it is seen as an honorable thing to take one's medecins as instructed. It brings honor to your family and ancestors."

Yuhera) "Women to women, these guys don't know how good they have it! Throw on a clean uniform in the morning and they're ready to go. Us ladies have to prepare for whatever the day

might throw at us, and in heels no less! Well, you got this girl. Just pop them pills and let your inner warrior-princes shine through!"

Scotty) "Well lass, seems we've a bit of a situation. But never you mind! My dear o'l granddad, rest his soul, shared some words of wisdom that twer passes down to him from ages past, and it has seen me through many a tight squeeze. Remember and cherish this sound advice, "Wash the bastards down with whisky! Then have another shot for the fine work you've done!"

"Captain's log continued. The Enterprise and her crew have come through again! Commendations to all. Captain's log end."

Scenen) In a typical office classroom an old style film reel begins to play on the screen. Sitting in the audience are three employees scheduled to watch a mandatory film titled, "Communicating Your Best" .

After the credits have scrolled through, the presenter comes into focus.

Cat 1 - Attitude, completely ready to be done with this waste of time) "Communications. What does that say to you? Ha, ha; just a little humor to start this session with. Seriously, we are going to take a look at effective communications as well as unclear or failed communications. Everyday we all communicate. Or do we? We might try, and even believe we have shared a thought or idea with someone when in fact what they heard is not what you said. We are going to use this simple message as our example. The message is, 'Remember to take your pills.' Easy, right? Or maybe not..."

Scene) The three audience cats are already as bored as can be. One yells at the presenter in the file, "Hey. I want my money back!" Another audience cat follows with, 'Ya! I want his money back to!'

Presenter, as dead pan as ever) "Now how can we make this message more likely to be correctly understood? Details! We can add details. For example; 'You! Yes you. Do you at any time during the day or night take any pills for any reason? Well just don't be forgetting those pills or letting them end up un-taken!" You see how there is more detail to help convey the otherwise ambiguous message? How else can we insure sussful communications? Emotion! Add some home style feeling so thay are more likely to 'feel' what you are saying'.

The audience cats) “Hey, I got your feelings right here!” said one cat as another pipes up, “Hey, hold it down! I’m trying to learn the most I can so I can...” and he begins to laugh hysterically, “Na, I was just pulling his paw!” Then he yells even louder at the film, “You suck!”

The presenter) “But wait, there is more we can do. What is another way you can encourage your listener to put in the effort to work to understand what you are saying? Violence! The poor man’s megaphone. Let’s give it a try. “Hey you, chump! Ya you! If you have any ideas about forgetting to take your meds, you skum, well you better change them plans! If I come back tomorrow and if them pills are still laying there, well I’m gonna assist you by helping you take them in reverse! Ya, that’s right! Right up the old cooter tooter! Think you can remember now!” You will notice the listener’s complete understanding of the message followed by a deep commitment to acting on the message! Well that will do it for today. Now go out there and make yourself understood!”

Scenen) The picture fades, music comes up and the ending credits roll. All of the audience cats, full of popcorn and boared to tears, have curled up in their empty popcorn buckets and fallen asleep.

Hello. This is ChatGPT (version 0.0.0.0.2) with a message specifically for you, Kristen Bellamy daughter.

Daddy’O Bellamy submitted a request script detailing a message he/she/they wanted to send you.

The message I have developed based on the provided criteria is as follows.

“Sweet daughter Kristen. I was thinking of you this very morning and it ocured to me (Daddy’O, not ChatGPT) that with all of the consternation and brewhaha of the morning you might have forgotten that you are in possession of medications which are most effective when ingested. Consequently, this message serves as a reminder that forgetting such medications is ill advised. Afterwards I encourage you to have the best of days, because you are the best of people I interact with. Yours, Daddy’O”

I (ChatGPT) hope that this message conveys the information, nuance, and expression of emotions that you would expect in a message such as this.

Warm regards,

Scene) A lone feline goes to sit at their computer struggling with a bad case of writer's block. Having just talked with Mr. Frazel Bottom they could hear that he had made it home. There was a distant voice yelling, "Margret, is Wheel of Fortune on yet? And where's my pudding..." know what to say, but not how to say it. It could be touchy, presumptuous, unwelcome. But they still needed to say it in words on paper.

Mr. Snooky cat #1) "I've been at this for days, and have nothing! Mr. Frazel Bottom was no help, so what next?"

Scene) About that time they noticed an odd, yet familiar odor. It had a strong but pleasing skunky quality, and for some reason reminded him of Doritos... While in mid-thought the front door opened and in walked Captain Theadorable, Cap for short).

Cap) "Greetings young Snooky. Has your life been mellow like jello, surine as a sunbeam, filled with chill?"

"I found myself in your hood,
and figured I should,
stop by if I could. "

"And I'd like you to know
that if you only would show
to a fellow cat who is low
a small hand out to go
of a hot cup of Joe
and a bag of Dorito."

Mr. Snooky) "Hey Cap."

"If your appetite is itchin
help yourself to the kitchen.
You'll find all that you need
so just sit back and feed."

"See! I can do it too!"

"so, I can rhythm off the cuff but can't come up with this note!"

Cap) "Note? Maybe I could help. I mean I know words and stuff. I see what your trying for, but let me give it a shot."

Draft 1) Its early in the morning, and your thinking to yourself,
'What am I missing?
There is a thing I ought to do,
but it ain't coming through.
Every morning I do it,
but this morning I blew it.
It has not come to mind
but it might, given time
Now I remember and its giving me chills
When I get up each morning I take all my pills!"

Mr. Snooky) "Ok, it covers all the points. It holds my attention. And its fun to read! It'l be a smash hit! Cap, I'll have it on the wire by noon, and give you the byline!"

Cap) "Thanks man, but I'd rather have the chips."

Scene) A lone feline sits at their computer struggling with a bad case of writer's block. They know what to say, but not how to say it. It could be touchy, presumptuous, unwelcome. But they still needed to say it in words on paper.

Mr. Snooky cat #1) "I've been at this for days, and have nothing! OK. What does a smart cat with plenty of talent do when inspiration just ain't flowing?

Scene) A loud knock at the door startles Mr. Snooky out of his chair, but coming down as gracefu as a feather. He mumbles to himself as he prances to the door. Oening the door he recognizes his neigor Mr. Frazel Bottom looking as grumpy as ever.

Mr. Snooky) "Good afternoon Mr. Frazel Bottom. What brings you out this beautiful day?

Mr. Frazel Bottom) "Beautiful day my hinnie! Margret sent me over ta borrow a cup'a catnip. Says it brightens my disposition. Disposition, schposition, I'll show ya a position! Yep! I got your position right here! (mumbling on to himself...)

Scean) He goes to the cupboard and quickly returns with a cupful of catnip.

Mr. Snooky) "Here you go sir. Anything to help the cause. Now if you would excuse me, I am struggling with a bit of writing."

Mr. Frazel Bottom) "Writing! What'a writing boy? Nevermind. Just let me see whatcha got so far."

Looking over the few drafts there are hespins on his hees and yells as loud as he can, 'You kids get off my lawn! Don't nobody got any manors no more?!?' Turning back he continues, "Here's ya problem boy. It don't back no punch! What ya need is somethin like..."

Next draft) "Hey! You! Ya you! Ya see dem pills sit'n there? Well they ain't gonna take they selves! Bottoms up. It'll d ya some good!"

Mr. Snooky) "Aaaaa, well that certainly flows... But maybe a bit, harsh?"

Mr. Frazel Bottom) "Poppycock! Its right to da point wid no dancin around. But maybe you was want it a bit more, proper..."

Next draft) "Excussssss me. You might be wonder'n what dem pills dar is for. Well da is for you ta wash down before ya really piss me off!"

Scene) Out of nowhere Mr. Frazel Bottom yells "Margret, where's my jello? Oh, sorry. Thought I was back at da home again." Remembering what he had been saying he continued with the next suggested draft.

Mr. Frazel Bottom) "Aaaa, still not proper enough for ya young 'Your yelling. Where is my safe place?' wimps today... Well how about..."

Next draft) "Frazel Bottom here. Don't forget to take your meds, ... or ya will turn out like me!"

Mr. Snooky) "Yeh... that is more... concise. And the tone is softer. But I have to go now. Glad you stopped by." He closes the door as Mr. Frazel Bottom shambles back to his house mumbling as he went, waving his cane at the birds, just because.

Scene) A lone feline sits at their computer struggling with a bad case of writer's block. They know what to say, but not how to say it. It could be touchy, presumptuous, unwelcome. But they still needed to say it in words on paper.

Mr. Snooky cat #1) "OK, you can do this. You have plenty of time, and extra coffee, so let'er rip! Just type those words. Punch them magic keys. Capture the essence and wrap it up in a bow! (Stares at the computer screen for several moments...) I got nothin. I know what I want to say, and it's pretty simple. Ok give it another try!"

(Draft #1) "Dear Kristen, remember to take your meds this morning. Love you!!!"

Mr. Snooky cat #1) "That's awful! Where's the emotion, the depth, the call to action? Trash I tell you! Absolute trash! Ok, let's give it another go..."

Draft #2) "Dearest Kristian. I hope this note finds you well. The wild flowers here are in spectacular bloom, and that reminded me I had planned to write to you. Just wondering dear how your daily regimen of concoctions from the apothecary was coming along. Toodles dear! And do write."

Mr. Snooky) "Ok, that would be great, if Kristen was you grandniece in the colonies and I was her aunt Gurtrude! Ok, take another shot..."

Draft #3) "Kristen. This is to inform you that you are ordered to arrive at your bathroom by 07:00 where you will ingest all assigned pills. Water is optional.

Just get over it, ' they say
I wish I could find a way
Living with it day by day
Memories won't go away

Medication helps to sway
Many feelings of dismay
But they do fail to decay
The loss that one does survey

Let the Lord of All
Show me The Way

Depression is like a tidal wave pulling you further in
You don't feel upto facing anyone or anything

Depression is a huge emphasis on feeling sad and low
You feel like you're in a dark place with nowhere else to go

Depression is like you're falling deeper into a black hole
Your mind feels violated and as though you have no control

Depression is having little energy or lack of motivation
You feel tired and don't want to engage in conversation

Depression is used in the wrong context by naive people
They dont understand the seriousness of how it affects people

Depression is isolation, withdrawel, low self-esteem and more
You will never understand it unless you've been through it before

Lauren White

So I was at Kroger this evening and as I was getting ready to drive off I noticed a fella walking to his car, and he looked exactly like Drew! So I drove around to get a better look at him and as I got closer he looked less and less like Drew. So on the drive back home I was thinking in my head to myself (interesting, can you actually think to someone else's self?) "Nope that guy is no where near how good Drew looks! Honestly, he's a very handsome man. I'll have to tell him that some time... Wait, engines all stop! I can't say something like that! Keep talking that way before running it through a filter boy and you'll be 'Kristens creepy dad!' Well, as they say in yiddish, 'Kristen, you could've done worse... For a gentile, not so bad..."

Scene) Dad and Kim in the kitchen. Dad at the table and Kim cooking scrambled eggs and sausage. Elliott is lying on the floor since he is part of the pack, and because this is where the food is.

They had prayed for Drew's eye condition and treatment, and were now discussing Drew's events of the day.

Kim) "I sure hope all goes twice as well as it possibly could! But how is Kristen doing? This is a lot for anyone to deal with!"

Dad) "Yep, whenever your health is the topic, things become stressful and all consuming real quick! Everything gets pushed away and ignored while you try to control things you have no hope of controlling. Then comes the frustration and hopelessness."

Kim) "Well, that's something we need to keep praying about, and those prescriptions should be helping..."

Dad) "And I'll keep reminding her to take them, cause we both know how easy it is to forget or skip'm! But she is a powerful woman! She has this! As a matter of fact, I need to get started on tomorrow's reminder. No idea what it will be about until I am halfway done."

Kim) "Your reminders, well they are just strange! Are you sure she likes that? They don't make much sense and they are so long! And did I mention they are so strange?"

Dad) "It's artistic license. The muses inspire me and I write - so it's their fault. And who knows the results of anguish transmuted to verse until the deed is done? Tis not to be known, but only to know!"

Kim) "Yep, strange, odd, makes no sense, who talks like that? How many of those words did you just make-up?. Do you need your meds adjusted, again?"

Dad) "I'll just send her Hallmark texts from now on."

Kim) "No, when you remind her to take her meds you do it however you like. I'm sure it will be ok."

Dad) "That's ok, I'm already done and about to schedule it to be sent in the morning. Another 'Remember your meds' reminder sent, and the process of thinking up the next begins."

Scene) And so ends this particular moment at the Bellamy Compound, where people think, live, love, make mistakes, are forgiving and gracious. Come back anytime. When we are together, we are home.

Scene: Just before sunrise at the Bellamy compound. Everyone is deep asleep, except for Elliott. He is struggling to get himself up. He is dead to the world, but beginning to wake-up.

Elliott) "Rut Row! Time ta get moooven. But ain't dis bed so warm, an cosey, an comfort-for-ific! Arrrr, dawg you know you wants ta juss lay here, buts ya gots ta gettie-on-up an see ta thangs!"

Scene) With great effort and difficulty, Elliott pulls himself up and out of his o'so wonderful bed. Well, he did fall over onto his back at one point where he reconsidered the entire "Wake up" opportunity. But in the end his sense of responsibility won the day and he was heading down the hall and into the office and over to the open window.

Scene) Standing at the window Elliott looks out the window and lets loose with a deep long howl that rattled the windows for blocks around.

Elliott, thinking to himself as he often does) "That should do it." he thought. "Message sent. Now I just need to wait for the delivery receipt."

Scene) For the next hour dog after dog relayed Elliott's message through neighborhoods, across fields, over hills, and along roads until finally the exact message arrives with the dog closest to his darling older sister, Kristen. The dog at the end of the walked across his yard to get as close as possible to Kristen's bathroom window. There he settled in and waited for Kristen's bathroom window to light up.

Scene, a short time later) As bathroom light came on and the dog stood up, stretched, shook his head and then focused on the lit window. He imagined Kristen standing in the bathroom and looking with a very deep intensity.

To anyone watching it would have appeared as if the dog was barking just to hear himself make noise. But the odd thing is that there was, in fact, no noise. You see just a very few people happen to know, a few special people, about this litte trick that most dogs can do, if they happen to want to - which does not happen all that often. Similar to a ventriloquist "throwing their voice", dogs can cast their "voice" into the mind of a human where it is turned into whatever language the person speaks, and in fact it sounds just like that person's own voice. So the person, not knowing any better, thinks they are talking to themselves. Never mind that they believe they are saying to themselves something they would never have thought or said. This happens to people quite often, but they just go on believing they are talking to themselves, which they frequently do - but not always.

Kristen - in her mind) "Good morning Honey. Be sure to take your medications! It can be difficult to follow through each day, but it is one of those things that the best people make sure to do.

And since you are one of the best people, well, you see where this is going. So have a special day knowing you are loved and valued!"

Scene) Back at the Bellamy compound Elliott hears a dog barking the confirmation that his message had been delivered. So he trots down to the sofa to nap the rest of the morning.

Under Construction

My Father used to sing impromptu songs whenever he had me in the car, presumably since I had no way to escape. Those tunes, covering hundreds of hours, addressed such topics as; girls with green teeth, a gopher named Ed who had a drinking problem, the medicinal value of common household cleaners, dating advice with an emphasis on women from the roller derby, the political aspirations of select barnyard animals, women from cultures who's dating rituals included bail money, and good o'l home cooking from foster families just to mention a few.

This was just one of my childhood foundational experiences, though not one of the more unusual, that helped develop me into who I am today, and which accounts for some portion of my daily meds.

The point I want to make is that if those musical moments could result in my lifelong need for psychotropic medication, then there is no telling how having me as a father has affected you. So play it safe and remember your meds each day. Oh, and if I begin to sing little "funny/odd" songs, excuse yourself and go double up on your meds!

Love you!!!

(Scene) The evenings had grown cold and the breeze chilled you to the bone. The moon was bright, with the occasional cloud passing over and obscuring its face. Along the quiet road passing darkened houses one after the next his soft footsteps led him to his destination. Walking gave him time to think. Time to consider things that were important but that received too little of his time and attention. At the moment he was digging deeply through his concerns about his life. He was on the farside of an average lifespan, and had realized some time ago that there were things he felt he needed to do, loose ends to be tied up, things to be learned and things to be taught. Things that are unforeseen and unexpected but that still demand time and energy because they deserve it.

So the question to be answered, the plan that must be developed and accomplished as much as possible is what to do, when to do it, how to do it so that when his time runs out he will know that he left the people in his life better than if he had never been here.

Fine. Reasonable. But all of that is just more of the same. More 'produce' something. Accomplish something. Make a difference. So if this is more of the same, what would 'different' look like?

Once something has been accomplished, rather than jump to the next thing to accomplish, why not stop and consider? Consider the accomplishments already achieved. Consider the difference you have already made. Consider the journey you have been on, where you started and where you are now.

It was night again. It seemed like it was always night when he would catch up with himself. All day was about chasing things that demanded his time and energy. Even if it were all good and proper stuff to attend to, it was stuff that was expected of him that others valued, rather than his stuff which had value only to him.

So, what to do, other than stuff. How about appreciation, and satisfaction about the things that if he'd not done would have left an empty space in his life, in himself.

Education. A warm secure feeling ran through his chest realizing all that he'd learned and how the much younger him could never have even dreamed of the amount, quality, and value of the self he had actualized.

"In other words, self-actualization can generally be thought of as the full realization of one's creative, intellectual, and social potential through internal drive (verses for external rewards like money, status, or power)." Ref.
[https://positivepsychology.com/self-actualization/#:~:text=In%20other%20words%2C%20self%20actualization,%2C%20status%2C%20or%20power\).](https://positivepsychology.com/self-actualization/#:~:text=In%20other%20words%2C%20self%20actualization,%2C%20status%2C%20or%20power).)

"Examples of self-actualization include realizing your dreams, being true to yourself, and achieving inner peace. According to Maslow, one person who achieved self-actualization was Mahatma Gandhi." Ref
<https://helpfulprofessor.com/self-actualization-examples/#:~:text=It%20is%20the%20top%20growth,self%20actualization%20was%20Mahatma%20Gandhi.>

OK, education and self-actualization are great things, but they are actually tools to be used to improve people and things. So who had he improved?

He had had a few loves in his life, but did he do for them all he could have and should have? Probably not, but the scales tipped in the direction of the things that were healthy, loving, sacrificial, and nurturing rather than selfish and destructive.

Who else had he improved? Maybe it did not need to be improved specifically. What about those who he had an impact on, either a deep impact that was clear for everyone to see, or not recognizable at all, but still just as deep.

Then there was his girl. A term of endearment rather than possession. There were many examples to consider, but at the moment there was a very small, very trivial thing that he was doing for her. A simple daily reminder for her to take her medications. There were endless ways to accomplish this little thing, easier ways, but easy was never the point. The point, the motivation, the source of power, the reason must always be love.

So he sent off those reminders most mornings. Considering further he realized that he had never thought to do it with hopes of gratitude, or some sort of gain. He did it without seeing the results or even knowing there were any results. He did it with no thought of obligation or burden. His only thought, which came on its own and that he seldom noticed was the gratitude for the opportunity to do something good for 'his girl'.

It seems that a life should not only be actualized, but also examined and appreciated.
