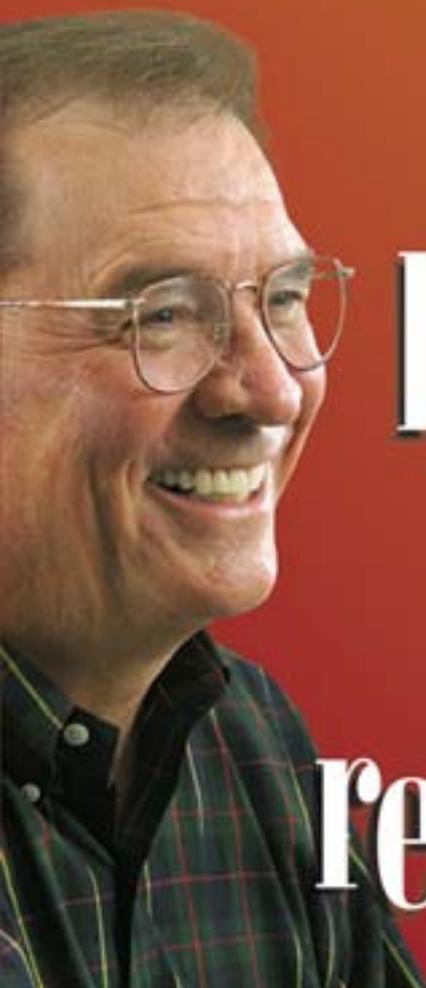


# PAUL W. POWELL

45 Years of My Best Jokes



a funny  
thing  
happened  
on the  
way to  
retirement

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retirement

**Paul W. Powell**  
**Tyler, Texas**

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*Dedicated To*

*Milton Cunningham*

*Russell Dilday*

*Richard Jackson*

*Phil Lineberger*

*Four fun preachers, who like a funny story.*



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# Foreword

A church was considering as interim pastor a young preacher who was known for his use of humor in the pulpit. When his name was mentioned in a committee meeting, a distinguished seminary professor within the church questioned aloud whether the young man possessed sufficient dignity for the task. He asked if the preacher recognized the “gravity” of filling the esteemed pulpit. A deacon in that same meeting pounded his fist on the table and retorted, “We’ve had enough gravity around here. It’s time to laugh.”

Just as surely as the Bible reveals that there is an appointed season for weeping, there is indeed “a time to laugh.” (Ecclesiastes 3:1) I discovered some years ago that any time spent with Paul Powell, listening with delight to his humorous illustrations, is a “time to laugh.”

No pastor within recent Baptist life has been more appreciated by other pastors for his humor, insight and courage than Paul Powell. No doubt, it was his gift for humor coupled with his outstanding leadership ability that enabled him to help build the great Green Acres Baptist Church of Tyler. His wonderful stories amused us all, and they did not stop when he assumed the presidency of the Southern Baptist Annuity Board. It’s worth noting that his marvelous ability to tell humorous stories never diminished our respect for him or our confidence that the Annuity Board was in good hands.

Every successful preacher learns that people appreciate humor, and they learn from humor. When

people laugh, they become more open to new insights and understanding. And a humorous story used at an appropriate time can serve to ease a tense situation. Effective leaders know how to help people laugh. I am grateful to Paul Powell for sharing these stories with church leaders and to the Texas Baptist Leadership Center, Inc., for making this book possible.

Dr. Charles Wade  
Executive Director  
Baptist General Convention of Texas

# Introduction

Through the years I have been fascinated by the differences between human beings and other animals. One of the differences that first impressed me is the fact that man is the only creature who both laughs and cries because he's the only one who knows the difference between the way things are and the way things ought to be.

The ability to laugh is therefore one of the things that set us apart from the rest of the animal kingdom and is one of the ways we are like God.

Does God laugh? Oh, yes! We are told so many times in scripture. Look at some of them: "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh" (Psalm 2:4). "The Lord shall laugh at him (the wicked): for he seeth his day is coming. (Psalm 37:13); and, "Thou, O Lord, shalt laugh at them; thou shalt have all the heathen in derision." (Psalm 59:8).

Not only does God laugh but the scriptures tell us we should laugh also. They say, "A merry heart doeth good like a medicine" (Proverbs 17:22). And, "To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: ... a time to weep, and a time to laugh. (Ecclesiastes 3.1)

Laughter is important for many reasons. For one thing, it's a sign of a healthy self image. Dr. John Newport, long time Southwestern Theological Seminary professor, said that neither fanatics nor dictators can laugh at themselves. Both are too insecure. Some preachers are the same way. They act like they are so holy they would never take anything but "St. Joseph's" aspirin. Yet, through the years, some of our most effective preachers have had a great sense of humor - J.D. Cirray, Herschel Hobbs, and the renowned preacher of London, Charles Haddon Spurgeon to name a few. Spurgeon loved life; his favorite sound was laughter. In the pulpit he often leaned back, roaring loudly over something he found amusing. When fellow clergymen, incensed by Spurgeon's humorous bent, railed against him, he responded with a chuckle: "If only you knew how much I hold back, you would commend me. This preacher thinks it less a crime to cause a momentary laughter than a half-hour of profound slumber."

How great was Spurgeon's humor? Addressing a preaching class on the importance of coordinating facial expressions and speech, he advised, "When you speak of heaven, let your face light up, let it be radiated with a heavenly gleam, let your eyes shine with reflective glory. But when you speak of hell - well, your ordinary face will do."

It's especially important for us to laugh at ourselves. We can't take the Lord's work too seriously, but we can take ourselves too seriously. And humor, when used correctly, can be a great tool in communicating. It has long been recognized as one of the best ways to build speaker - audience rapport. It breaks down barriers, builds trust, and creates an atmosphere of response. Herb Gardner said, "Once you get people laughing, they are listening and you can tell them almost anything."

Humor can help us preserve our sanity. Victor Frankl, the Swiss psychiatrist, who endured the atrocities of a Nazi concentration camp, spent considerable time studying the lives of people who had survived these prisons. In his book, *Man's Search For Meaning*, he wrote, "I learned that the people who were most likely to survive were those who had a sense of humor,"

It's hard to imagine anything amusing happening in a concentration camp. And it's often hard to find much amusing in some deacon's meetings. But the people who survive and thrive in the ministry as well as those who survive concentration camps, are those who keep their sense of humor. It's one of the qualities of a good leader and a good healthy self image.

And finally, humor can also be used effectively to illustrate a point. I have often used humor for this purpose. One of the values of this book, perhaps the primary value, is to that end. It contains the best stories I have been able to collect over the years. I have tried to give at least one application for each story and show how it can be used to illustrate a point. And, if nothing else they can serve as a way to laugh at ourselves. I hope you have as much fun telling these stories as I have. Good stories, like good music are timeless. So tell them and tell them again. Your audience will enjoy them every time.

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# 1

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## Favorites

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### 1. Jesus - Our Friend

A church had a pompous preacher they wanted to get rid of. They prayed that he would leave. They recommended him everywhere. But no one would call him.

Finally he received a call to be a pastor in another place. The Sunday he resigned he said, "When I came here five years ago, Jesus led me here. And now Jesus is leading me away."

When he was finished the chairman of the deacons stood and said, "Let's all sing, 'What a Friend We Have in Jesus.'"

*Application: We do have a friend in Jesus.*

### 2. A Poor Preacher

A preacher was speeding down the highway and was stopped by a highway patrolman. As the patrolman was preparing to write a ticket, the minister, hoping to appeal to his sympathy, said, "Officer, I hope you'll show me mercy. I am a poor preacher." The officer responded, "Yes, I know, I heard you last Sunday."

*Application: Some things are obvious.*

### 3. Insecurity

A minister was uneasy about his church situation. He said, “When I went there six months ago they didn’t put my name on the church sign. They hung it on a shingle beneath the sign, and they didn’t paint it on. They wrote it in chalk. Now, for the past three weeks, the chairman of the deacons has been sitting on the front row and tossing an eraser back and forth in his hands.”

*Application: There’s not much security in today’s world.*

### 4. Women Preachers

When the new minister arrived — the first female for this congregation — the deacons debated whether to carry on the welcoming ritual and take her fishing. There was some disagreement, but in the end tradition prevailed.

As the boats moved out in the pre dawn darkness, the pastor realized she had not dressed warmly enough for this expedition. She shivered in silence for a time, but finally decided this is foolish. Not wanting to be troublesome to her boat mates, she gently stepped out of the boat, walked across the water toward the landing to retrieve an extra wrap, and then returned. Everybody watched, wide-eyed, but no one said a thing.

At least, not until the next morning, when several of the grumblers sat sipping coffee at the cafe with friends. The new reverend was the topic of conversation.

“Not only are we stuck with a woman preacher,” said one of the men, “but we’ve got one that can’t even swim!”

*Application: Nobody’s perfect. We all have weaknesses.*

## 5. The Perfect Pastor

Sometime ago I read a letter that described the perfect pastor. It was a takeoff on a chain letter. It read:

“The perfect pastor preaches exactly twenty minutes. He condemns sin, but never hurts anyone’s feelings. He works from 8:00 a.m. until midnight, and he is also the church janitor.

“The perfect pastor makes \$100 a week, wears good clothes, drives a good car, and donates \$50 a week to the church. He is forty years old and has thirty years experience. The perfect pastor makes fifteen house calls a day but is always in his office.

“If your pastor does not measure up, send this letter to six other churches that are also dissatisfied with their pastor, and then bundle your pastor and send him to the church at the top of the list. In one week you will receive 1,643 pastors and one of them should be perfect for your church.

“Have faith in this letter. One church broke the chain and got its old pastor back in three months.”

*Application: Be good to your pastor. He’d be hard to replace.*

## 6. Encouragement from Wife

Preachers are like athletes, they have good days and bad days. There are days when they strike out and days when they hit a home run.

Recently a preacher at a convention had a good day. He felt as though he had “knocked their socks off.” On the way to the hotel from the convention center, he said to his wife, “Honey, how many R-E-A-L-L-Y great preachers do you think there are in America?”

She replied, "I don't know, but there's one less than you think."

*Application: Our wives can put us in our place when they want to. Most of us aren't as great as we think we are.*

## 7. Visitation Gets Results

A young pastor had rung the doorbell at the home of one of his parishioners and was waiting to be received, but no one came to the door. He sensed that someone was at home, but repeated ringing of the bell brought no response. He went around to the back, walked through the garden, and rang the back doorbell several times. As a final departing act he wrote Revelation 3:20 on the back of one of his calling cards and stuck it under the door. When the lady of the house read it, it said: "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any-one hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in."

The next Sunday, as the lady left the church, she handed him a calling card with Genesis 3:10 written on it. When he looked up the text, it read: "I heard Thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked: and I hid myself."

*Application: You can have some interesting experiences visiting for the church.*

## 8. I Don't Want to Go To Church

A mother knocked on her son's door one Sunday morning and said, "Get up, honey, it's time to get ready for church."

The boy responded, "Oh, mother, I don't want to go to

church today. Just let me sleep.”

The mother replied, “I don’t care what you want. Get yourself out of bed, get dressed, and get down to church.”

He responded, “Mother, I don’t want to go! Those people down there don’t like me, and I don’t like them. Just the other day I was walking down the hall and around the corner I heard some people talking about me. And, Mother, they were saying some awful things. Don’t make me go.”

The mother responded, “I don’t care about all that. You get yourself up. You’re going.”

The boy responded, “Why, Mother? Why?”

And she said, “For two reasons. First, you’re forty-five years old. And, second, you’re the pastor and they’re expecting you down there.”

*Application: Some of you didn’t want to be here today but I’m glad you came. There are times when all of us feel no one likes us.*

## 9. Preachers — Don’t Pay Any Attention to Critics

A guest preacher stood at the back door with the pastor to greet the people as they left church. A man stopped and said to him, “That sermon was terrible. The worst I have ever heard in my life.” In just a few moments he came through the line again, and this time he said, “That sermon was so bad, your wife could have done better.” Then he came back in line a third time. This time he said, “That sermon was so bad, I could have done better myself.”

The guest was astounded. He turned to the pastor and asked, “Do you have any idea what that man has been saying to me?” The pastor responded, “Don’t pay any

attention to him. He's the village idiot and he just goes around repeating what other people are saying."

*Application: When criticism comes, consider the source.*

## 10. Remembering Names

I feel like the young preacher who had just gone to a new pastorate. His picture had been in the newspaper, in the church mail-outs, and he was on television. So he thought everyone in town should know him.

He went to the nursing home to visit an elderly member of his congregation. As he walked down the hall she was sitting in a wheelchair outside her room. He walked up to her with a smile on his face, stuck out his hand, and said, "Do you know who I am?" She replied, "No, but if you'll ask the lady at the nurse's station, she may be able to tell you."

*Application: I hope you'll help me know your name.*

## 11. Showing Life

A 90-year-old man asked an 80-year-old woman out on a date. The lady lived with her children and they were a bit apprehensive about her going. Before she left the daughter made her promise she would be home promptly at 10:30.

Ten thirty came and they were not home. Eleven o'clock came and they still had not returned. The daughter and son-in-law were married. Finally, at 11:15 they came home.

The daughter asked her mother, "How did things go?" She replied, "Just fine. But, I had to slap him three times."

The daughter responded, "Because he got fresh with

you?" "No," replied the mother, "to see if he was still alive."

*Application: I hope you'll be on time so we won't worry about you.*

## 12. Optimism

The most optimistic person I know was an 85-year-old man who married a 35-year-old woman and immediately began looking for a larger house near an elementary school. That's optimism.

*Application: Stay optimistic all your life.*

## 13. Hard of Hearing

A man said to his friend, "I bought me a new hearing aid last week and it is wonderful."

His friend responded, "Oh, what kind is it?"

The man (looking at his watch) said, "It's a quarter till three."

*Application: I hope you can hear this.*

## 14. Short Sermon

A preacher preached a sermon much shorter than usual. When he was finished he apologized, saying, "I have this dog who has a mania for paper. He loves paper. And, anytime we leave a piece laying around he eats it. Well, last night I was studying my sermon when the phone rang. I laid the sermon down to answer the phone and when I came back the dog had eaten half of it."

Following the close of the service, as the parishioners left the church, one man stopped and said, "Pastor, you don't know me. I'm a visitor. I was passing through your

city today and stopped to worship. But, I have a request to make of you. If that dog of yours ever has pups, I want one for my preacher.”

*Application: There's no such thing as a bad short sermon. I hope you won't mind my being brief today.*

## 15. I've Heard Them, Shoot Me First

A pastor, minister of music, and deacon chairman were on a mission trip to the jungles of South American when their plane went down. All three survived the crash, but they were immediately surrounded and captured by a group of bandits. The leader of the group said, “I'm going to shoot all three of you. But, before I shoot you, I'm going to give you one last request.”

He turned to the pastor and said to him, “What is your request?” He replied, “I have one sermon I have preached all over the world. Wherever I go, people ask me to preach that sermon. It takes one hour to deliver it. I'd like to preach that sermon one last time.” The leader of the bandits said, “Your request will be granted.”

He turned to the minister of music and said, “What is your request?” The minister of music said, “I am a great singer. I'm in demand all over the world. And, my favorite oratorio is 'Elijah.' It takes me one hour to sing all the solo parts to 'Elijah.' I'd like to sing that oratorio one last time.” And again, the leader of the bandits said, “Your request will be granted.”

He then turned to the chairman of the deacons and asked, “What is your request?” He replied, “I've heard both the sermon and the solo. Shoot me first.”

*Application: You may have heard this before, but listen again. I don't keep records because I never expect to get invited back.*

## **16. Your Sermons Mean a lot**

A lady came out of church one Sunday and said to the preacher, "Your sermons have meant so much to my husband since he lost his mind."

*Application: Preachers hear some strange things.*

## **17. False Humility**

A lady came out of church Sunday and said, "Pastor, your sermon was wonderful." Trying to appear humble, he said, "Thank the Lord." She replied, "It wasn't that good."

*Application: Stay humble so you don't stumble.*

## **18. Sleeping in Church**

In the days of the Puritans, when worship services lasted for hours and churches were not air conditioned, worshippers sometimes found it difficult to stay awake the entire service. So, churches had a man who often walked through the congregation with a long pole with a glass knob on the end. When worshippers began to nod, he would reach over with the pole, and using the glass knob, give them a solid thump on the head.

One Sunday he thumped a nodding worshipper on the head, the man raised up, shook his head, and said, "Hit me again, I can still hear him."

***Application:*** *Sometimes it's hard to stay awake in church.*

## **19. You Get What You Pay for in Life**

A preacher went to the grocery store owned by one of his members. He ordered a loaf of bread but he was ten cents short. The owner said, "That's all right preacher, I'll take it out in preaching."

A little annoyed, the preacher said, "But I don't have any ten cent sermons."

"That's okay," he said, "I'll come hear you twice."

***Application:*** *You get what you pay for in life.*

## **20. Denominational Leader**

The Lord stood beside a road one day when presently along came a man limping. The Lord said to him, "What's the matter my son?" The man replied, "I am crippled, Lord, and I cannot walk."

So, the Lord touched his legs, healed him, and he went on his way rejoicing.

Presently, along came a man staggering from side to side. The Lord said to him, "What's the matter, my son?" The man replied, "I am blind, Lord, and I cannot see."

The Lord touched his eyes, restored his sight, and he went on his way rejoicing.

Then, along came a man weeping. The Lord said to him, "What's the matter, my son?" The man replied, "I am a denominational servant." (Or school superintendent . . . or mayor, etc.)

And the Lord sat down and wept with him.

*Application: This is not the best of times to be in denominational work.*

## 21. Same Old Crowd

The local Baptist church burned down and the congregation contracted with a local tavern to hold services in their facilities until a new church building could be erected. On Saturday night, after the festivities, church members would clean up the tavern, rearrange the furniture, and prepare for Sunday morning. The tavern had a talking parrot to entertain its guests.

One Saturday night the cleanup crew failed to remove the parrot. The next morning the choir came in and the parrot said, "I see we have a new chorus line." The preacher came in and the parrot said, "I see we have a new bartender." Then the congregation came in and the parrot said, "Yea, but it's the same old crowd."

*Application: It's good to see you back. I'm glad to be back with you again.*

## 22. Enthusiasm

I leave some worship services feeling like the little boy who went to "big church" for the first time. On the wall of the sanctuary hung a plaque in memory of the young men of that congregation who had died in the armed services. The plaque captured the boy's attention. In the middle of the service he whispered to his mother, "What's that for?"

Hoping to quiet him with the answer she replied, "It has been placed there in memory of the young men who died in the services."

The little boy responded, "Which service did they die

in, the morning service or the evening service?"

*Application: Some church services are so dull and dead a person could die in them and no one would know it until the service was over.*

### **23. Jesus is the Answer**

A minister delivering the children's sermon in church asked, "Boys and girls, what lives in a tree, eats nuts, and has a long, bushy tail?"

One little boy responded, "Preacher, I know the answer is Jesus, but it sure sounds like a squirrel to me."

*Application: Jesus is not the answer for everything.*

### **24. Invitations**

At the invitation a nice looking middle-aged man came forward to join the church. He was introduced to the congregation and then the people came by to greet him. One of our middle-aged ladies said, as she greeted him, "You look just like my fifth husband." He responded, "My soul! How many husbands have you had?" She replied, "Four."

*Application: Preachers see and hear some amusing things.*

### **25. Enthusiasm in Church**

One young man came into a formal congregation and sat on the front row. He was enthusiastic and expressive. After the first hymn, he said, "Amen." Then, following the solo, he shouted, "Praise the Lord!" When the preacher made his opening remark, he declared, "Preach on!"

Finally, one of the deacons who could stand it no more said to the visitor, "Sir, you are going to have to be quiet."

"But you don't understand," said the visitor, "I can't help it. I've got religion." "Well," responded the deacons, "I don't care what you've got, you didn't get it here!"

*Application: It's OK to say amen here. I don't want to be as quiet as some Christians are until I'm in the cemetery.*

## 26. Motivation for Giving

A minister passed the collection plate in his congregation and did not receive as large an offering as he expected. So, he said to the congregation, "I'm going to pass the plates again, and if I don't get a \$20 bill I'm going to tell who I saw out with somebody else's wife last night."

He passed the plates again, and got three \$20's and one \$10 with a note attached, "Don't tell, I'll pay the rest next week."

*Application: Around here we don't try to motivate by intimidation.*

## 27. Father Forgive Them

One young pastor was talking with an older minister about the challenges he would face in the ministry. One challenge that especially fascinated the young pastor was the wedding ceremony. He listened carefully as the old minister outlined each step he should take. In conclusion, the wise advisor said, "If you ever forget what to say, just quote scripture. That's always appropriate at a wedding."

Shortly thereafter the young pastor had the opportunity to test his newly gained knowledge when a

young couple requested that he perform their ceremony. Everything went according to plan until that point of the service where the young pastor was to pronounce them husband and wife. At that point his mind went blank and he couldn't remember what to say next. Heeding the advise of the older pastor, he quoted scripture. Unfortunately, the only scripture that came to mind was, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do."

*Application: We all need forgiveness at times.*

## **28. Pouting**

A husband and wife drove for miles in silence after a terrible argument in which neither would budge. The husband pointed to a mule in a pasture.

"Relative of yours?" he asked.

"Yes," she replied. "By marriage."

*Application: Sometimes it's best to let your mate have the last word.*

## **29. Married the Wrong Person**

I sat on a plane next to a man who had his wedding ring on his index finger. I said, "Say, fellow, you've got your ring on the wrong finger." He replied, "Yes, I know, I married the wrong woman."

*Application: We all make mistakes. You can have some unusual experiences flying.*

## **30. Showing Affection**

A man took his wife to the doctor. After careful examination the doctor could find nothing physically

wrong with her. They sat in his study and she stared at him with a glassy, faraway look in her eye. Finally, after about 30 minutes of counseling he got up, walked around the desk, lifted her out of the chair, and gave her a kiss that took her breath away.

He then turned to her husband and said, "Sir, that's what your wife really needs more than anything else. I prescribe that for her three times a week for the next 30 days." The man said, "Well, Doc, I'm a traveling salesman and I'm out of town a lot. But I can bring her in Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays."

*Application: Be sensitive and affectionate to your mate.*

### **31. Jogging to Solve Problems**

A man went to a counselor who was a jogging enthusiast to discuss his marital problems. The counselor felt the man was uptight and needed desperately to unwind before he could deal realistically with them. So, he suggested that the man run 10 miles a day for two weeks and then give him a call.

Two weeks later the man called the counselor back. The counselor asked, "How are you doing?" The man replied, "Just fine." The counselor then asked, "Have you been doing your jogging?" The man replied, "Yes, I have. Just like you suggested. Ten miles a day for the past 14 days." The counselor then asked, "How's your wife?" The man replied, "How should I know? I'm 140 miles away from home."

*Application: I've been running lately. You can't run away from your problems.*

## **32. Retirement is not so hot**

The first day of retirement I asked my wife, "How would you like to get up and fix me a hot breakfast?" She said, "I'll tell you what . . . why don't you set your raisin bran on fire."

*Application: Retirement is not all its cooked up to be.*

## **33. Thank the Lord, My Prayer is Answered**

A deacon and a preacher each owned a parrot. And each bird knew only two words. The only words the deacon's parrot could say were, "Let's kiss." And the only thing the preacher's parrot could say was, "Let's pray."

Each worked and worked to increase the vocabulary of his bird, but all their efforts were in vain. All the deacon's parrot could say was, "Let's kiss." And all the preacher's parrot would say was, "Let's pray."

Finally, one of them suggested, "Why don't we put our birds together in the same cage and maybe they can learn from one another." So, they brought them together, put them in the same cage and left the room. When they did, the deacon's parrot said, "Let's kiss." The preacher's parrot replied, "Thank the Lord, my prayer has finally been answered."

*Application: Persistency in prayer pays.*

## **34. Knowing the Lord's Prayer**

Two men, neither of whom were very religious, were talking one day and somehow the conversation turned toward religion. One of them said, "I just love the Lord's prayer." His friend replied, "Oh, I didn't know you knew it."

“Oh, yes,” he said, “I’ve known it since I was a child.” His friend responded, “I don’t believe you. In fact, I bet you five dollars you can’t quote it for me.”

The friend replied, “Okay, I’ll take that bet.” Then he started, “As I lay me down to sleep, I pray the Lord my soul to keep. If I should die before I wake, I pray the Lord my soul to take.”

His friend handed him the five dollar bill and said, “You win. I sure didn’t think you knew it.”

*Application: Some people don’t know as much about prayer as they think.*

### **35. I Hope You’ve Had a Good Day**

A man walked into a barber shop one day and the barber said to him, “Have you had a good day?” The man said, “I sure have. I entered a sales contest at my office and won first prize.”

The barber responded, “You did? What did you win?” The man replied, “I won a free trip to Rome, Italy.”

The barber said to him, “Rome is the worst city in the world to visit. Everything is unclean and the people are unfriendly. You are going to have a miserable time.”

The barber then asked, “How are you going to get there?” The man replied, “I’m flying TWA.” The barber responded, “That’s the worst airline in the world. You’re liable to get out over the Atlantic and have the wings fall off of that thing.”

The barber then asked, “Where are you going to stay when you get to Rome?” The man replied, “At the Intercontinental Hotel.” The barber responded, “That’s the worst hotel in Rome. The food is terrible and the service is worse.” Then the barber said, “I suppose you’re going to

try to see the Pope while you're there?" The man replied, "Sure, I am."

The barber then said, "That's the worst idea of all. There will be hundreds of thousands of people there. If the Pope is even in town, he'll be so far away you won't even be able to recognize him."

To say the least, that conversation dampened the spirits of the man for the rest of that day. However, he made his trip to Rome and met his barber on the street about a month later. The barber asked him, "How did your trip to Rome go?"

The man said, "It was great. Rome is the finest city I've ever visited and the people were the nicest I've ever met." The barber said, "Is that right? Well, how about that trip over on TWA?" The man replied, "It was as smooth as silk. It was like sitting in my lounge chair in my living room." The barber said, "Is that right? Well, how about that Intercontinental Hotel?"

The man replied, "That's the finest hotel I've ever stayed in in my life. The food was delicious and the service was better."

The barber then said, "Is that right? Well, how about the Pope? Did you see the Pope?" The man replied, "Yes, I saw the Pope. What's more, I had a personal audience with the Pope." The barber replied, "You did?" The man said, "Yes, I did. And, what's more, during that audience the Pope leaned over, put his hands on my head, and whispered in my ear."

The barber said, "He did! What did he say?" The man replied, "He said, 'That's the worst haircut I've ever seen in my life.'"

***Application: Be careful of criticism. It will come back on you.***

### 36. We All Make Mistakes

A man was seated at a banquet next to a nice-looking, middle-aged lady, whom he did not know. He noticed the name card at her plate said "Emily Post." So, he leaned over to her and asked, "Are you Emily Post?"

She replied, "I am."

He said, "Are you the Emily Post?"

She replied, "Yes, I am."

He said, "Are you *the* Emily Post who wrote the book on etiquette?"

She replied, "Yes, I am. Why do you ask?"

He replied, "You just ate my salad."

*Application: Go easy on yourself, we all make mistakes.*

### 37. People Saying Strange Things

A lady bought a parrot from a pet shop, took it home, and put it in a cage. After a while, the parrot let out a string of curse words that would blister your eardrums. It embarrassed the lady to no end. She scolded the bird, saying, "Listen, you, we don't talk that way around here. And, if I ever hear those words again you will pay for them."

It wasn't long until something else happened and once again the parrot let out a string of profanity the woman could hardly believe. She opened the door of the cage, grabbed the parrot around the neck, took him to the deep freeze, threw him inside, and slammed the door shut. She left the bird there for 30 minutes. When she took him out he was frozen stiff.

She put him back in the cage, let him thaw out, and then said, "Now, you see I mean business. If I ever hear

words like that from you again, something worse is going to happen to you. Now, do you have any questions?"

The bird responded, "Yes, what did that turkey in there say?"

*Application: There are some turkeys saying some strange things out there.*

### **38. A Chance to Witness**

A wino boarded a bus and sat next to a nun. His hair was mussed up, his clothes were wrinkled, and his breath wreaked of alcohol. He opened the newspaper and proceeded to read. Presently he turned to the nun and asked, "Sister, what causes arthritis?"

The sister thought, this is a good opportunity to witness so she replied, "Sin. Pure and simple, sin. Drinking whiskey, smoking big, long, black cigars and carousing. Why do you ask?"

The man replied, "I just read here in the paper that the Pope has arthritis."

*Application: I hope you're feeling OK today. I hope your arthritis is not bothering you.*

### **39. Quick Thinking - What Position Does She Play?**

A man walked up to the assistant manager of the Produce Department at the grocery store and told him he wanted to buy half of a tomato. The assistant manager repeated, "A half of a tomato?" and the man said, "yes."

The assistant manager went to the back where the manager was and said, "Some jerk up there wants to buy half of a tomato . . ." and then realized that the man had

followed him to the back and was standing right behind him. So he added, "And this nice fellow will buy the other half!"

The next day the manager called the assistant manager in and told him, "I liked the way you handled that awkward situation yesterday so well that I am going to move you to Rockport to become manager of that store!"

The assistant manager said, "Rockport?! I don't want to move to Rockport! The only people who live in Rockport are prostitutes and old baseball players!" The manager said, "How dare you! My mother lives in Rockport!" The assistant manager promptly answer, "Is that right? What position does she play?"

*Application: It pays to think fast.*

## 40. Making Comparisons

There were once two brothers who were the sorriest men in three counties. There was not anything they would not do. They lied, cussed, fought, cheated, drank, and chased women. They did it all.

In the passing of time, one brother died. The surviving brother asked the local Baptist minister to conduct his brother's funeral. The minister replied, "Oh, I couldn't do that. Everyone knows how sorry you two boys have lived. There's not anything you wouldn't do. You lied, cussed, fought, drank, stole, and chased women. I just can't do your brother's funeral service."

The brother said, "Preacher, you've just got to do this. And, what's more, if somewhere in the funeral sermon you will manage to say my brother was a real saint, I'm going to pay you \$1,000." The preacher replied, "Well, I didn't realize you wanted that kind of service. I think I can help."

The day of the funeral arrived and the church was packed to overflowing. People wanted to hear what the preacher would say about the deceased. When he stood to preach, the pastor said, "All of you know how sorry this man has lived. There's not anything he wouldn't do. He lied, cussed, cheated, stole, fought, drank, and chased women. He did it all. But, compared to his brother over there, he was a real saint."

*Application: You've just got to make the right comparison.*

## **41. I've Always Wanted To**

An old prospector rode into town one day and hitched his mule to the hitching rail in front of the saloon. Three young cowpokes were standing on the porch and one of them decided to have some fun with the old prospector. So they pulled out their six shooters and said, "Old man, we want to see you dance." Then they began to fire their guns at his feet. As the dust kicked up around him, he began to dance a jig. They kept it up until they had emptied their six shooters. Then, as they began to reload, the old prospector turned around and pulled a double-barreled shotgun off his mule's pack. He cocked both hammers, put the barrel of the shotgun under the nose of the lead cowboy and said, "Son, have you ever kissed a mule?" The young boy replied, "No sir, but I have always wanted to."

*Application: I've always wanted to do this.*

## **42. Hard of Hearing**

A man who was having trouble hearing went to the doctor. The doctor said, "You are a drinking man, aren't

you?" The man replied that he was. The doctor said, "You must quit or you'll go deaf." The man said he would.

He came back in a month and said, "Things are no different," he said to the doctor. "In fact, my hearing is worse." The doctor asked, "Have you quit drinking?" The man replied, "No." The doctor asked, "Why haven't you?" The man replied, "Well, to tell you the truth, doc, what I've been drinking is so much better than what I have been hearing that I've decided to keep it up."

*Application: I want you to listen to me.*

### 43. My Last Book

A man was at a convention and trying to sell one of his books. He asked a friend, "Have you read my last book?" The friend replied, "I sure hope so!"

*Application: You may hope this is the last one.*

### 44. Enthusiasm

A man read in the newspaper that the Jehovah's Witnesses were holding a convention in his city. He didn't know much about Jehovah's Witnesses' beliefs, but he did know that when they held a convention in a city they visited from door to door sharing their faith. He felt he needed to be better prepared to meet them when they came, so he asked his pastor to teach a course on what Jehovah's Witnesses believe and how to witness to them.

Among other things he learned that Jehovah's Witnesses do not salute the American flag. This man was very patriotic so he bought a six-foot American flag and tacked it to the wall of his den and waited anxiously for the Jehovah's Witness convention to begin.

At mid-afternoon, the second day of the convention, his doorbell rang. He went to the door to find a neatly dressed, middle-aged woman with magazines in her hand, standing there. He said to her, "Good afternoon, madam, I've been expecting you. Please come in."

Then he said, "Before you say anything, I want you to follow me." He led the woman into his den, stopped in front of the flag, and asked her to put her hand over her heart and repeat after him. He started, "I pledge allegiance . . ." She responded, "I pledge allegiance . . ." "To the flag . . . of the United States of America . . . and to the republic . . . for which it stands . . . one nation . . . under God . . . indivisible . . . with liberty . . . and justice . . . for all."

He then turned to the lady, "Now, what do you think about that?" She replied, "Well, I don't know, I've been an Avon lady for twenty years . . ."

*Application: We need to be enthusiastic about all we do.*

## **45. I'm Sure I'm Going to Fail**

A young boy came home from school and said to his father, "Dad, I think I failed my math test today." The father, a positive thinking advocate, said to him, "Son, don't talk that way. You need to be more positive."

The boy responded, "Okay, Dad, I'm positive I failed my math test today."

*Application: We need a positive attitude in life.*

## **46. He's a Good Father to the Children**

A wife took her overworked preacher husband to the doctor. The doctor, after examination said, "I don't like

the way your husband looks.” The wife responded, “I don’t either, but he’s a good father to the children.”

*Application: We need to look for the good qualities in our mate.*

## **47. Troubles, got more than you realize**

In my work I travel a lot. And, I have had some interesting experiences. The other day, I pulled up to the curb of DFW Airport to unload my bags. The baggage check-in man came over to my car and began taking my bags to the check-in counter. From out of nowhere a man, obviously late for his flight, rushed up and asked the baggage check-in man to help him. So, the man turned to help him make his flight on time. As he carried the man’s bags to the check-in booth, he dropped one of them and it popped open. When it did, the man lost his cool. He called the baggage check-in man everything under the sun. I have never heard a man talked to like that in all my life.

All the while the baggage check-in man kept calm. He just looked at the man, smiled, and kept saying, “Yes, sir. Yes, sir. Yes, sir.”

When the man turned and walked away I walked over to commend the baggage check-in man. I said to him, “Sir, I want to commend you on the way you handled that very difficult situation. I have never heard a man talked to as you were talked to. And, you responded magnificently. You just smiled and said, ‘Yes, sir. Yes, sir.’ And it’s obvious that that man has a real problem.” The baggage check-in man replied, “Yes, and he really has more problems than he knows.”

I asked, “How’s that?” He replied, “He’s going to Florida and his bags are going to California.”

*Application: We sometimes have more problems than we know.*

## **48. I'm in Sales, not Management**

I travel so much I know the stewardesses and they know me. The other day our plane was caught in some turbulence and a stewardess said to me, "Reverend, do something." I replied, "I'm sorry, I'm in sales, not in management."

She said, "No, do something religious." So, I took up a collection. I got \$13.98.

*Application: We're going to do something religious - we're going to take a collection.*

## **49. Low, I Am With You**

I needed to get to El Paso so I asked a travel agent the best way to get there. She said I could take a plane and get there in one hour, or I could take a bus and get there the next day. I told her I was scared to fly, so I would take the bus. She turned and said to me, "Preacher, you don't need to be afraid. Don't you know that Jesus said, 'I'll be with you always.'" I said, "No, Ma'am, he said, 'LO (L-O-W), I am with you always.'" "

*Application: The fact that the Lord is with us doesn't help us from being afraid at times.*

## **50. Baptist Aren't So Smart**

A handsome Baptist boy from Mississippi, named Billy, met and fell in love with a beautiful, dark-haired, dark-eyed, Roman Catholic girl from Louisiana, named Maria. Things were going well with them and wedding plans were

in the future when suddenly the engagement broke off.

A friend said to Billy, "Man, what happened?" Billy replied, "Oh, I said something about the Pope and Maria got mad and quit me."

The friend replied, "You dummy, didn't you know Maria was a Catholic?" Billy replied, "Sure, I did, but I didn't know the Pope was."

*Application: We Baptist don't know as much as we think we do.*

## 51. Who Shoved Me?

A wealthy west Texas rancher had an unmarried daughter. He decided to give a party and invite every eligible bachelor in the county. He had a big barbecue around his swimming pool. At the appropriate hour he announced that he had filled the pool with man-eating sharks, and that anybody who would swim the length of that pool could have a million dollars, a thousand acres of land, or the hand of his daughter in marriage. They could take their choice.

He had hardly gotten the proposition out of his mouth when there was a splash and he saw a man was literally flying through the water. He popped out on the bank right at the feet of the rancher and the rancher said to him, "Congratulations! I didn't believe anybody would take me up on my offer. But you did and now you have a choice: Do you want a million dollars?" He replied, "No, I don't want that."

"Do you want a thousand acres of land?" the rancher asked. "No," replied the man, "I don't want that." "Well, then, you want my daughter's hand in marriage?" "No," the man replied, "I don't want that."

“Well,” the rancher asked, “what do you want?” The man wiped the water off of his face and hair and said, “I just want to get my hands on the man that shoved me.”

*Application: Sometimes we need a little shove in life.*

## **52. We Just Need to be Motivated**

A man walked through the cemetery one night and fell into an open grave. He tried to get out several times and couldn't. Finally he sat down in a corner to wait for dawn. After a while another fellow, a drunk, came walking through the graveyard and fell into the same grave. The first fellow thought he would sit back and watch the second fellow and see if he could get out. He tried to get out of the grave once and he couldn't and he tried a second time and he couldn't. He tried a third time and couldn't. After a while the first fellow stood up, reached over and tapped him on the shoulder, and said, “Say, fellow, you can't get out of here.” But he did!

*Application: When motivated, we can do things we thought we couldn't.*

## **53. You Take a Chance When You Invite a Speaker**

An old west Texas rancher attended Rotary one Thursday noon. The speaker was long, dry, and boring. Midway through his speech the rancher reached in his holster, pulled out his six-gun, and laid it on the table.

To say the least, this made the speaker nervous. After a while he turned to the rancher and said, “You don't intend to use that on me, do you?” The rancher replied, “Nope, I'm looking for the fellow who invited you here.”

*Application: You take a chance when you invite a speaker like me to come.*

## 54. Too Busy

Two brothers from New York got tired of the fast lane of city life; so they bought a 50-acre farm in Texas. After a few weeks they decided they needed a mule to plow with so they got in their flat bed truck and drove down to a neighbor's farm to see if he had a mule to sell. The neighbor told them people in Texas didn't use mules for plowing any more but he could not resist the opportunity to have a little fun with the city slickers. He pointed to a watermelon patch and said, "I don't have a mule, but I do have some mule eggs. Maybe you'd like to buy a couple and hatch your own. They said, "We don't need that mule till the spring so we'll do that. We'll take two."

They bought the melons, placed them on the back of their truck and headed down the bumpy road toward home. They were almost there when they hit a huge bump and one of the watermelons bounced off the back of the truck, hit the road, and burst open. Seeing what happened, the driver stopped the truck and turned around to retrieve the "mule egg." Meanwhile, a big Texas jack rabbit came hopping by, saw the melon, and began to enjoy it. When the brothers saw the long ears and the furry back, they shouted, "Look, the egg has hatched. Let's get the mule." Well, of course, the jack rabbit took off at lightening speed as the New Yorkers hotly pursued. They gave the chase everything they had, but to no avail. After about 30 minutes chase, they sat down exhausted and one of the men said, "I give up. We're never going to catch that mule." The other brother replied, "Me too, but I think it's just as

well, I'm not sure I wanted to plow that fast anyway!"

*Application: I'm not sure I want to go as fast as I'm going. We need to slow down a little.*

## 55. This is for You

An elderly lady was circling the parking lot of a mall, looking for a parking place when she saw one several spaces ahead. As she slowed down approaching it a young fellow in a 280 ZX whipped around her and pulled in the parking place in front of her.

He hopped out of his car, slammed the door, and pranced by her. She rolled down the window and asked, "Why did you do that?"

He replied, "Because I'm young and fast."

The elderly lady backed her big long Cadillac up about 10 feet, got a running start and crashed into the back of his 280ZX. Then she backed up again, and took another running start and hit it so hard it jumped the curb, hit a telephone pole, and bashed in the hood.

The young man, hearing the crash turned around and saw what she had done to his car. He rushed back to her and asked, "Why did you do that?"

She replied, "Because I'm old and rich."

*Application: No matter who you are, this is for you.*

## 56. You Want a Miracle

A man was walking along the beach one day when he found a bottle. He picked it up, rubbed it and the proverbial genie came out. The genie said, "I'm going to grant you three wishes."

The man, overjoyed, said, "I wish there would be

enough food in the world to feed people. Many are starving to death." The genie replied, "It's done."

The man then said, "I wish we could have peace on earth. There is so much war and conflict." The genie replied, "It will be done."

The man then said, "I've always wanted to go to Hawaii but I'm afraid to fly. I wish you would build a bridge from Los Angeles to Hawaii." The genie replied, "Man, do you know what you're asking? Do you realize how much concrete and steel it would take to build a bridge from Los Angeles to Hawaii? Do you realize that the pilings and the bridge would mess up the ocean currents and would affect El Nino? Ask me something more reasonable."

The man then replied, "OK, I wish every preacher would quit preaching by 12 o'clock Sunday morning."

The genie thought for a moment, then replied, "How many lanes do you want in that bridge?"

*Application: Don't expect any miracles here today.*



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## General

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### 1. Getting Use To Sin

Before their homecoming game, a group of college boys stole the school mascot of their opposing football team. It was a goat. Once they captured it they made intricate plans to smuggle the animal into their dormitory room. "But what about the smell?" someone asked. "The goat will just have to get used to it," the other replied.

*Application: God's people can't afford to get used to sin.*

### 2. Judgmental

A Baptist preacher and an Episcopalian Rector were seated next to one another on a plane. When they learned that each was a minister they immediately began a warm and friendly conversation. Presently the stewardess came to take their drink orders. The Baptist preacher said, "I'll have a diet coke." The Rector said, "I'll have a glass of wine." Almost immediately their conversation cooled and the Baptist turned away and became very quiet.

The Rector noticing the silent treatment tapped the preacher on the shoulder and asked him what was wrong.

The preacher said, "I don't think a man of God should be drinking wine." The Rector replied, "But, my brother, surely you know Jesus himself turned water into wine."

The preacher responded, "Yes, we do. And we'd have thought a whole lot more of him if he hadn't.

*Application: Beware of being judgmental. You don't want to be more spiritual than Jesus was.*

### **3. Lord, do it Again**

A Lutheran minister was driving to New York to see a Broadway show and he was stopped in Connecticut for speeding. The state trooper smelled alcohol on his breath and then he saw an empty wine bottle on the floor, and he said, "Sir, have you been drinking?" And the minister said, "Just water."

The trooper said, "Then why do I smell wine?"

And the minister looks down at the bottle and said, "Good Lord, He's done it again!"

*Application: That's our prayer, "Lord, do it again."*

### **4. Seeing Better**

A snake went to an optometrist to see if he could be fitted with glasses. The optometrist said, "Man, I can't put glasses on you. You don't have a nose. You don't have ears. There's no way you could wear glasses."

The snake then said, "Doc, maybe you could fit me with contact lenses."

The doctor did and instructed the snake to come back in two weeks for a checkup. When the snake returned the doctor asked him how the contact lenses were working. He replied, "Terrific! Doc, these things are great! I went

home and found out I'd been living with a water hose for the past two years."

*Application: I hope you can all see all right. It's important to see things correctly.*

## **5. Financial Trouble**

The chief financial officer/business manager/comptroller of a company came to the president one day to say, "I've got good news and bad news for you."

The president said to him, "Give me the good news first." He replied, "We've got enough money to operate one more day."

The president then said, "What could be worse news than that?" He replied, "That was yesterday's report."

*Application: We've got to hurry. We're behind already.*

## **6. I Got Two of His Cows**

When Mike Ditka was one of the assistant coaches for the Dallas Cowboys, he was hard to live with after a loss.

As a new season began the Cowboys lost the first two games in a row. Ditka was as mad as a bear. So, one Monday morning, Tom Landry picked him up and said, "Come on, we are going hunting."

They drove out to the ranch of a man who had invited them to hunt anytime they wanted to. Landry went up to the door, knocked on it, and asked the man if it was okay if they hunted that day. He said, "Sure, it is." As Tom turned to walk away, the man called him back and said, "By the way, since you are here and since you have your guns, I wonder if you would do me a favor? That old horse out there in the corral needs to be shot. But he has been a part

of our family so long, and he is so special to us that none of us have the heart to do it. I wonder if you would do it for me?" Tom said, "Sure."

On his way back to the car he decided to have a little fun with Ditka. So, he walked up to the car and leaned over the window and said to Ditka, "Can you believe it, that old so and so won't let us hunt on his ranch. I'll show him a thing or two. I'm going to shoot his horse." So, Tom raised his gun up, sighted in the horse, and shot him, and he fell dead. About the time the horse hit the ground he heard two more shots in rapid succession, bang, bang! Mike called out to him, "Hop in, Tom, let's get going. I got two of his cows."

*Application: Be careful that it doesn't backfire on you.*

## 7. Three-legged Chicken

A traveling salesman was driving down a country road in Louisiana and looked out the window and saw a chicken running right along beside his car. He looked down at his speedometer and saw that he was clipping along about forty miles per hour and thought, "My soul, that's a fast chicken." So, he kicked the car up to fifty and the chicken stayed right with him. Then he kicked it up to sixty and it kept right up with him. Then the chicken turned on the back burner, ran right past him, and cut up a trail toward a farmhouse.

He slammed on his brakes and whipped up a country lane to that farmhouse himself. He got out and found the farmer standing by the chicken yard gate and asked, "Are those your chickens?" "Yep," replied the farmer. "They are fast, aren't they?" said the salesman. "Yes, pretty fast," said the farmer.

“How did they get that way?” asked the salesman. “Well,” said the farmer, “we like chickens around here. We especially like chicken legs. So we bred them and crossbred them until every one of those chickens now has three legs.”

The salesman said, “Is that right? How do they taste?” The farmer replied, “Don’t know, we never have caught one.”

*Application: You can be too smart for your own good.*

## **8. Do You Want to Fish or Talk?**

A man lived near a lake, but not on it. He loved to fish and did it often. He had a pickup with all of his gear on it. Among other things he had a large special-made ice chest that fit exactly into the truck. Whenever he went fishing he always came back with that icebox full. In fact, he never came back with it empty and he was never gone very long. He would go, return early, and spend the rest of the day cleaning the fish.

It happened that his neighbor was a game warden. Naturally, he took a great interest in the fact that this man never came back empty-handed. One day he said to his friend, “Can I go fishing with you?” The friend replied, “Yes.” So, off they went.

They got to the lake and put the boat in the water and immediately the man sailed right for the center of the lake. The game warden could not understand why he would stop at that spot. You never catch fish there. You always catch them along the bank. Nevertheless, they stopped and dropped anchor. The man reached into his tackle box and pulled out a stick of dynamite. He lit it and let it burn down to the end and then he threw it out into the water. There was a terrific explosion and fish came up everywhere.

Then he took out a little net and began to pick them up, one by one.

The game warden could not believe his eyes. Finally, he said to the man, "Man, don't you know that what you are doing is illegal?" The man said, "Huh uh." "Don't you know that I am going to have to arrest you for what you have done?" And the man said, "Huh uh." The warden said, "Listen, friend, you aren't taking me seriously. You are my neighbor and my friend and you are in real trouble. Friend, we've got to talk."

The man reached down into his tackle box and picked up another stick of dynamite, lit it, let it burn down almost to the end, pitched it into the lap of his game warden friend, and said to him, "Now, do you want to fish or talk?"

*Application: There's a time to talk and a time to fish.*

## 9. Have a Drink

A Yankee was cruising through the southern part of the United States in his new Cadillac at about 85 miles an hour down a country road when an old farmer in a 1947 beat-up red pickup pulled out in front of him and he hit the farmer broadside. Neither of them was hurt seriously. The Yankee crawled out of the car, the veins in his neck were bulging, his face was red and smoke was coming out of his ears. And the madder he got the more he cussed; and the more he cussed, the madder he got. He really chewed the old farmer out.

The old farmer calmly said to him, "Now, son, don't get all hot and bothered over this. You are getting too excited. You need to calm down." Then he reached in the back of his truck and pulled out a jug of homemade whiskey. He said to the Yankee, "Just calm down, now.

Take a great big swig of this, and you will feel much better.”

So the Yankee took the jug, uncorked it, and took a great big swallow. The farmer then said, “There, don’t you feel better?” The Yankee said, “Yes, I sure do.” Then the farmer turned around and put the jug back in the truck. The Yankee said, “Wait a minute, aren’t you going to take a drink, too?” The old timer said, “Yes, I sure am, just as soon as the highway patrolman gets here and finishes his report on the wreck.”

*Application: You need to think before you drink.*

## 10. Be Responsive

A man from Mars landed his spaceship on earth for the first time. He didn’t know what people looked like or how to deal with them. He landed at a gas station, so he walked up to the gas pump thinking that it was a man. He nudged it with his elbow, and said, “Hey fellow, how are you doing?” Of course, nothing happened. The pump made no reply.

He nudged it a little harder and said a little louder, “Hey fellow, how are you doing?” The pump did nothing. It made no response. So he circled the gas pump, looking it over real good. Then he walked to the other side and gave it another nudge and said, “Say fellow, how are you doing?” Still no reply.

So he got back in his spaceship and went back to Mars. His commander called him in and asked for a report. He asked, “How did things go?” He said, “Fine. The earth is a beautiful place. It’s a wonderful place. I saw people standing on every corner. But they sure were unresponsive. I walked up to this one fellow, nudged him, spoke to him

three times, and he just stood there with his tail in his ear and said nothing.”

*Application: Don't just stand there, do something.*

## 11. I've Come to Talk to You About My Brother

A man went to a psychiatrist wearing a long, flowing robe, long hair, a strip of bacon over his right ear, another over his left ear, and a fried egg on his head. He said, “Doctor, I've come to talk to you about my brother.”

*Application: Don't always talk about others.  
Sometimes we are the person with the problem.*

## 12. Mixed Up Message

A preacher and a merchant in a small town had identical names. The merchant took a train to Los Angeles. A day or so after he left, the preacher died. When the merchant arrived in Los Angeles, he sent a wire back to his wife. The Western Union people mistakenly delivered the wire to the widow of the preacher. When she opened the telegram it read, “Arrived safely, but the heat is terrible.”

*Application: Make sure you communicate to the right person. The weather will be hot so dress appropriately.*

## 13. Germs and Jesus

A mother told her little boy to go wash his hands. He said, “Germs and Jesus, germs and Jesus, that's all I ever hear around here. I have never seen either one of them.”

*Application: We've never seen Jesus but we know he is.*

## 14. Who Wants To Go To Heaven?

A preacher, after describing all the glories of heaven, called for a show of hands of all who wanted to go there. All but one meek little fellow promptly responded. The startled clergyman asked the holdout, "Do you mean to tell me you don't want to go to heaven?"

"Sure, I want to go," said the man, "but I thought you were trying to get up a load for tonight!"

*Application: Make sure you're ready to go whenever the time comes.*

## 15. She'll Want to Go Both Days

A man was assigned to work in an evangelistic endeavor in northern Mississippi. One day he walked up to the porch of a man chewing his tobacco and engaged in conversation. When the time seemed appropriate he said to him, "Are you a Christian?" The man replied, "No, the Christians live down the road about a mile." He said, "Well, you don't really understand what I'm talking about. Sir, are you lost?" "Lost?" he said, "why no, I've lived here all my life and I know right where I am."

"No, no," said my friend. "Are you ready for the judgment?" The old man said, "Well, when is it gonna be?" The friend said, "Well, I don't rightly know. It might be today or it might be tomorrow."

The old man said, "For heaven's sake, don't tell my wife. She'll want to go both days."

*Application: In witnessing it's important to explain things so people can understand you.*

## 16. All You Do is Complain

Once a man grew weary of life, so he went to live in a monastery. The Monsignor explained the rules: “You must first take an oath of silence. Then you study and pray and meditate for an entire year, and you cannot speak a word to anyone. At the end of the year I’ll call you in, and we’ll determine how you did.”

He passed the first year in silence. The Monsignor called him in and said, “You have done well the first year. Now you can say only two words and nothing else. What would you like to say?” The man thought for a long time, and then finally he said, “Food bad.” The Monsignor said, “Obviously you’ve got a ways to go spiritually, so you must spend another year in complete silence. Then we’ll talk again.”

At the end of the second year, the Monsignor called the man in and again said, “You have now been here two years, and we need to evaluate your progress. You can say only two words once again. Think carefully before you speak. Now, what would you like to say?” The man responded quickly, “Bed hard.” The Monsignor shook his head in despair and said, “You still haven’t learned what you need to know spiritually. Go back and spend another year in prayer and meditation and complete silence.”

At the end of the third year he called the man in again and said, “It has now been three years since you came. You may speak two words. Choose your words carefully. Now, what would you like to say?” The man only said, “I quit.” The Monsignor shook his head and said, “Well, I suppose it is just as well. All you’ve done is complain since you’ve been here.”

*Application: All some people do is complain.*

## 17. Let Me Get the Saddle Off Him

A deer hunter came home to a raging wife. She said, "I'm tired of being a deer widow. The next time you go hunting, I'm going." Her husband said, "It's often very cold and we walk a long way and we may not even get a shot." Nevertheless, she was determined and the next time he went hunting, she went.

He put her up a tree and walked off down the draw about a mile and climbed up his tree. About sunrise he heard three shots — ping! ping! ping! — and she began to holler. He jumped from his tree and started toward her. The nearer he got to her, the faster he ran. Then he heard shots again — ping! ping! ping! — and heard her say, "Get away, that's my deer!"

He reached a clearing and saw a long, lanky cowboy standing with his hands up in the air saying, "Yes, lady! It's your deer, but just let me get the saddle off him."

*Application: You deer hunters be careful next week. I don't want to lose any of you.*

## 18. Pessimistic — The Truck Won't Be There

A man wanted to learn to parachute so he took instruction. The instructor said, "When we get at the right spot, I'll tell you when to jump and if you are afraid, I'll push you. Now remember this, all you have to do is count to ten slowly, then pull the ripcord and the chute will open and you'll float down gently to the ground. If by chance the chute doesn't open, don't panic. Just pull your emergency cord and the chute will open and you'll float gently down. Then there will be a truck there to pick you up and bring you back to the airport."

So they went up for his first jump. At the right spot,

out he went. He counted to ten and pulled his ripcord, but the chute didn't open. He didn't panic. He just calmly reached up and pulled his emergency cord, but the chute still didn't open. The man then said to himself, "With my luck I'll bet the truck won't be there either."

*Application: Some people look on the dark side of everything.*

## **19. I've Been On Your Side All Along**

The athletic teams of Duke University are known as the Blue Devils. Their mascot is a young man who wears a devil's suit. One of the school's fraternities was having an initiation of pledges and as a part of their initiation they took a freshman pledge, dressed him in a devil suit, took him to the edge of town after dark, turned him loose, and made him walk back to town.

As he was walking down the road it started to rain. He came around a curve in the road and there was a little country church where they were holding a revival meeting.

The evangelist really had the people jumping. The boy thought, "I can step into the vestibule of the church and no one will be the wiser. I'll wait out the shower and then I'll go on." The trouble was the church didn't have any vestibule. He opened the door and stepped in, and he was, right in front of the whole congregation.

The people were already wrought up emotionally, and the sudden appearance of the devil was catastrophic. Most of them hit the back door, and quite a lot of them went through the windows. There was one heavyset woman sitting right down on the front pew. She surveyed the situation very quickly. She saw the pileup at the back door.

She knew she couldn't get through the window, so she decided the thing for her to do was to try to get out the same door the devil came in.

The problem was the devil had the same idea at the same time and they got stuck together in that door. The lady used every resource she could muster. She smiled at him and said, "Mr. Devil, this is the first time I've ever had a chance to meet you personally, but I want to tell you that I have been on your side all the time."

*Application: You need to decide whose side you are on in life.*

## 20. Lord, I Thought You'd Take Care of Me

Old Charlie died and went to heaven. When he got there, he asked to see the Lord. He said, "I've got a complaint. Lord, I was caught in a terrible flood. The water started to rise higher and higher until finally I got up on the top of my roof to survive. After a while along came a rowboat, and the man said to me, 'Charlie, get in and I'll take you to safety.' But I said to him, 'No, the Lord is going to take care of me. He'll get me out of here.'" Then along came another boat and Charlie said the same thing. Then came a helicopter and he said the same thing.

Soon the water rose above the house and Charlie was drowned. His complaint to the Lord was, "Lord, I thought you were going to take care of me. Why did you let me down?" The Lord replied, "Charlie, I sent you two boats and a helicopter. What else did you want?"

*Application: The Lord uses people to help us. Some people don't recognize the Lord's help when he sends it.*

## 21. How Do You Feel?

A farmer in southern Alabama was on his way to town in a wagon and was hit broadside by a truck. One mule was knocked 35 feet off into a field and the other was knocked 20 feet off into a ditch. The farmer got up and walked away saying he was okay. Later he sued the truck driver.

At trial the lawyer said, "How is it that you are suing my client, seeing at the scene you said you were okay?" The farmer said, "There were extenuating circumstances. As I lay there on the roadside by my wrecked wagon, the sheriff walked over to one of my mules and said, 'This mule has a broken leg. He'll never live.' Then he pulled out a pistol and shot him. He did the same to the second mule. Then he walked over to me and asked, 'How are you doing?' I said, 'Sheriff, I've never been better.'"

*Application: It helps to understand why people do what they do.*

## 22. Do You Remember Me? Do You Want to Do It Again?

A circus owner went broke and had to sell all the animals. He sold all but one elephant. He wondered, "How can I make a living with one elephant?" Finally, he hit on an idea. He said, "No one has ever made an elephant jump over a bale of hay. I'll offer odds of 10 to 1 that no one can do it." So he got a tent, a sign, and toured the country. People put up \$50 for a chance to win \$500 if they could make the elephant jump over a bale of hay. Years went by and no one did.

One day he went to Gladewater. A little eleven-year-old boy, with horn-rimmed glasses and a black attaché case,

came. He said, "What's the deal?" The owner said, "I'll give you odds of 10 to 1 that you can't make this elephant jump. Have you got \$50?" The boy said he did. He walked behind the elephant and opened his attaché case, took out a sling shot with surgical rubber tubing, stretched it out and took a two-inch galvanized nail, drew it back, and sailed it into the seat of the elephant. The elephant not only jumped over the 10 bales of hay, but he knocked down the whole tent.

The man paid off and left, saying, "I've got to get a new act. No one has ever made an elephant shake his head up and down as if to say yes and then back and forth as if to say no.. I'll offer odds of 10 to 1 that no one can do that." He began traveling with great success until he came again, after three years, to Gladewater.

A little boy came in, now 14 years old, with horn-rimmed glasses and a black attaché case. He asked, "What are the odds?" The owner told him 10 to 1 and asked if he had \$50. The boy replied, "Yes," then he opened his case, walked in front of the elephant, pulled out the slingshot, and said to the elephant, "Do you remember me?" The elephant shoot his head up and down. "Do you want me to do it again?" The elephant shook his head back and forth.

*Application: Some things you don't want to do again.*

## **23. You're a Crook**

A little old lady climbed into the witness stand and sat down. The prosecuting attorney began his interrogation. "Do you know me?" he asked.

"Most certainly," she replied. "I've lived in this town all my life, and I know just about everybody who has ever

lived here. I remember you from ‘way back, and the best I can say for you is that you are a crook!”

Taken aback, the attorney asked, “Then I suppose you know the opposing attorney?”

“I most certainly do,” she snapped. “I knew him when he was no bigger than a speck — and he’s a crook too.”

The judge summoned the attorney to the bench and whispered in his ear, “If you ask her if she knows me, I’ll charge you with contempt!”

*Application: You don’t have to tell everything you know.*

## **24. I Threw in the Full Amount**

An old miser called his doctor, lawyer, and minister to his deathbed. “They say you can’t take it with you,” the dying man said, “But I’m going to try. I’ve got three envelopes with \$30,000 cash in each one. I want each of you to take an envelope, and just when they lower my casket, you throw in the envelopes.”

At the funeral each man tossed in his envelope. On the way home, the minister confessed, “I needed money for the church, so I took out \$10,000 and threw only \$20,000 into the grave.”

The doctor said, “I, too, must confess. I’m building a clinic. I took \$20,000 and threw in only \$10,000.”

The lawyer said, “Gentlemen, I’m ashamed of you. I threw in a check for the full amount.”

*Application: We will take cash or checks.*

## **25. George’s Dad Was Not Up the Cherry Tree**

A farmer gathered his six sons around him and

demanded, “Which one of you boys pushed the outhouse into the creek?” No one responded. The farmer said, “When George Washington’s father asked him if he cut down the cherry tree, George told him the truth, and his father was proud of him.” Motivated by this story, the youngest son admitted he was the guilty party. His father picked up a switch and started whipping him. “Wait a minute,” the son cried, “you told me that George Washington’s father was proud of him when he confessed to chopping down the cherry tree.” The farmer explained, “He was, but George Washington’s father wasn’t sitting in the cherry tree when his son chopped it down.”

*Application: We ought to tell the truth even if it hurts. There are many circumstances that play a part in proper discipline.*

## 26. Four Speeches

Will Rogers said, “I have four speeches — the one I wrote, the one I gave, the one I wish I’d given, and the one reported in the newspaper.”

*Application: Don’t believe everything you read in the paper.*

## 27. Knowing the Answer

A monkey, an elephant and a giraffe were walking down a jungle trail when a lion jumped out and roared, “Who’s the king of the jungle?”

The monkey said, “You are” and the lion let him pass. The giraffe said, “You are” and he let him pass.

The elephant grabbed the lion with his trunk, twirled him around in the air three times and threw him up against

a tree.

The lion shook the stars out of his head and said, "Just because you don't know the answer to the question, you don't have to get so sore about it."

*Application: We don't know the answer to every question. We need to be patient with people who don't know.*

## 28. Woodcutters

Two pulpwood cutters from deep east Texas grew tired of cutting pulpwood and decided to go to Dallas and get another job. As they drove down the street, they saw a sign that said, "Love Field." So they whipped their pulpwood truck into Love Field and drove to the main office.

One of the men said to his brother, "You stay in the truck and I'll go in and see if I can get a job." He went inside, found the man who was in charge of hiring, and said to him, "I want a job." The man asked, "What can you do?" He replied, "I'm a pile-it (pilot)." The man said, "We need lots of those around here. You've got a job." He hired him on the spot.

The pulpwood cutter went back outside to the truck and said to his brother, "I got me a job. They hired me on the spot. Why don't you go in and see if they have a job for you?" His brother said, "Okay, you wait here in the truck, and I'll go in and see if they will hire me." He went inside and told the man, "I want a job." The man asked, "What do you do?" He replied, "I'm a woodcutter."

The man said, "Fellow, this is an airline. We don't need any woodcutters around here." The woodcutter then responded, "But, you just hired my brother." The man

responded, “Yes, but he said he was a pilot.”

The brother responded, “Well, how do you think he’s going to pile it if I don’t cut it?”

***Application: In every business somebody has got to chop the wood.***

## 29. The Devil

One bright, beautiful Sunday morning, everyone in the tiny town of Selma, Alabama got up early and went to the local church. Before the services started, the townspeople were sitting in their pews and talking about their lives, their families, etc.

Suddenly, Satan appeared at the front of the church. Everyone started screaming and running for the front entrance, trampling each other in a frantic effort to get away from evil incarnate.

Soon everyone was evacuated from the church, except for one elderly gentleman, who sat calmly in his pew, not moving . . . seemingly oblivious to the fact that God’s ultimate enemy was in his presence.

“Do you know who I am?” The man replied, “Yep, sure do.” Satan asked, “Aren’t you afraid of me?” “Nope, sure ain’t,” said the man. Satan was a little perturbed at this and queried, “Why aren’t you afraid of me?” The man calmly replied, “Been married to your sister for over 40 years.”

***Application: The devil is real and he’s not your brother-in-law.***

## 30. We Need to Speak Up

There was a man who wanted to give his mother a

special gift. She seemed to have everything and so he finally found a parrot that spoke in five languages. It cost him \$7,000 to buy that parrot, but he bought it and sent it to his mother.

A few days after it arrived he, called his mother and said, "Mother, how did you like the gift I sent you?" The mother replied, "Oh, son, it was delicious!"

The son was aghast. He said, "Oh, mother, surely you didn't eat that bird? It spoke five different languages and cost me \$7,000." She said, "Well, it should have spoke up."

*Application: There are times when we need to speak up.*

### **31. He Was Running for his Life**

Alabama and Auburn were playing in one of the most crucial games of the year. Alabama was leading by five points. Two minutes were left in the game. Alabama had the ball twenty yards away from the goal line. On first down, the number-one quarterback was injured. Coach Bryant sent in his number-two man.

Before sending him in, Bryant gave him strict instructions. He was not under any circumstances to throw the ball. He was to run the ball three downs, even if they did not gain a yard. By that time, the game would be almost over, and the defense would hold them.

On second down, Alabama was stopped dead. On third down, they gained a yard. Fourth down. The quarterback turned to hand off the ball, but missed the hand off. He began to run, and when he did, he spotted a receiver open in the end zone. What a chance to lock the game up. He could not resist the chance to be a hero, so he lofted a pass to his open receiver.

What he did not notice was the safety for the other

team only a few yards away. This all-American safety happened to be the fastest man on the field. As soon as the ball was in the air, the safety cut in front of the receiver, pulled the ball in, and headed for the other end zone. All of a sudden, like a flash of lightening, the quarterback caught up with the swift safety and tackled him on the two-yard line, just as the clock ran out.

Alabama won. After the game, the Auburn coach asked Bear Bryant, "I've read the scouting reports. That quarterback is supposed to be slow. How is it that he caught up with the fastest man on the field?" Bear Bryant replied, "It's simple. Your man was running for a touchdown. My man was running for his life!"

*Application: We can accomplish great things when we are properly motivated.*

### **32. A Last Resort**

A man was up in a plane, and the pilot had a heart attack. He knew nothing about airplanes, so he called in on the radio. The radio man said, "Mash down the flaps." He said, "I can't. It's stuck." The radio man said, "Turn the nose up." The man said, "I can't. It's stuck."

Then the radio man said, "Repeat after me . . . Our father which art in heaven . . ."

*Application: When all else fails we can still pray.*

### **33. I Wasn't Talking to You**

Supposedly, when Bill Moyers was press secretary for President Lyndon B. Johnson, the president called on Moyers to lead in prayer. He spoke softly, and Lyndon said, "Speak up, Bill, I can't hear you."

Bill Moyers responded, “Mr. President, I wasn’t talking to you.”

*Application: When we pray we talk to God.*

### **34. Music in Church**

A man’s wife wasn’t feeling well one Sunday so he went to church by himself. When he got home, she asked him how he liked it. He said, “I didn’t.”

She asked “Why? What didn’t you like?”

He said, “We sang choruses instead of hymns.”

She said, “Paw, what’s the difference in a chorus and a hymn?”

He said, “If I came home and said, Mama, I’m home. That would be a hymn.”

But if I came home and said, “Mama, dear Mama, sweet Mama, precious Mama, loving Mama, good Mama, I’m home, I’m home, I’m home, I’m home. That would be a chorus.”

*Application: There’s a lot of differences in choruses and hymns.*

# 3

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## Age

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### 1. How to Live Longer

In George Burns' book, *Wisdom for the Nineties*, he gave "ten don'ts for a long life."

Don't smoke

Don't drink

Don't gamble

Don't eat salt

Don't eat sugar

Don't eat fats

Don't over-exercise

Don't over-eat

Don't under-eat

Don't play around

Author's Note:

You may not live longer, but it will seem longer.

*Application: It does pay to live right.*

### 2. Optimism

When Ty Cobb was 70, a reporter asked him, "What do you think you'd hit if you were playing these days?"

Cobb, who was a lifetime .367 hitter said, "About .290, maybe .300."

The reporter said, "That's because of the travel, the night games, the artificial turf, and all the new pitches, like the slider, right?"

"No," said Cobb, "it's because I'm 70."

*Application: Keep a positive attitude no matter what your age.*

### **3. It Needs Ironing**

Two men sat in wheel chairs in a nursing home, watching television. An elderly lady resident decided she would streak across the room to put a little excitement into the place. As she went by, one said to the other, "Who in the world was that?" His friend replied, "I don't know. And what was that she had on?" The first replied, "I don't know, but whatever it was, it sure did need ironing!"

*Application: It's terrible to get old.*

### **4. Memory Medicine**

An elderly man was talking with a friend about how difficult it was to recall things as you get older. The man said, "My memory is really much better now than it used to be."

His friend inquired as to why. He said, "I went to the doctor and he gave me some medication that has helped a good deal." The friend wanted to know the name of the medication. The man thought and thought and thought and could not name it.

Finally, he said to the man, "What is that flower that grows in the garden that has a long stem and thorns and a

beautiful blossom?" The friend said, "It's a rose." The man turned and yelled into the other room, "Rose, what's the name of that medicine the doctor gave me?"

*Application: I have trouble remembering everybody's name, so help me.*

## 5. Hard of Hearing

One evening an elderly man and his wife were watching television. The television was a little loud. The husband said, "You know, I'm kind of proud of you." She reached over and turned the volume down and said, "Yes, and I'm getting tired of you, too."

*Application: Did I hear you correctly? We don't always hear the way we should*

## 9. Memory

A priest was walking down the street one day and saw a little boy with a lawn mower and a sign on it that said "for sale." He stopped and asked the boy how much he wanted for the lawn mower. The little boy replied, "Thirty dollars."

The priest said, "Well, we need a lawn mower down at the church and that looks like a pretty good one." The young boy said, "It is." The priest then said, "What are you going to do with the money?" The little boy replied, "I'm going to buy me a bicycle."

So the priest bought the lawn mower. A day or two later the little boy was riding his bicycle by the church, and the priest was outside trying to start the lawn mower. He pulled and pulled and pulled but just couldn't crank it. When he saw the little boy, he called him over and said,

"Sonny, I thought you said this was a good lawn mower. I can't get the thing to start."

The little boy said, "Father, it is, but I forgot to tell you, that you have to cuss it to get it to start." The Father replied, "Well, son, I haven't cussed in years, and I've forgotten all the words I knew."

The little boy replied, "Well, you pull on that thing long enough, and they'll come back to you."

*Application: Give it time, it will come back to you.  
You'll remember.*

## 10. Hard of Hearing

Two elderly men were walking down the road one day and one said to the other, "It's windy isn't it?" The other replied, "No, it's Thursday."

The first replied, "Me too, let's stop and get something to drink."

*Application: We don't always hear things as they really are.*

## 11. Shocking News

I heard the other day that senior adults were the largest carrier of aids in America - Roloids, Band-Aids, and Hearing aids.

*Application: It's great growing old.*

## 12. Advantages of Age

I've got an aunt who was so old when she got married that Medicare picked up 80% of the cost of the honeymoon.

*Application: There are some advantages to getting old.*

### 13. Write It Down

An elderly couple was sitting on the porch one evening and she said, "You know what I'd like?" He said, "No." She said, "I'd like some vanilla ice cream with chocolate syrup on top." He said, "OK, I'll get you some."

She responded, "You'd better write it down. You'll forget." He said, "I won't write it down, and I won't forget." Offhe went.

In a few minutes he came back with two scrambled eggs and an order of toast. She said, "I told you to write it down. You forgot the bacon."

*Application: When we get old we don't remember so well.*



# 4

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## Bible Knowledge

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### 1. Lot's Wife

Two children were on their way home from Sunday school. One asked, "Do you believe that story about Lot's wife looking back and turning into a pillar of salt?"

"Why not?" said the other. "Yesterday my mother looked back and turned into a telephone pole."

*Application: You can believe the Bible.*

### 2. Walls of Jericho

A pastor was concerned that the children in his Sunday school were not receiving the Bible knowledge they needed. So, while walking down the halls of the church he met little Johnny and asked him, "Johnny, who knocked down the walls of Jericho?"

Little Johnny shot back, "Preacher, I don't know. But I sure didn't do it."

The pastor thought, "This is terrible. Johnny's been in Sunday school for years and he still doesn't know who knocked down the walls of Jericho. I need to talk to his Sunday school teacher."

So the pastor approached Mrs. Brown and said to her, "Mrs. Brown, I stopped Johnny in the hall and asked him

who knocked down the walls of Jericho. He told me he didn't know, but he sure didn't do it."

Mrs. Brown replied, "Pastor, Johnny is one of my best pupils. He is always present. And, he comes from one of the best families in our church. If Johnny says he didn't do it, I believe him."

The pastor then thought, "This is really terrible. Not only does Johnny not know who knocked down the walls of Jericho, neither does his teacher. I need to talk to the deacons about this."

So, the pastor contacted the chairman of the deacons and told him the whole story. He told how he had stopped Johnny in the hall and asked him who knocked down the walls of Jericho and Johnny had responded he didn't know but he sure didn't do it. Then he explained how he confronted Mrs. Brown and she apparently didn't know who knocked down the walls of Jericho because she said she believed Johnny. The pastor then said to the chairman of the deacons, "Brother Smith, this is terrible. Nobody seems to know who knocked down the walls of Jericho."

Deacon Smith responded, "Pastor, I think you're making a mountain out of a molehill. Why don't you just tell us what these walls cost, we'll pay for them, and forget about it."

*Application: You'd be surprised at how little we know about the Bible.*

### 3. Ten Commandments

A Sunday school teacher was trying to teach the Ten Commandments to her young students. She thought it would be most helpful if she read concrete illustrations. "One morning Johnny's parents were going shopping," she

read to them. "They asked Johnny to wash the dishes while they were gone. When they returned, however, Johnny was watching cartoons, and the dishes were still unwashed." Then she asked, "What commandment did Johnny violate?" In one accord the class responded, "Honor thy father and thy mother!"

"Good," said the teacher. "Ann went shopping with her mother, but when no one was looking, she slipped a candy bar into her pocket." Again, she asked, "What commandment was violated?" The class was quick to respond: "Thou shalt not steal!"

"Great," said the teacher. "Andy was a mean little boy and had a bad temper. He got angry with his sister one day, and grabbing her pet kitten, he threatened to pull its tail off. What commandment did this violate?" asked the teacher. This was a much tougher example. Everyone was real quiet for a moment, but then one little fellow piped up and shouted, "What God hath joined together let no man put asunder!"

***Application:*** *We need to interpret the scriptures correctly.*



# 5

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## Conflict

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### 1. Can't Get Along With Ourselves

A man was shipwrecked on a deserted island in the South Pacific. Despite his radio calls for help it still took many months for rescuers to find him. When they did find him they were surprised to see three huts on the beach. They said, "We thought this was a deserted island and you were all alone." The man said, "Oh, it is and I am."

Then they pointed to the huts and asked, "Why are there three huts?" The man said, "The first one, there, that's where I live. The other hut, that's where I go to church. And the third one, that's where I used to go to church."

*Application: That's how ridiculous we are at times. We can't even get along with ourselves.*

### 2. Church Splits

I heard about six men who were marooned on an island two Baptists, two Catholics and two Jews. The two Jews got together and built Temple Bethel. The two Catholics got together and built St. Mary's. The two Baptists split and formed First Baptist and Second Baptist.

*Application: Sometimes our denomination is the worst of all about not getting along.*

### **3. Arguing in the Dark**

Once a man brought a motion in the church that they ought to buy a chandelier. He made a passionate plea for it but it was immediately met with strong opposition.

The leader of the opposition party stood to say, "Pastor, I want to oppose the buying of the chandelier for three reasons: First, nobody knows how to spell it so we would never be able to order it. Secondly, if we got it, I don't know anybody who could play it. And, third, what we need here is more light."

*Application: We need to get the facts before we oppose a thing.*

### **4. Opinions**

When you get two Baptists together you've got three opinions about everything.

*Application: We are often too opinionated.*

### **5. Agreement**

The only thing two Baptists can agree on is what a third ought to give.

*Application: We need to work at being more agreeable.*

### **6. He's Not Much of a Truck Driver**

One day a truck driver pulled up in front of a truck stop in his eighteen-wheeler. He got out, went inside, ordered a hamburger, a cup of coffee, and a slice of pie. As he sat there, up drove three men on motorcycles. They had on black leather jackets, long stringy hair, and shaggy beards. They walked in, looked around, and saw only the

one truck driver present. They walked over and one of the motorcycle gang picked up his hamburger, another took his cup of coffee, and the third took his slice of pie. They sat down and began to eat it.

The truck driver did nothing. He just sat there and watched them. When they were through, he got up and walked to the cash register and paid the bill. He then went outside, got in his truck, and drove off.

In a moment the motorcycle gang leader said to the cashier, "He wasn't much of a man, was he?" The cashier said, "No, and he's not much of a truck driver either. He just ran over three motorcycles."

*Application: There's more than one way to handle conflict.*

## **7. Mean Church Members**

Some church members are so mean, if they were in the arena with the lions, I'd pull for the lions.

*Application: We need to keep a sweet spirit in church.*



# 6

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## Deacons

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### 1. I've Lost My Dog

A man drove up to the home of a famous bird dog raiser one time and said to him, "I want to buy your finest bird dog." The man said, "He is not for sale." The stranger said, "But I'm willing to give you \$5,000 for him."

The dog raiser said, "Well, that's an offer I can't refuse. The dog is yours." The stranger said, "Now I don't carry that much cash with me, but I do have \$100 and I will return next week and pay you the rest. You can trust me, I am a Methodist steward."

That weekend the man was walking the streets and bumped into a friend. He told him the story and then said, "Friend, can you tell me, what is a Methodist steward?" The man thought for a moment and then replied, "Well, near as I can tell, he's about the same as a Baptist deacon." The man slapped himself on the forehead and said, "Oh, my, I've lost my bird dog!"

*Application: Deacons ought to be good men - well thought of.*

### 2. Encourage Your Pastor

A pastor was having trouble with the chairman of his

deacons. He opened the paper one day and noticed that by some freak mistake his obituary was in there. Of course it was a mistake, the preacher was alive and well, but he thought, "People are going to read this and think I'm dead. So I'd better call the chairman of the deacons and tell him so."

He picked up the phone, called the chairman of the deacons, and said, "Brother chairman, my obituary is in the paper today but I just want you to know that I am OK." After a long pause the chairman of the deacons responded, "Where are you calling from?"

*Application: Deacons ought to encourage their pastor.*

### **3. We Pray You'll Get Well**

A preacher was deathly sick in the hospital. Following the regular meeting of his deacons, they sent him this message, "Your deacons have voted to pray for your recovery by a vote of 15 to 5."

*Application: Be grateful for whatever support you can get.*

# 7

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## Denominations

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### 1. Bury All You Can

In small towns in the west the Methodist church and the Baptist church were often located on the same street and just down the block from one another. And, in those small towns, mixed marriages were common. But, denominational loyalties were fierce and so the husband would often go to his church on Sunday morning while the wife went to hers.

Once, when the Baptist church was without a pastor, one of its members died. His wife was a Methodist, so she asked her pastor if he would perform the funeral ceremony. The pastor was young and inexperienced and did not know all the rules and regulations of the Methodist church. So he sent a telegram to his bishop with the question, "Is it okay if I conduct the funeral service of a Baptist?" The bishop responded immediately, "Absolutely! You bury all the Baptists you can."

*Application: We love everybody, even those in other churches.*

### 2. I'll Sell You to a Baptist

A gentle Quaker was milking his cow, when all of a

sudden the cow swished her tail and knocked the gentle Quaker from his milking stool.

He got up, brushed himself off and proceeded with his milking. Then the cow picked her foot up and put it in his milk bucket. He picked the bucket up and started milking again.

Then the cow swished her tail and knocked him off the stool and put her foot in the bucket of milk. He got up, brushed himself off and set the bucket upright again, and said to the cow, "O, cow, thou knowest that I cannot smite thee; and thou knowest that I cannot curse thee; but what thou does not know is that I can sell thee to a Baptists?"

*Application: At times we need to be plain spoken.*

### **3. Hit on Sunday Morning**

A man who lived in New York City owned a house trailer that he needed to move all the way across the city and into New Jersey. As you know, the traffic in downtown New York is terrible and he knew he would have a difficult time. So, he decided to ask a taxi driver, when was the best time to move a house trailer across the city.

The taxi driver said, "Oh, that is easy. Seven o'clock Sunday morning. All the Catholics will be in mass, all the Protestants will be asleep, and all the Jews will be on the golf course." So, seven o'clock Sunday morning the man started moving his house trailer across town and suddenly there was a terrible crash. Somebody had run into him from the rear. He stopped his truck, rushed back to his trailer, and asked, "Mister, what are you doing out on the streets driving so fast on Sunday morning?" The man said, "I'm a Seventh Day Adventist late for work."

*Application: Don't be late now!*

#### 4. Dress Nice

A pastor went to visit a member of his congregation who had not been present in a long time. He asked him, "Bill, why don't you come to church?" Bill replied, "Pastor, I just don't have the clothes to come down there."

The pastor said to him, "Bill, we can't have that. I want you to go down to the clothing store and get the finest suit that money will buy. And I want you to get a shirt and a tie and some shoes and socks so you'll have the clothes you need to come to church. Just charge everything to us. I'll look forward to seeing you in church next Sunday."

The next Sunday the pastor looked out across the congregation and Bill was not there. So, early Monday morning he made a beeline to Bill's house and said to him, "Bill, didn't you go to the clothing store and buy the clothes like I suggested?"

Bill responded, "Yes, pastor, I did." The pastor then asked, "Why weren't you in church as you promised?"

Bill replied, "To tell you the truth, pastor, when I got those new clothes on I looked so nice I decided I ought to become a Presbyterian."

*Application: Nobody ought to stay away from church because of dress.*

#### 5. Christmas Celebration

One day three children were talking about how they celebrated Christmas. One was a Roman Catholic, one was a Baptist, and the other was a Jew. The Roman Catholic said, "We have many activities at Christmas. We put up a tree, we buy presents, and then on Christmas Eve we go to mass and then go home and join hands around the Christmas tree and sing 'Ava Maria.'"

The Baptist boy said, "We do about the same thing. We buy lots of presents and put up a tree and on Christmas Eve we go to a candlelight service and then we go home and join hands around the Christmas tree and sing 'Silent Night.'"

The Jewish boy said, "My daddy comes in on Christmas Eve and brings all the money that we've made from the presents we've sold to the Catholics and to the Baptists and we put it on the floor and we gather around it in a circle and sing, 'What a Friend We Have in Jesus.'"

*Application: We all do have a friend in Jesus.*

## **6. Eating**

Our favorite text is, "Bless the Lord, oh my soul, and all that is within me. Bless his holy name."

Our favorite hymns are: "When the Rolls are Served up Yonder We'll Be There," and "God Be With You Till We Eat Again."

*Application: We Baptist love to eat.*

# 8

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## Education

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### 1. The Cow Did Jump Over the Moon

You remember when the astronauts came back from that last moon trip they brought some moon rocks. They promised the universities and colleges could study these rocks, so they gave each one of them a rock. By the time they got to Baylor and the University of Texas they were out of rocks. They didn't want to disappoint the geologists, so some of the boys from NASA in Houston went to some grazing land close to Houston and found a couple of dried cow patties and took one of them to the geologist of the two schools.

The geologists just went crazy studying those rocks. They took all kinds of notes and got together and compared notes and held a press conference. They said, "We are prepared to make the most sensational announcement that's been made in connection with this whole project. Our study of these rocks reveals that, without a doubt, the cow did jump over the moon!"

*Application: After careful study we have come to some amazing conclusions.*

## 2. You've Got to Pass Him

When Woody Hayes was coach of Ohio State University, he had an outstanding football player who was not very smart. He was in danger of losing his eligibility because of his grades, so Woody Hayes went to the player's biology teacher to appeal to him. He said, "I've got to have this player. You've got to pass him."

The teacher agreed to give the student a simple test that anyone could pass. It consisted of one question. He asked, "Name the three vital parts of the body."

The student replied, "That's easy. The head, the heart, and the bowels, of which there are five — A, E, I, O, U."

*Application: Make sure you know all the parts*

## 3. Doesn't Know Meaning of the Word

A coach said of one of his linemen, "He doesn't know the meaning of the word 'fear.'" After reflecting a while he added, "Come to think of it, there are several other words he doesn't know the meaning of either."

*Application: Fear should not be a part of our vocabulary.*

## 4. He Only Missed It Two

The coach took one of his star players to his math teacher and said, "If you don't pass him he can't play and we'll lose the championship." The teacher said, "Okay, if he can pass a simple, one-question test, I'll pass him. The question is: How much is six plus six?" The boy answered, "Thirteen!" The teacher said, "I'm sorry, that's wrong. You fail." The coach said, "Oh, pass him. He only missed it by two!"

*Application: You've got to give people a little margin for error.*

## **5. Kidneys, Man, Kidneys**

A little boy had a hard time learning the various parts of the anatomy — his knee, his elbow, his foot, etc. The teacher would point to the various parts, like the elbow, and ask, "What's that?" And he would miss it every time.

Finally, one day out of a clear blue sky, he got them all right. His teacher was amazed and said, "How did you do it?" He pointed to his head and said, "Kidneys, man, kidneys."

*Application: You must use your head in this.*



# 9

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## Health

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### 1. Be Careful

A doctor went to a party one night and he saw one of his patients out on the dance floor with a beautiful girl. They were dancing like mad and having a great time. The doctor walked up to the man and said, "Fellow, what in the world are you doing?" And the fellow said, "Well, doctor, I'm following your advice." The doctor said, "Following my advice? What do you mean?" He said, "Well, you told me to get me a hot mama and be cheerful." The doctor said, "Oh, no, no! I said, 'You've got a heart murmur, be careful!'"

*Application: I want you to listen carefully.*

### 2. You've Got It Again

A Scotsman was feeling very badly and it finally dawned upon him he was going to have to spend a little money to see a doctor. He was afraid that was going to cause him a setback. But he finally went down to the medical arts buildings and walked up and down the halls just seeing if he could find a bargain. He found one — a Scottish doctor. The sign said, "Dr. Angus McDonald — First Call \$40.00. Subsequent Calls \$25.00 Each."

He went in and said, "Well, Doctor, here I am again." The doctor examined him and said, "You remember, of course, what I said you had before." He said, "Oh, yes." The doctor said, "You've got it again. Just take the same treatment I prescribed for you before and pay the girl \$25.00 as you leave."

*Application: It's good to see you again.*

### **3. It Cured Her of Her Hiccups**

A lady went to the doctor for the very first time in her life. She was scared to death. As she sat in the waiting room, nervously thumbing through a magazine, she heard a blood-curdling scream come from the doctor's office. As she looked up, the door flew open and out ran a nun, her black robes waving behind her. Right behind her was the doctor; just a few seconds too late to catch her. She was already gone.

The doctor stopped, looked at his new patient, and reached out his hand to greet her. She jumped back, shoved his hand away, and said, "Don't touch me. Don't lay a hand on me after what you did to that nun."

The doctor looked shocked and said, "Lady, what in the world is wrong with you? I didn't hurt that nun. All I did was tell her that she was pregnant."

The lady exclaimed, "Pregnant! But she is a nun. Is she really pregnant?" The doctor replied, "No, but it sure did cure her hiccups."

*Application: Sometimes the cure is worse than the disease*

#### 4. Dentist

Dentist: "Try to relax - I'll pull your aching tooth in five minutes.

Patient: "How much will it cost?"

Dentist: "It'll be \$100."

Patient: "That much for just five minutes; work?"

Dentist: "Well, if you prefer, I can pull it out very slowly."

*Application: I'll try to speed this up a bit.*

#### 5. Cough — I Died of Sinus

Three men died and met in eternity. They began to discuss how their lives had ended and how they came to be in heaven.

One said, "I was killed in a car wreck. It was terrible. There was broken glass and there were screaming sirens everywhere. It was unbelievable."

The second man said, "I was killed in a plane crash. It was horrible. There was flaming gasoline and bent metal everywhere you looked."

They turned to the third man and asked, "What happened to you?" He said, "I died from seenus problems."

They replied, "Seenus? You mean sinus, don't you?" He replied, "No, I was out with another man's wife and he seen us."

*Application: My hoarseness is due to sinus, not seen us.*

#### 6. Cough — How Do You Stop It?

A man died and following his funeral service the body was being taken to the cemetery. It was a cold day and the streets were iced over. As the hearse climbed the long, steep

hill to the cemetery, the back door popped open and the casket slid out onto the icy street. It skidded down the hill, hit a curb, bounced up over it, and through the swinging doors of a drug store. It slid down the center aisle and hit the prescription counter with a thud. It struck the counter so hard the lid of the casket flew open and the corpse sat up. The druggist leaned over the counter and said, "May I help you, sir?" The man replied, "Yes, do you have anything to stop this coffin (coughing)?"

*Application: I've got a bad cough and I hope I can make it through this speech.*

# 10

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## Introductions

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### 1. A Few Minor Mistakes

A man was introduced as the speaker for a banquet. The MC said, "This man has made \$1 million in oil exploration in Texas." When the speaker addressed the crowd he said, "I appreciate that wonderful introduction, but I need to make one of two corrections. It wasn't in oil; it was in timber. It wasn't in Texas; it was in Louisiana. It wasn't me; it was my brother. And, he didn't make a million, he lost it."

*Application: I appreciate the introduction. He got it close to right.*

### 2. One of the Best Speakers in the Country

It is a pleasure to introduce \_\_(Name)\_\_. In fact, he's one of the best speakers in the country . . . Now if you want to go to the city, you can find a lot who are better than he is.

*Application: We have a good speaker tonight.*



# 11

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## Marriage and the Home

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### 1. Married the Wrong Person

I sat on a plane next to a man who had his wedding ring on his index finger. I said, “Say, fellow, you’ve got your ring on the wrong finger.” He replied, “Yes, I know, I married the wrong woman.”

*Application: We all make mistakes. You can have some unusual experiences flying.*

### 2. Show Affection

I read the other day about a man who didn’t kiss his wife for five years and then shot the man who did.

*Application: If you don’t show affection to your wife someone else will.*

### 3. Never Consider Divorce

My wife and I have been married forty years and we have never considered divorce — murder, yes! But never divorce.

*Application: Commitment is the cornerstone of marriage. We should marry for life.*

#### 4. Show Love

A man attended a marriage seminar in which the speaker encouraged husbands to tell their wives they loved them. He realized he had been negligent at that point and decided to do something about it. So, on his way home from work that day he stopped by the drug store and bought her a box of chocolates. He then went by the florist and got her a dozen long-stem red roses. Then he walked in the house, handed her the gifts, threw his arms around her, and planted a kiss on her, and said, "Honey, I love you."

She pulled away from him and said, "Oh, George, it's been a horrible day. Johnny got in a fight at school. The washing machine broke down. I burned supper. And now, you come home drunk!"

*Application: Husbands should show affection to their wives, but it may take some time for your message to grow.*

#### 5. Argument over Money

A couple was having a heated discussion regarding the family finances. Finally the wife exploded, "If it weren't for my money," she screamed, "this 42-inch TV set wouldn't be here. If it weren't for my money, that chair you're sitting in wouldn't be here. If it weren't for my money, this house wouldn't be here."

"Are you kidding?" her husband shot back. "If it weren't for your money, I wouldn't be here!"

*Application: It's important to have the right perspective of money if a marriage is to be strong.*

## 6. Wife Buying Clothes

A husband and his wife were having financial troubles. He decided that the family should go on a very strict budget. He gave his wife instructions that she should not be buying any clothes for a while. The next week she came in with a very expensive outfit.

He reprimanded her and said, "Honey, why in the world did you do that?" She said, "The devil made me do it." He replied, "Why didn't you say to the devil, 'Get thee behind me, Satan.'"

She replied, "I did. And he said, 'It looks good from the back, too.'"

*Application: Be sure to compliment your wife.*

## 7. You Are Going to Die

A man went to the doctor for an examination and got a very bad report. The doctor said, "You are in terrible shape. I need to visit with your wife about your condition." So the man's wife went into the doctor's office, closed the door, sat down, and the doctor said, "Your husband is in terrible condition. He has malnutrition of the worst order and he must have three hot, home-cooked meals every day. Furthermore, he is allergic to dust and so the house must be dusted and vacuumed completely every week. And, the soap the laundry is using in his clothes has affected him adversely and you must begin to wash and iron his clothes at home yourself. He has a terrible inferiority complex. He needs love and attention on a daily basis. If you do not do these things, your husband will be dead in six months."

The lady left the doctor's office and her husband

asked, "What did he say?" She said, "He said you have just 6 months to live."

*Application: It takes a lot of effort to keep a good marriage alive.*

## 8. The Right One

Planning is an important part of life. However, it can be overdone. I heard about a woman who married four men in this order: a banker, an actor, a preacher, and a mortician. She said that one was for the money, two for the show, three to make ready, and four to go.

*Application: Make sure you marry the right person.*

## 9. Optimism

The most optimistic man I've heard of this year was the man who went down to city hall to see when his marriage license had expired.

*Application: We need to be optimistic.*

## 10. Too Much Yak-Yak

Many homes are like that of the three bears. Father bear sat down at the table, looked at his empty bowl, and said, "Somebody's been eating my soup and they've eaten it all up." Baby bear sat down at the table, looked at his empty bowl, and said, "Somebody's been eating my soup, and they've eaten it all up." Mother bear said, "Shut up, your yak-yak, I haven't poured the soup yet!"

*Application: Beware of grumbling and complaining too much.*

## 11. Standing Up for Wife's First Husband

In a revival meeting once an evangelist was talking about the universality of sin and asked, "Is there anyone here who has never sinned? Anyone who has never done anything wrong?" To his surprise, a man stood in the back. He said, "Sir, did you understand me? I asked if there was anyone who had never done anything wrong. Never sinned." And the man responded, "Yes, I heard you. I'm standing up for my wife's first husband."

*Application: No one is perfect*

## 12. Ground Hog's Day

Over breakfast one morning, a woman said to her husband, "I bet you don't know what day this is."

"Of course I do," he indignantly answered. But he really didn't. Was it her birthday? Their anniversary? He couldn't remember so just to play it safe he sent her a dozen long-stemmed roses. Then he called the drug store and had them deliver a two-pound box of her favorite chocolates. Later, a boutique delivered a designer dress to her.

The woman couldn't wait for her husband to come home. "First the flowers, then the candy, and then the dress!" she exclaimed. Honey, you've made this the best Groundhog Day in my whole life!"

*Application: Don't forget those special days. They matter to women.*

## 13. Parents — Mothers and Little League

A Little League coach was instructing one of his players on appropriate behavior. He said, "Now, Johnny, you know

you are not to throw your bat when the umpire calls a strike on you, don't you?"

Johnny replied, "Yes sir, coach, I do."

The coach said, "And, Johnny, you know that you are not to cuss, scream, and throw dirt when you get thrown out at first base, don't you?"

Little Johnny said, "Yes sir, coach, I do."

Coach then said, "Johnny, will you then please tell your mother that?"

*Application: Parents can be the problem at times.*

## **14. Anniversary, A Time to Remember**

The pallbearers were carrying the casket of the deceased woman from the church down to the cemetery. They came to a rough place on the bridge and dropped the casket. It jarred open, the wife sat up, came back to life, and lived ten years longer. Then she died a second time. They came to the same spot going to the cemetery. The husband said, "Easy now, boys, remember what happened here ten years ago."

*Application: We are here to remember what happened in years past.*

## **15. Mother-in-law**

A big-game hunter went on safari with his wife and mother-in-law. One evening, while still deep in the jungle, the Mrs. awoke to find her mother gone. Rushing to her husband, she insisted on them both trying to find her mother.

The hunter picked up his rifle, took a swig of whiskey, and started to look for her. In a clearing not far from the

camp, they came upon a chilling sight: The mother-in-law was backed up against a thick, impenetrable bush, and a large male lion stood facing her.

The wife cried, "What are we going to do?"

Nothing," said the hunter husband. "The lion got himself into this mess, let him get himself out."

*Application: If you get yourself in trouble, get yourself out.*

## **16. Where Would You Like to Go**

My wife and I recently celebrated our 45th anniversary. As the date approached I ask her, "Where would you like for me to take you?"

She replied, "Take me someplace I haven't been in a long time." I replied, "OK, how about the kitchen?"

### **The Best Place to Hide Her Gifts**

I have a friend who bought his wife's Christmas present in October and hid it in the oven to be sure she wouldn't find it.

## **17. Marriage and Money**

A woman who had just received an inheritance used it to build and furnish a new home for herself and her husband. As they toured the new house she constantly reminded her husband: "John, if it were not for my money, we would not be here." John didn't say a word.

That afternoon a truck delivered a load of new furniture. After the furniture was in its place, they toured the house again. As they observed each room, beautifully appointed and magnificently decorated, she reminded her husband: "John, if it were not for my money, this furniture

would not be here.” Again, John was silent.

Late in the afternoon another truck came with a special piece of furniture that was to be the focal point of the family room. It was a combination stereo-television-computer center all wrapped into one gorgeous piece of furniture. When it was in place, she again said: “John, if it were not for my money, that beautiful electronics system would not be here.”

Finally, John spoke: “Honey, I don’t want to make you feel bad, but if it were not for your money, I wouldn’t be here either!”

*Application: I hope you’re here for the right reason.*

# 12

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## Preachers

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### 1. Bible Knowledge

A young preacher was interviewing for his first church. He had never been a pastor before and the pastor search committee had invited him for an interview. The chairman asked, "Son, do you know the Bible?"

He replied, "Yes, sir, I really know the Bible." The chairman then asked, "What part of the Bible do you know best?" And, he replied, "Well, sir, I know the whole Bible."

The chairman then suggested, "Why don't you tell us something you know about the New Testament? Why don't you tell us the story of the prodigal son?"

The young preacher began, "There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus. He went down to Jericho by night and fell upon stony ground and the thorns choked him half to death."

"The next morning Solomon and his wife, Gomorra, carried him down to the ark of Moses to take care of it. As he was going through the eastern gate to the ark, he caught his hair in a limb and hung there forty days and forty nights. Afterwards, he was an hungered and the ravens came and fed him."

"The next day the three wise men came and carried him down to the boat dock and he caught a ship to Nineveh."

When he got there he found Delilah sitting on a wall. He said to the men with her, 'Chunk her down, boys,' and they asked, 'How many times shall we chunk her down? Seven times?' He replied, 'Nay, but seventy times seven.' And they chunked her down 490 times and she burst asunder in their midst. And when they had finished picking up the fragments, there were twelve baskets left over."

"Now," said the young preacher, "the question is, in the resurrection, whose wife will she be?"

When he had finished the chairman of the committee said, "Fellows, I think we ought to call him. He's awful young, but he really knows the Bible."

*Application: We all need to know the Bible.*

## 2. Not Quitting

A preacher said to a pulpit committee, "I can tell you one thing, I'm no quitter. I have been pastor of three churches and stayed with all three until they died."

*Application: Don't be a quitter.*

## 3. Can't Hear

A preacher was delivering a sermon. About half way through his introduction, a man on the back row waved his hand and shouted, "Speak up, we can't hear you back here!"

A man on the front row turned to him and replied, "I can. I'll trade places with you."

*Application: I hope you can hear me . . . and what I say is worth hearing*

#### **4. Call to Preach**

A man said, "I knew I was called to preach when I woke up one morning with a craving for fried chicken and didn't want to go to work.

*Application: Knowing God's will is not always easy to discover. Preachers ought to work hard.*

#### **5. My Weakness is Gossip**

Four preachers were visiting informally one day and began to confess their weaknesses to one another. One said, "My weakness is stealing. I have a strong compulsion to take things that do not belong to me." The second said, "My weakness is alcohol. I love to drink and I often drink too much." The third replied, "My weakness is women. I love beautiful women."

The fourth said, "My weakness is gossip. And I can't wait to get out of here!"

*Application: Don't tell what you don't want others to know.*

#### **6. Duty to Bury the Dead**

A minister and city manager had a falling out. One day the preacher phoned a complaint to the city manager. A jackass had died on the church parking lot and the minister wanted it removed. The city manager said sarcastically, "Reverend, I thought it was your duty to bury the dead." The minister said sweetly, "It is, sir! But my first duty is to inform the next of kin."

*Application: We need to work at getting along with one another.*

## 7. Well Prepared

A young preacher boasted that all the time he needed to prepare his Sunday sermon was the few minutes it took him to walk to the church from the parsonage next door. After a few weeks of hearing his sermons, the congregation bought a new parsonage five miles away.

*Application: If you aren't prepared don't tell anyone, they'll find out soon enough.*

## 8. Questions

A pastor was accustomed to ending his sermons with a question and answer time. He wanted to make sure he had not left an important question unanswered with his congregation.

One Sunday a bright-eyed young lady sat on the front row listening eagerly to every word he spoke. When he asked if there were any questions, her hand shot up like a roman candle. "How did Jonah survive three days and three nights in the belly of the whale?" she asked.

The pastor responded, "I don't know. But, when I get to heaven I will ask him." She responded, "But, suppose he's not in heaven?" The pastor then replied, "In that case, you ask him."

*Application: We'll have to wait until eternity to know the answer to some questions.*

## 9. Get Carried Away

A young preacher was scheduled to give a special sermon at the evening hour, but in the afternoon he began to get hoarse. He asked an older preacher what to do to relieve it.

The elder minister advised, “Get some brandy and pour a little in a glass and fill the rest of the glass with water. Take it into the pulpit and as you preach, just sip it a little at intervals and your voice will clear up.”

After the sermon was concluded, the young preacher asked the older minister how he liked it. “Well, in all candor, I didn’t,” he replied. “You didn’t?” asked the young preacher. “Why didn’t you?”

The older minister answered, “I have my reasons. In the first place, I didn’t say gulp it, I said sip it. Secondly, the Sermon on the Mount was not preached in New York City. Thirdly, there are 10 Commandments not fourteen. And in the fourth place, when David killed the giant Goliath, he used a sling and a stone — he didn’t stomp his insides out.”

*Application: You need to make sure you get the facts right when you tell something.*

## 10. God Will Provide

A young Methodist preacher went to his first annual conference meeting and sat down in the morning session right in front of the bishop. The bishop said, “Young man, I’m so happy that you are in our conference and that you are here for this meeting today. It just happens that one of our program personalities couldn’t come and I want you to bring a major message in the program this afternoon at three o’clock.” The young preacher was literally scared to death and said, “But, sir, I’m not prepared. I wouldn’t know what to say. What can I preach?” The bishop looked at him in a reassuring way and said, “God will provide, young man. God will provide. You just pray about it and God will provide.”

So while everyone else went off to enjoy lunch, the young worried preacher got up on the platform and got down on his knees behind the pulpit and prayed, "Lord, give me something to say." And while he was praying, he put his hand up under the pulpit and came out with something that looked like a manuscript. He read through it and it looked pretty good. So he decided that God had provided. At three o'clock that afternoon he read the manuscript in the finest fashion you can imagine. When he came down out of the pulpit he was met by the angriest bishop he had ever seen. The bishop said, "Young man, do you know that was my closing annual address for this conference? And now you've used it. What am I going to do?" And the young preacher said to the bishop, "Bishop, God will provide."

*Application: God does provide for us.*

## **11. Keep It Simple**

A man came out of church, stopped in front of the preacher and said, "Pastor, you are smarter than Albert Einstein."

The pastor blushed and said, "Smarter than Einstein? Einstein was the smartest man who ever lived. What makes you think I'm smarter than him?"

The man replied, "Einstein was so smart when he spoke people could only understand 5% of what he said. When you speak people can't understand anything you say."

*Application: It's important to talk so people can understand you.*

# 13

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## Sports

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### 1. Picking the Right Person

An old experienced coach was trying to train a young coach in recruiting. As he rehearsed the procedure, he emphasized the kind of players he wanted at his school. He said, "Bill, you know there are different kinds of players. And, some of them, we don't want at our school."

Then he said, "There are some players, who get knocked down, and when they are down, they stay down."

The young coach, eager to impress his boss with his understanding, said, "Yes, coach, and we don't want those kinds of players at our school, do we?"

The coach said, "That's right!"

Then he said, "There are some players who, when they get knocked down, get up. And, when they get knocked down a second time, they stay down."

The young coach said, "Yes, coach, and we don't want those kinds of players at our school, do we?"

The coach said, "That's right."

Then he said, "There are some players, who when they get knocked down, get up again. And when they are knocked down a second time, they get up again. And, every time you knock them down they get right back up again."

And the young coach said, "Yes, coach, and that's the kind of player we want at our school, isn't it?"

The old coach said, "No, we want the guy who is knocking all those other guys down."

*Application: You're the kind of people we want on our side.*

## **2. Things do Change**

A young man, who was also an avid golfer, found himself with a few hours to spare one afternoon. He figured if he hurried and played very fast, he could get in 9 holes before he had to head home. Just as he was about to tee off, an old gentleman shuffled onto the tee and asked if he could accompany the young man as he was golfing alone. Not being able to say no, he allowed the old man to join him.

To his surprise, the old man played fairly quickly. He didn't hit the ball far, but plodded along consistently and didn't waste much time. Finally, they reached the 9th fairway and the young man found himself with a tough shot. There was a large pine tree right in front of his ball and directly between his ball and the green. After several minutes of debating how to hit the shot, the old man finally said, "You know, when I was your age, I'd hit the ball right over that tree."

With that challenge placed before him, the youngster swung hard, hit the ball up, right smack into the top of the tree trunk and it thudded back on the ground not a foot from where it had originally lay.

The old man offered one more comment, "Of course, when I was your age, that pine tree was only 3 feet tall."

*Application: Things do change.*

### 3. Stupid Coach

The substitute quarterback was sitting on the bench while the game was going on. The coach called him and said, "We are losing this ball game through stupid quarterbacking. I want you to go in there and do exactly what I tell you, understand?" The substitute quarterback said, "Yes, sir!"

The coach said, "On the first play you take the ball yourself on the left-hand sweep. You're going to be new in there and they're not going to be looking for you." He said, "All right, coach."

The coach said, "On the second play, you take the ball again, run a slant play right over the left tackle, you understand?" He said, "Yes, coach."

"On the third play," the coach said, "I want you to make a long pass to Hank Miller, you understand?" He said, "Yes, sir!"

The coach said, "And on the fourth play, kick!"

The substitute quarterback went in and did exactly what the coach said. On the first play he went around that left end and the coach was right. They weren't looking for him and he picked up twenty yards. On the second play he did what the coach said again. This time he went over that left tackle on a slant play and a hole opened up and he cut back and picked up fifteen more yards. The third play was that long pass to Hank Miller, and it was a dinger! Fifteen yards in the air and old Hank snagged it and ran twelve more before they got him down. He was at the three-yard line, with ten seconds to go.

On the fourth play he kicked the ball the way the coach said, and it went clear out of the stadium. The coach was livid. When the quarterback came back to the bench, the

coach grabbed him by the shoulder pads and said, "Son, what were you thinking out there?" He replied, "I was thinking what a stupid coach we have."

*Application: We all make mistakes at times.*

#### **4. Glad You Could Be Here**

A man was an avid Cowboy fan. He lived and died with every game. But, when Jimmy Johnson left the Cowboys he became disillusioned and thought the team would fall apart. So, he gave up his option on his season tickets. But, when the next season rolled around, the Cowboys started doing very well. In fact, they did so well they won their conference and were scheduled to play the San Francisco 49ers for the division championship the next week. His interest in the Cowboys suddenly revived and he began to try to get a ticket to the game. But, they were extremely scarce. He finally located one ticket that cost him \$1,000.

The day of the game came and the game was a complete sellout. There weren't even scalpers out in the parking lot trying to get rid of an extra seat. There were no seats available.

He found his place, sat down, and anxiously waited for the game to start. Kick off time came and he noticed the seat next to him was vacant. Next to it was a neatly dressed, middle-aged lady. He said to her, "I can't understand this seat being vacant. The game is a sellout. I wonder what happened to the person who has this seat?"

The lady responded, "That's my husband's seat." The man responded, "Oh, where is he?"

She replied, "He died."

The man responded, "I'm sorry to hear that. But with seats at a premium and the price so high, why didn't you bring a relative with you?"

She replied, "I couldn't. They're all at the funeral."

*Application: Don't let anything keep you from attending this.*

## 5. Making the Right Selection

Sam Sneed was playing in a golf tournament and was using the same caddie Arnold Palmer had used the day before. They came to a hole with water on it and he asked the caddie, "What iron did Arnold use here yesterday?"

The caddie quickly responded, "A five iron."

Sneed picked up the five-iron, hit it solidly, and it landed right in the middle of the lake. He turned to the caddie and said, "I thought you said Palmer used a five-iron yesterday."

The caddie responded, "He did. And his shot landed in the middle of the lake, just like yours."

*Application: Make sure you get all the facts before you make a decision.*

## 6. Baseball in Heaven

Two friends had played baseball together all their lives. One day, Joe and Frank made a pact that whoever died first would let the other know whether there is baseball in heaven.

Frank passed away, and several days later Joe heard his friend's voice. "Joe," Frank said, "I have some good news and bad news. The good news is the baseball here is

the best, the sun always shines, and the fields are glorious.  
The bad news: You're the starting pitcher tomorrow."

*Application: We never know when we'll die. We need to stay ready.*

# 14

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## Stewardship - Giving

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### 1. The Spirit in Which it Was Given

I was at Ohio State University and they told me about a minister who called on one of his parishioners. While he was there the parishioner served him a drink that the minister liked very much. He said, "That's delicious. What is that?" The parishioner said, "That's cherry wine. I make it myself. I'll give you a gallon of it if you'll thank me for it from the pulpit next Sunday morning." The preacher said, "That's a deal."

He took the gallon and the next Sunday morning in the service, when he got to the announcements, he said, "And I wish to thank Bro. Watson for the lovely gift of fruit I received this week, and especially for the spirit in which it was given."

*Application: It's important to give in the right spirit.*

### 2. Worth a Try

A multimillionaire, who had never had any regard for God or his church, was on his deathbed. He called the pastor to his side and said, "Pastor, if I made the church the beneficiary of my will, if I left my entire estate to the

work of God, do you think it would help me get into heaven?"

The pastor replied, "I'm not sure, but I think it's worth a try."

*Application: We don't try to motivate by manipulation.*

### **3. I Was Real Sick**

A church member was in the hospital and very sick. The pastor called on him and the man made a bargain with the pastor. He said, "Pastor, I am pretty sick. I'd like for you to pray for me, and if the Lord heals me I'll give \$25,000 to the church."

The pastor prayed and the good Lord had mercy on the man and he got well. However, he promptly forgot about his pledge. Time passed and the pastor hinted in various ways to the man about the pledge, but he continued to ignore it. So the pastor finally decided to use the direct approach. He called on the man and said, "Brother, do you remember when you were sick you made a pledge to the Lord that you would give \$25,000 to the church if he would heal you? Well, you have not paid this pledge yet."

The member answered, "Did I say that?" The pastor said, "You sure did." The man then said, "Well, pastor, that just goes to show you how sick I was!"

*Application: We need to keep our word and pay our pledge.*

### **4. Enthusiasm for Giving**

A new preacher came to the church and everyone was excited. The first Sunday he stood to deliver his sermon

and said, "If I'm gonna be pastor of this church, it's gonna walk." And the people replied with an enthusiastic, "Amen, let her walk, brother, let her walk."

He said, "And, furthermore, if I'm gonna be pastor of this church, she is gonna run." And the people replied, "Amen, let her run, brother, let her run."

He said, "More than that, if I'm the pastor of this church, it's gonna fly." They replied, "Amen, brother, let her fly, let her fly."

Then he said, "If this church is gonna fly, then it is going to take money." They replied, "Let her walk, brother, let her walk."

*Application: Some people lose their enthusiasm when the preacher starts talking about money. It takes money to have an alive, progressive church.*

## 5. In for Surprises

A wealthy man died and left one of his relatives a million dollars. It just so happened that the fellow who was to receive the million dollars was sick and in the hospital. He recently had a heart attack and the doctors were afraid to tell him about the million dollars for fear that he might get excited and have another heart attack. So they finally prevailed upon the pastor to go to the hospital and tell him.

He wanted to break the news to him gently so that he wouldn't get excited. So when he arrived, they exchanged a few pleasantries and then the preacher got to the subject. He said, "George, I want to ask you a question. What would you do if you were to inherit a million dollars?" He thought

for a minute and he said, "Preacher, if I inherited a million dollars I would give half of it to the church." And immediately the preacher had a heart attack.

*Application: I hope some of you will surprise me with your gift. We'd all be shocked if people gave what they should.*

## 6. He Will Give

An income tax auditor was auditing a man's income tax return. He called the man's minister and said, "I see that one of your church members, Mr. Howard Anderson, indicates on his return that he gave your church \$5,000 last year. Would you tell me, please, did he give that much?" The minister said, "I don't have the church records right here at hand, of course. I couldn't tell you right off hand if Bro. Anderson gave that much. But, I can assure you of this — if he didn't, he will."

*Application: People just need to be properly motivated to give.*

## 7. Almost Persuaded

A Christian and Jew were friends. They decided to visit the worship services with each other. The Christian went with the Jew to the synagogue and the rabbi met him at the door. He said, "Abe, we've got a special project here at our church and I'll put you down for a thousand dollars." Abe said, "That's fine, Rabbi." Then they went on to worship.

The next week Abe went with his Christian friend to church. As the worship services proceeded they passed the collection plate. His friend pulled out a great big roll

of bills and peeled off two one dollar bills and laid them in the place. The Jew leaned over to his Baptist friend and said, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian."

*Application: We Christians need to learn to give generously.*



# 15

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## Texas

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### 1. Texas

Several businessmen went bear hunting in Alaska. After they unloaded their gear in the mountain cabin, the guide advised them on which rifles to use and how to bag a bear safely. But one businessman from Texas said, "Never mind all that. Which way to the grizzlies?"

The guide pointed north and warned, "If you go out there without a gun, you're a dead man." The Texan strolled out the door unarmed. A few minutes later, he came running toward the cabin at top speed with a ferocious bear a few strides behind. When Tex reached the door, he flung it open, jumped aside and the huge bear - unable to stop - hurtled right into the cabin. The Texan yelled to his colleagues as he slammed the door, "You men skin that one - I'm going after a couple more."

*Application: We've reached our goal, now we need to reach another.*

### 2. Life Will Seem Longer

A lawyer was preparing to go out of town and was trying to finish up his affairs when late Friday evening a man rushed in and said, "I must have some help with my

will. And, I must have it done by Monday.” The lawyer said, “I’m preparing to go out of town and wills aren’t usually that urgent. Why can’t it wait?” The man responded, “I have just returned from the doctor and he says I have only six months to live.” The lawyer asked, “My, what’s the matter with you?” He said, “The doctor told me that I have a serious heart problem and will not live beyond six months. He gave me strict instructions and I intend to do everything he said.”

He responded, “What else did he tell you?” He said, “The first thing I should do is move to south Texas. So, I am making my plans to move there on Tuesday morning. Second, he told me to buy a hog farm and begin raising hogs. The third thing he said to do was find a widow woman who had five children, all under the age of ten, and to marry her.”

The lawyer asked, “My, goodness, will that extend your life?” He said, “No. But the doctor said it would make that six months seem like an eternity.”

*Application: I know some of you feel we’ve been here for an eternity.*

### **3. Everything is Bigger**

There was a guy who had heard that everything in Texas was bigger and better than any other place. So, on his first visit to the state, he went in a bar one night and said, “Give me a beer.” The bartender served him up a whole pitcher of beer. He thought to himself, “Boy, things are bigger here in Texas.”

He then ordered a steak and the waiter brought him 32 ounces of the finest steak he had ever tasted in his life. He thought, “Boy, things are bigger here in Texas.”

He needed to go to the bathroom, so he asked for directions. He was told to go through the door in the back, turn right, and go through a second door, and he would find it. By mistake he turned left. When he walked through the second door, he fell into an Olympic size swimming pool. When he came up, he cried out, "Don't flush it, don't flush it!"

*Application: Things really are bigger in Texas.*

#### **4. A Local Call**

A Texan was in New York City and needed to make a phone call. When He got the operator she said, "That will be \$1.75, please." He exclaimed, "\$1.75! Why, in Texas, we can call hell and back for less than that." She replied, "Yes, but in Texas that would be a local call."

*Application: It gets awfully hot in Texas*

#### **5. All Liars**

Few people know that George Washington was actually a Texan. As a young boy, he used his bowie knife and chopped down his father's favorite mesquite tree. His father returned from a hard day of riding the range and demanded to know who had cut down his prized tree.

"Father," said young George, "I cannot tell a lie. I chopped it down."

"That settles it," said his father, "we're moving to Virginia. With an attitude like that, you'll never make it in Texas politics."

*Application: Texans don't always tell the truth about their state.*

## **6. Texas**

It got so dry in West Texas that the Baptists started sprinkling and the Methodist started wiping them with a damp cloth.

*Application: It gets hot and dry in Texas.*

# 16

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## Travel

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### 1. Kiss Your Luggage Good-bye

At Christmas time a man walked up to the baggage check-in counter at the DFW airport and saw a piece of mistletoe hanging right above the counter. He asked the clerk, "What's that for?" She replied, "That's so you can kiss your luggage good-bye."

*Application: You take a real chance when you travel.*

### 2. My Friends Call Me Bubba

A man who obviously thought he was a Romeo sat next to an attractive lady on a plane. To break the ice he said, "I'm doing a survey and would like to know, 'What kind of men turn you on?'"

She replied, "I really like native Americans. They are so in touch with nature. But, I also like Jewish men. They hold women in such regard."

"And, then, I also like Southern men. They are so gracious and thoughtful."

The man then said, "Permit me to introduce myself. I am Running Bear Goldstein. But my friends call me Bubba."

*Application: Some people try to please everybody.*

### **3. You Did It Last Week**

A man walked up to the baggage check-in counter at DFW with three suitcases. He said to the attendant, "I want one of these to go to San Francisco, one to Miami, and one to Mexico City. The check-in man said, "Fellow, I can't do that!" The man replied, "Why not? You did it last week."

*Application: It's amazing what you can do if you try.*

### **4. Don't Tell Them I'm a Preacher**

I travel a lot in my work. Usually, when I sit next to a stranger, they get around to asking me what I do for a living. I used to tell them I was a preacher, but I could see their countenance drop. They were thinking, "Oh, no, I've got to sit here and drink cokes the entire flight."

Nowadays, when they ask me what I do for a living, I tell them, "I am in insurance — fire insurance."

*Application: People act differently around a preacher.*

### **5. You Get Lonely**

I travel a lot and am often in hotels over a holiday. It gets awfully lonely. I walked up to a man in a restaurant last Christmas day and said to him, "Are you dining alone?" He replied, "I certainly hope so."

*Application: Sometimes we just want to be alone.*

### **6. Watch It Take Off**

Unaware that El Paso is on Mountain Standard Time and Dallas on Central Standard Time, a man inquired at DFW airport about a plane to El Paso. "One leaves at 1:00 p.m." a ticket agent said, "and arrives in El Paso at 1:01

p.m.”

“Would you repeat that, please?” the man asked. The agent did so and then inquired, “Do you want a reservation?”

“No,” said the man, “but I think I’ll hang around and watch that thing take off.”

*Application: I want you to be here to see this.*

## 7. We’ll Be Up Here All Night

A 747 was halfway across the Atlantic when the captain got on the loudspeaker: “Attention, passengers. We have lost one of our engines, but we can certainly reach London with the three we have left. Unfortunately, we will arrive an hour late as a result.”

An hour later the captain made another announcement: “Sorry, but we lost another engine. Still, we can travel on two. I’m afraid we will now arrive two hours late.”

Shortly thereafter, the passengers heard the captain’s voice again: “Guess what, folks? We just lost our third engine, but please rest assured we can fly with only one. We will now arrive in London three hours late.”

At this point, one passenger became furious. “For Pete’s sake,” he shouted. “If we lose another engine, we’ll be up here all night!”

*Application: We won’t be here all night.*

