

Another couple

One day in heaven, the Lord decided He would visit the earth and take a stroll. Walking down the road, He encountered a man who was crying. The Lord asked the man, "Why are you crying, my son?" The man said that he was blind and had never seen a sunset. The Lord touched the man who could then see and was happy.

As the Lord walked further, He met another man crying and asked, "Why are you crying, my son?" The man was born a cripple and was never able to walk. The Lord touched him and he could walk and he was happy.

Farther down the road, the Lord met another man who was crying and asked, "Why are you crying, my son?" The man said, "Lord, I work for the school system."

And the Lord sat down and cried with him.

According to a radio report, a middle school in Oregon was faced with a unique problem. A number of girls were beginning to use lipstick and would put it on in the bathroom. That was fine, but after they put on their lipstick they would press their lips to the mirror leaving dozens of little lip prints.

Finally the principal decided that something had to be done. She called all the girls into the bathroom and met them there with the maintenance man. She explained that all these lip prints were causing a major problem for the custodian who had to clean the mirrors every night. To demonstrate how difficult it was to clean the mirrors, she asked the maintenance man to clean one of the mirrors. He took out a long-handled squeegee, dipped it into the toilet and then cleaned the mirror.

Since then there have been no lip prints on the mirror. There

are teachers and then there are TEACHERS.

More humor

Again, not by me.

EDUCATION HUMOR— WORST ANALOGIES USED IN ESSAYS

These are the winners of the “worst analogies ever written in a high school essay” contest

His thoughts tumbled in his head, making and breaking alliances like underpants in a dryer without Cling Free.

Her hair glistened in the rain like nose hair after a sneeze.

He spoke with the wisdom that can only come from experience, like a guy who went blind because he looked at a solar eclipse without one of those boxes with a pinhole in it and now goes around the country speaking at high schools about the dangers of looking at a solar eclipse without one of those boxes...

The little boat gently drifted across the pond exactly the way a bowling ball wouldn't.

From the attic came an unearthly howl. The whole scene had an eerie, surreal quality, like when you're on vacation in another city and “Jeopardy” comes on at 7 p.m. instead of 7:30.

Her eyes were like two brown circles with big black dots in the center.

Bob was as perplexed as a hacker who means to access T:\flw.quid55328.com\aaakk/ch@ung but gets

T:\flw.quidaaakk/ch@ung by mistake.

Her vocabulary was as bad as, like, whatever.

He was as tall as a six-foot-three-inch tree.

Her date was pleasant enough, but she knew that if her life was a movie this guy would be buried in the credits as something like "Second Tall Man."

Long separated by cruel fate, the star-crossed lovers raced across the grassy field toward each other like two freight trains, one having left Cleveland at 6:36 p.m. traveling at 55 mph, the other from Topeka at 4:19 p.m. at a speed of 35 mph.

They lived in a typical suburban neighborhood with picket fences that resembled Nancy Kerrigan's teeth.

John and Mary had never met. They were like two hummingbirds who had also never met.

The red brick wall was the color of a brick-red Crayola crayon.

Mara's Death

I have loved the character of Mara Jade ever since I first read Timothy Zahn's book Heir to the Empire. In fact, I have all eight of his Star Wars books and they all deal with Mara some way. When she was first introduced, she wanted to kill Luke Skywalker, but later married him! Talk about some major emotional change. Going from wanting to kill someone to marrying them ten years later, is pretty good! Mara is one of

the favorite characters in the Expanded Universe, and yet, they killed her off! And by her nephews hand, no less! Jacen Solo turned to the Dark Side and killed his aunt! The way the fight between Mara and Jacen went, Jacen should have died too! He had a ceiling collapse on him and yet he still survived! I understand that this was one of the easier ways to show that Ben, Luke and Mara's son, was important, but so many people were not happy. The author didn't like that Mara died, and she killed her off! Timothy Zahn didn't like how she was killed, but is willing to continue writing books with Mara in them! I just can't wait for another book with Mara to come out! And with Timothy Zahn as the writer, makes me even more impatient! I have no idea if he is working on one right now or not!

Telescopes, an introduction

If you've been reading through the entire blog, you will notice I talk about my family and telescopes. I will try to make the titles very specific, so you will know what you are going to be reading...

Eventually, I will answer the question: "What telescope should I get?" For now I want to talk about various kinds of telescopes. There are really only two types of telescopes. If you're a die-hard astronomer, just wait. This is for beginners. ☐

There are telescopes that use lenses (called refractors) and those that use mirrors (called reflectors). The refractors are the telescopes most people think of. A pirates spyglass, 1/2 of a binocular are examples of refracting telescopes. Reflectors are generally the big boys. Most observatory telescopes are now reflectors of one type or another. The

space telescope is a reflector.

Now for some there is a third group of telescopes that combine the mirrors and the lenses. I don't differentiate in that manner. I will admit there are different types of reflectors. Some have corrector lenses somewhere in the light path that correct different deficiencies in the mirrors. More on that in a latter post. Lets just say that all telescope types have there problems, and various ways are used to correct those problems.

Now more on the introduction. The first telescopes were refractors. But the strength of any telescope is how much light it can take in. Refracting telescopes with big front lenses get very big and awkward quickly. And there is also a limit as to how big you can make a piece of glass and only support it on the edge. So some bright people invented reflecting telescopes. Theoretically, there is no limit as to how big you can cast a mirror because it is supported across the entire back. In practice, once a mirror gets too big, it is very hard to support in something that can move and take in the entire sky. And glass does have a problem with deforming under stress, and big mirrors under gravity are under stress.

The biggest refracting telescope is in the Chicago area at the Yerkes observatory. The main lens is 40 inches across. The largest reflecting telescope in operation is the 11 meter scopes in South Africa. The largest telescope in the United States are the twin 10 meter scopes on Mauna Kea in Hawaii. The largest in the mainland US is the 9.2 meter Hobby-Eberly Telescope in Texas. And finally in Ohio the largest telescope is the the 1 meter (39 inch) at the University of Toledo.

I have a family connection with the telescope in Toledo (and others around the world), my father was a quality control manager at Owens-Illinois and this was one of the mirrors he over saw the production of.

More later

Shout to the Lord

Even popular television can do things right from time to time. Apparently American Idol had their final eight perform [Shout to the Lord](#) not once, but **twice**. The first time they changed “Jesus” to “shepherd” presumably to not “offend” anyone (he is our shepherd though!), but the second time around they changed it back! Praise Jesus! The second, good version is below:

Fire... Bon Fire

A new hilarious episode of "The Office" was on tonight. I am now watching reruns on Tuesday nights and decided to see if I could follow the new episodes as well. Happily enough, I enjoyed the new episode tremendously. Tonight's episode featured the absolute worst dinner party you can imagine. Michael even had to stage a revolt to his superiors in order to get Jim and Pam and another couple I am not familiar with to come to his and Jan's place. Apparently, none of Michael's "friends" were too keen on going. Poor Dwight was the only person in the office who wanted to attend and was not invited.

The party featured a tour of Jan and Michael's abode. Bon fire scented candles, anyone? And Michael's mini-plasma screen television hanging near his multiple (?) Dundee trophies... both of which he is exceedingly proud. The party kicked into high gear with a game that resembled charades but the performer was able to speak.

By the end of the party, there was a party crasher and his "date", domestic squabbling, and enough staring to make anyone think that the worst party they have ever been to was 1000% better. That is what make "The Office" one of the funniest shows on television. The writers take a horrible situation and exaggerate it to the point where it becomes hilarious.

Thoughts on family

As a father, I've had many thoughts on my family and my responsibility to them. To me that thought is mind numbing. For the first 20 years of my being a parent, I had help. My girls had, in my opinion, the best mother on the planet. She gave everything to those girls. The last four years it has been just me. The youngest was 13, and the oldest 23 when their mother died. The oldest had been out of the house since she graduated High School. There was really no more parenting that needed to be done there. She was on her own. The next was a senior in High school and I had a sophomore and a 7th grader. These three still needed their mother, and I could not be her.

I struggle through with their help. Their mother did a good job at raising them, I just had to keep things flowing. Lucky me. The first year I had trouble keeping me flowing. The four of us at home kind of flowed with the stream for a while. Not our best moments by any standards, but we got through.

There were 2 high school graduations, 2 weddings, multiple boy friends in the past 4 years. I probably wasn't the best at handling all that. But again we made it through. I should emphasize that WE made it through.

Video tapes of my daughters in plays were put into a safe place. Birth Certificates were put in a safe place. Those safe places were lost. I found tv remotes in the freezer. Bought more cabbage when I couldn't find the head I just bought. Found the first head months (weeks maybe) later. By then it was a wonderful science experiment. There were a number of those experiments. But as a family WE made it through.

We all got together last January. My daughters, the extended families, grandkids and all went to the Zoo, went shopping, and just hung out. We made it through.

In the future, no matter how far apart we are, I know I can rely on my girls. We will make it through.

I feel stupid...

Well, today I was a floater at a middle school, meaning that I would sub for different teachers throughout the day as they went to meetings. When I arrived they gave me a list. Four classes. Were they serious? I thought I had it fairly easy yesterday with five classes (in middle school six is typical, with a planning period, team meeting- subs not invited, and lunch). In this district one period is homeroom, making a total of ten periods of which a sub usually works seven when homeroom is added in. This meant that I had **three** extra periods off! A half-day of work for a full day's pay! Then again, this is me we're talking about. I didn't feel quite right about this so I asked at the office a few times if I was needed elsewhere during these breaks. They didn't have anything as was typical, so it would seem that I would get all the time off after all. However, in the afternoon the teacher I was subbing for for 7th and 10th periods decided she could use me after all to help out while she tried to get some other work done. I stress *tried* because in fact since she was in the room her students still came up to her and asked questions. By the way, they were doing research in the LMC so I mostly babysat as I couldn't answer a lot of the questions since I didn't know all the expectations of the project. Still not bad- a very easy day.

Now, some may think the title of this post applies to the above paragraph since I asked for extra work instead of just saying nothing and sitting in the lounge all day. Well, it always pays to not get on their bad side- I already don't take

TA positions which pay about \$30 less per day- and besides, I would have missed the situation I am about to write on. □ Well, what happened was during one of the periods a couple of students came in who weren't a part of the class. Remember, this was the LMC and not a classroom. That would be very strange if random students just came into a classroom where they were not a part of the class... Anyway, I wasn't aware of this at first and so questioned them when I saw they were not doing the research with the rest of the class. They told me they were here while their class was on a field trip. Were they being punished? Nope. They were seventh graders in an eighth grade math class, and all the eighth grade was on the field trip. Now I thought I was pretty good at math being in algebra in eighth grade, but here they were, two seventh graders in the eighth grade class. And to make matters worse, this seemed to be the top eighth grade math course, algebra 2. That's right, 2. I didn't take algebra 2 until my sophomore year (they split the two courses with geometry in the middle, which I took as a freshman). These two seventh graders were *two* years ahead of where I was when I was in middle school. They expect to be bused to high school next year for math as they apparently were bused to the middle school when they were in 5th grade... I guess if this keeps up they will be taking calculus in their junior year instead of in college, unless they bring themselves even further ahead in the next three years. Definitely two top engineers in the making.

Awesome Day

It may be cold and rainy outside, but the weather has not affected my emotional state inside! I've had an awesome day! It is our ninth wedding anniversary today, and so far, the day

has been just short of perfect. The only thing that could make it better is if we could be together all day, but of course with 3.5 kids to support, it's unrealistic on a weekday to take off work. Besides, we were able to have a fun family day together yesterday in between the dental work and the tantrums of our 3-year-old.

Today, my husband has left love-note post-its all around the house for me to find. He sent me a sweet e-card, and I really love the church sign he put on tangents.org of our wedding day. My almost 18-month-old daughter even let me have a peaceful lunch today – I didn't even have to interrupt my own lunch once to get her anything and usually I have to get up between 5-15 times! Oh, wait, I did have 1 lunch "interruption", but I wouldn't even call it that. The doorbell rang with the delivery of a gorgeous vase of flowers my husband sent me for our anniversary! And lately, the smell of fresh flowers has been completely relaxing for me... it must be the pregnancy. I've always loved flowers, but lately they're almost like a drug when I smell them! So, walking past the eye and nose candy on the dining room table is also keeping my spirits high. We were going to celebrate with a nice dinner and a night out, then come home and watch the first new Office episode in MONTHS, but the other day, we found out tonight is the monthly meeting for the board of a community agency with which we volunteer – wouldn't you know April's meeting had to be tonight! But no matter... we can still go out around the meeting, go to the meeting together, and in the age of VCR's, computers, and all of that, we will find a way to catch the Office later. So thanks to all the well-wishers who've written and called – we've had a wonderful day and we will see you next year at the big 10-year anniversary BASH!

Taylor, Teeth, and Toledo

Our poor little 8-year-old daughter, Taylor, was born on the short side of the genetic crapshoot when it comes to teeth. The poor kid has cavities, teeth that are fused together, and other dental problems. They wanted to do so much dental work on her that our small town dentist referred us to the big city of Toledo to get it taken care of. So, yesterday saw an all day excursion to Toledo so the poor kid could undergo some major dental work. It actually went quite well; she handled everything like a trooper. I'm sure the laughing gas and novacaine somewhat helped the pain, but when it was all said and done, she did freak out a little about all the blood. After that whole ordeal, we wanted to make the day special for her, so we made a quick stop at the zoo between dental appointments. We only had about an hour, so we didn't get to see our favorite animals, but we did have time to check out the reptile house, which, crazily enough after all of our visits to the Toledo Zoo, we had never been in. It was a typical reptile house, full of snakes, lizards, and frogs (even though they're not reptiles, zoos always put them in the reptile house I've noticed), but what I really enjoyed was the crocodile. I can't tell you the last time I saw one of those, especially indoors. It was huge, and unlike their cousins the alligators, crocodiles are not friendly nor docile. They are very aggressive animals, and you can almost see it on their faces. The Toledo Zoo also has a Chinese alligator, and I was wondering if Chinese alligators are similar to American alligators in temperament. I know the Chinese alligator is smaller and much more rare, but I wonder if that is where the differences end... I'll have to do some research.

After the second dental appointment, we made a stop at Chuck E. Cheese, gauze packed mouth and all. The kids had a blast, although it wasn't very crowded, so Chuck E. didn't venture off the stage for a visit, much to my 3-year-old's

disappointment. But I came to a realization that it was our youngest-for-now's first visit to a Chuck E. Cheese, at least her first one where she was old enough to enjoy it. Since we live in the boondocks, we just don't find ourselves at Chuck E. Cheese nearly as often as when we lived in the Chicago suburbs like when our oldest was a toddler. But that's quite alright, the place is expensive, and going infrequently really teaches the kids to appreciate the times we do make it there. Over the years, not much has changed there... when I was a kid, they called it Show Biz Pizza, and I was able to find pics of the old characters for others my age who like nostalgia.



The main character for the chain, a bear named Billy Bob (top right picture), really scared me as a kid... for some reason, he had long claws, which can be really scary for a kid. In Kindergarten, we got to go on a field trip to Show Biz; they took us behind the scenes and "undressed" one of the robots and took us back into the room where they have all the control panels for everything. Why they wanted to show a bunch of 6-year-olds that the characters were actually robots is still beyond me, but it was a very cool field trip and something I

still remember.