

Teaching time again...

Well, teaching in Sunday school that is. Unlike last time I taught a month ago, I felt I did pretty well this time. I was able to do 1½ lessons this weekend. The ½ comes from last night, when I taught only half of the lesson. Why? Well, there was a shortage of leaders due to many taking the night off for this or that reason. In fact, one who had off rearranged his schedule so he could be there after all. Anyway, it was decided that we would spend most of the night with the younger kids (1st-3rd) as a result and not have small groups. In the end, we did wind up with enough help from last-minute volunteers to do our normal thing, but the wheels were already in motion. I really don't think 4th/5th grades got much out of the younger lesson, but fortunately we had time at the end to do the intended lesson, well half of it anyway. It was an important lesson so we had to fit it in. I taught them the Romans Road to salvation. This is a series of four key verses from the book of Romans. Here's where I get lazy now and cut-n-paste from [another site](#). You may notice that there are five verses here (6:23a and 6:23b are one), but Romans 10:13 is covered by 10:9-10 so as a "repeat" it doesn't count: ☐



The ROMANS ROAD is a pathway you can walk.

It is a group of bible verses from the book of Romans in the New Testament.

If you walk down this road you will end up understanding how to be saved.

Romans 3:23

"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."

We all have sin in our hearts. We all were born with sin. We were born under the power of sin's control.

Admit that you are a sinner.

Romans 6:23a

"...The wages of sin is death..."

Sin has an ending. It results in death. We all face physical death, which is a result of sin.

But a worse death is spiritual death that alienates us from God, and will last for all eternity.

The Bible does plainly teach that there is a place called the Lake of Fire where lost people will be in torment forever.

It is the place where people end up that remain spiritually dead.

Understand that you deserve death for your sin.

Romans 6:23b

“...But the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

Salvation is a free gift from God to you! We can't earn this gift, but we must reach out and receive it.

Ask God to forgive you and save you.

Romans 5:8

“God demonstrates His own love for us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us!”

When Jesus died on the cross He paid sin's penalty. He paid the cosmic price for all sin, and when He took all the sins of the world on Himself on the cross, He bought us out of slavery to sin and death! The only condition is that we believe in Him and what He has done for us, understanding that we are now joined with Him, and that He is our life.

Because He loved us and gave Himself for us!

Give your life to God... His love poured out in Jesus on the cross is your only hope to have forgiveness and change. His love bought you out of being a slave to sin. His love is what saves you. Not religion, or church membership.

God loves you! And reaches you right where you are.

Romans 10:13

“Whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved!”

Call out to God in the name of Jesus!

Romans 10:9,10

“...If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Jesus from the dead, you shall be saved; for with the heart man believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation.”

If you know that God is knocking on your heart door, ask Him to come into your heart.

It was a blessing to get to teach this to not one, but two groups of kids this weekend. Today by the way was a normal day- we played kickball, had worship, lesson, and small groups just as normal. They even got to make “salvation” bracelets to remind them of the message. Only last night was weird. I am happy to say that I will have another chance to teach in two weeks- I normally only get one lesson per month. So, another blog entry about teaching then. In the meantime, more of the movies, retro gaming, and whatever. ☐

That theatre bug

Reading the post on [Jamiahsh's blog](#) about his favorite things, I started to respond to his post then realized I probably had enough information for my own post, so here goes. While I was in a school play when I was 7 and in the chorus of one when I was 10, theatre didn't really enter my vocabulary until I was 16, before my senior year in high school. Here are some of my milestones and interests in this regard:

[Cheaper by the Dozen](#) [note: link is *not* my production] (yes, it was a book, play, and movie before Steve Martin came along...) was a play my church at the time did as a student show. I got to play the role of a 10-year old (I was 16 at the time, but then none of us were younger than high school) and had such a blast at it I would delve into theatre big time after this.

[Scapino!](#) was the first show I acted in in high school. I played the part of Argante. Very fun, and probably the most interesting audition I had ever. This included theatre games and improv in addition to a little singing and script reading.

[South Pacific](#) was another high school show I didn't try out for since it was a musical (hadn't been bitten by that particular bug yet), but it was the first and only show I ever played in the pit orchestra. I used to play trumpet but I wasn't very good at it. I never could get past moving my jaw as I played, a big no-no in technique.

Bishop of Aahs was written in-house (in-church I guess) as a parody of, you guessed it, [Wizard of Oz](#). This was the second show I did at my church and the second show that opened new doors for me, this time into musical theatre. I played one of

several “munchkins” (teenage kids). Unfortunately that’s about all I remember of it. Of course we sang munchkin songs with new lyrics. Of course I started trying out for musicals after this.

[Finian’s Rainbow](#) was the first community theatre show I ever performed in. Well, it was youth community theatre and not really a very well-run group (though it still exists today). Anyway I was just in the chorus for this one, but hey, chorus members are people too! After this show I would start private vocal lessons.

[Phantom of the Opera](#) was a show I have never been in, though I did do a different [Phantom](#) about 12 years ago. Rather, this was the first professional musical I heard on CD, and later saw in Chicago. This would be the only musical I listened to for awhile, though I did eventually broaden my horizons first with other Andrew Lloyd Webber shows including the dreadful [Aspects of Love](#), and later with other shows. [Les Miserables](#) would become my new favorite a few years later. I still want to be in that show- come on, release the amateur rights already!

Speaking of Les Miz, it was the first and only show I ever auditioned for professionally. They never called me...

[Grease](#) was a show I was in twice and didn’t perform even once. Both times the rights were pulled when the tour came to town. If you ask me, the second time the group should have done it anyway- pulling the rights is just evil. Once give, the publisher shouldn’t be able to go back on it. The first time they lost the rights immediately and so were able to do another show with the cast they had ([Do Black Patent Leather Shoes Really Reflect Up?](#)). This became the first show I had a solo song in. I was never told what role I had in Grease, though a friend tells me it was a combination of the Teen Angel and another role. The second time I was actually asked to be in the show and was given the role of Roger. We made it

about halfway through rehearsing before we lost the rights.

[Little Shop of Horrors](#)... Okay, let's not talk about this one.

[Oliver!](#) was a show I had a huge interest in at one time (I still have multiple CDs of this show). I did try out for it a couple of times previously, but just a couple of years ago it became the first show I ever had a true lead in. I was offered the role of Fagin, and according to several people I did an outstanding job at it. Life has kept me from community theatre since, but I have been doing drama at my church so it hasn't been all bad. Next show...? I would like to do Secret Garden I think, but who knows what the future will bring?

Back and caught up

Well, mostly. Anyway, I have returned and ~~apparently the site I thought would link to my HPX page never did so~~ (EDIT: there was a post there- I just missed it and so apparently did everyone else!), so there are no comments there. In the last couple of days I have caught up on much of the internet news I read, though I still have several days of newspapers to read. I really should give those up completely and just go to the paper's website for the local news, and comics.com for the comics. I was a little disappointed B.C. finally ended a few weeks ago and was replaced with a pretty bad comic about a sheep and a dog- Deflocked I believe is the title. Of course B.C. had to go since its writer passed on a few months ago. I will meet him once I go home myself, along with other figures like C.S. Lewis and of course the many faithful in the Bible. Not for a long time though, God willing.

The cabin I had was quite young and in some cases difficult. There were two who were prone to distraction and I feel the

small group time I had with them following lessons was not where it could have been. Mine was the only cabin in fact who did not even make it to the final flag raising on Saturday morning, still cleaning the cabin. We took over an hour to get ready, and even then I still had to go back and finish following breakfast. But enough of the bad. No one likes to read about that.

Every year there is something new at the camp. The first year I was there they were finishing up the lodge where we have meals and lessons. They had a big tent set up outside instead that year. The second year the lodge was finished and they had a new instructional- rock climbing. There is a small room on the bottom floor of the lodge with a rock climbing wall that extends to the roof two floors up. That replaced disc golf as an instructional. More importantly, the lodge was air conditioned, and so were the cabins! Ahh... The third year I was there they added a zip line. It is fun to go down it, but unfortunately after one got to the bottom there was a long hike around a lake to get back to the top. They also added an amphitheater for outdoor worship. This year's addition was small, but it aided the zip line immensely. A bridge over that lake. No more long hike around the lake to get back. Next year, who knows for sure, but there are plans for a baseball field and zip line improvements in the future.

The zip line was the general favorite part of camp for the kids in my cabin, but canteen time (where they could buy food and drinks, as well as have (guided) free time came in a close second. The day was quite organized and there was much to do, including lessons, worship, small group, games, instructionals, meals, etc. This could also be somewhat stressful as getting the kids to where they needed to be in a timely fashion when they all had needs like going to the bathroom (constantly!) and changing clothes wasn't easy.

In the end it was nice to hear their thoughts on what they learned and enjoyed when handing out their dog tags at the end

of the week. My team was air force, so I “promoted” them from cadets to airmen. Too bad I didn’t have wings to give them, but I did use some of my stimulus check (which I will receive soon) on t-shirts for my cabin. I still have one left too. Maybe I’ll take a picture of it and post it. In fact, I will have to post some of the pictures I took at camp. It should be relatively safe as I will not be identifying them, or the name of the camp (or my church for that matter ☐). Besides, too few people actually read this thing anyway. Look for those soon- I have well over 300 pictures and 90 videos to sort through to find some good ones. Well, I have some more catching up to do- like reading my friend’s blogs. ☐

Transitions

This is a time of transitions. Of course, as you know this is the time school days transition to long vacation time for the kids. They will be transitioning to the next grade, moreso of course these days than yesteryear. Once upon a time schools believed that holding back a child who wasn’t ready for the next grade was the right thing to do. Parents had to fight the schools to keep their children from this fate. Nowadays, schools have done a 180 and advance just about anyone believing it does more harm than good to hold that child back. This means that a child can do pretty much whatever he or she wants during the year without fear of having to repeat the grade. Parents who actually believe they might help their child by holding him/her back now must fight for this end instead. Is being held back such a bad thing? I don’t know- I just know things have really changed in schooling.

Okay, I have gone way off topic now, so where was I? Ah yes, transitions. I am transitioning from working to looking for

work. I will be looking in to a state job possibly, among other things. I mean, besides teaching- there are state jobs in just about every field. There are also transitions in my church as of late. One of the teaching pastors left a couple of months ago after only a short time at my church to head up another college. The new singles group got started a couple of weeks ago. Most kids moved up a grade starting this week (the rest will change over at the end of August). And, there have been some staff rotations. The pastor that had written the curriculum for at least 4th/5th grade, probably the younger grades too, had transitioned to another church campus running both from there, but now he's back and they hired another one to take over at the other campus so now each is dedicated to one campus. However, as duties have changed now a different pastor who previously did mostly the younger grades has officially taken over 4th and 5th grades as well, meaning he is responsible to get out the emails about the weekend to the leaders, such as what we should be doing, who will be teaching, new rules, etc... Yes, with the transitions come new rules. Just a slight change, but since he didn't get an email out being new to this and all- he didn't let us know until Saturday night. One of us two leaders (yes, only two of us this service) had to take over last minute. Since I work two services, I agreed I would teach Sunday morning so she taught Saturday night. The third service was actually worked out between a couple of the leaders phoning each other when they didn't get an email I found out later, so Sunday went quite smoothly.

This was the first time for the former third-graders, now fourth-graders, so things were completely new to them. They are used to having a drama (which I was part of, of course) but now they have a game time instead. Worship is also different- they have to provide all the singing. Prior to this, they sang to recorded children's songs, with the leader providing motions to do. Now the leader is more like the leader in the main worship service, providing the music via

guitar and possibly other instruments depending on who is there. Well, this was how it worked Sunday. We had no worship leader on Saturday night. High school students are a big part of this ministry and we just don't have any serving on Saturday nights (they often provide the music as well as lead). We have had an adult doing worship Saturday nights, but he wasn't there this time for some reason. I hope he didn't transition out, or if so that a replacement takes over quickly.

Anyway, also new to the new kids are small groups divided up by gender. Girls with female leaders, boys with male. The leaders could of course be high-school age, adults, or somewhere in between which is why I don't say "women" or "men." Well, one thing that hasn't changed is my Monday night small group, and I have to do my homework for it, so- later.

Three days, three meetings

No, not *that* kind of meeting. I mean meeting three students from my church. I should add that none of them were in my class but rather I sort of just ran into them. Two of them approached me, and for the other I recognized his name and approached him. It started with graduatin rehearsal the other day. They were going through the names and I heard his. I recognized it immediately. After all, I was his AWANA leader one year in addition to the 4th/5th grade ministry. Okay, that doesn't entirely mean anything as I didn't remember another such student right away who is one year younger than him and helps out in the ministry. Anyway, once I heard it I looked out for him and he was sitting in one of my (well, the teacher I was subbing for anyway) rows. I talked to him a little. I asked about his sister too who is two years

younger. Now, sad to say I don't remember a lot of the girls but his sister... let's just say I had a reason to remember her. Something she will grow out of if she hasn't already.

The next meeting was the next day when I subbed for a librarian, who also helped out in the computer lab. There were four classes to come in that day, pared down to three when one of the teachers canceled. I sorted books when I wasn't helping students at the computers. Now aren't you glad I didn't actually write about this assignment yesterday? The three of you who still read this blog would have gone down to zero! ☐ So, in the afternoon a third grader asked me if I played the doctor in the drama at church. Of course I told her I did, and not only that, but I would see her in fourth grade this weekend, even though she will still be in third grade for another week at school.

Finally, just today I ran into yet another one. She was in one of the four fifth grade classes I was not subbing in (five total at that school! ☐). She saw me in the hall and asked if I worked in 4th/5th grade at my church. When I said yes, I of course told her I *wouldn't* be seeing her there this weekend since she is no longer a fifth grader there, but a part of the junior high ministry. She was a little disappointed in this- I know I would, knowing I would have to attend regular worship from then on! True, now I willingly go and enjoy the service but I know at age eleven I wouldn't and didn't when I served as an acolyte once in awhile at the church I grew up in. And that was only an hour-long service. At my church now the service is half again as long.

Three students in three days- who would have guessed? Of course this doesn't beat the three students in one **day** a month ago, but still. As for my day today, as I said it was fifth grade. I corrected work with them, watched over their work on some projects in the morning, did some teaching in the afternoon, etc. The principal and I watched a few students play *Rock Band* in music. They were pretty good. Then he came

and watched *me* teach science. About a topic I knew little about (cold/warm fronts, high/low pressure zones). Sigh. I hope he wasn't too disappointed, but then I'm sure he understands a sub will not necessarily be an expert in anything taught during the day. The students were pretty good. A few had their minds on other things during silent reading, but hey, summer's almost here.

Well, that's all she wrote...

...for the 5th graders in children's ministry that is. What? Did you think I meant I was done with this blog? Today the 5th graders made their exit from children's ministry. In a couple of weeks they will officially enter student ministries as junior high students. Being Memorial Day weekend didn't help though as there were a few who didn't make it due to traveling, though fortunately not too many. The Junior high pastor (I think? I don't remember the other one leaving) came in with a couple other leaders and spoke with them about the welcome night, things to expect in junior high, etc. The kids were prayed over and given certificates- a sort of graduation I guess. Of course, some won't really be in junior high/middle school if they go to a public school in the area where 6th grade is still elementary, but at the church 6th grade is junior high even for them.

So, kids I have been working with for the last two years are now gone and in two weeks the third grade moves up to take their place. They should recognize me though, at least Saturday night kids, as I have been in the kid's drama. This is supposed to be the time then to heavily advertise camp, but the early bird discount will be over by then as camp is one short month away, and unless things change significantly,

yours truly will be joining them for the week. I have said before that that one week last year was very powerful for me spiritually, and I hope it will be the same for me this year- and for whoever will be in my cabin this time around.

Going back to drama, the headline applies here as well. It is done for the season, not to start again until next fall with a new theme. My usual exit line, to tell the audience to be sure to tune in next week, reflected this as well, instead telling them to be sure to trust Jesus since He's the only one who can make us super human. I also added a line for the third graders- that they would see me ("someone who looks like me") in two weeks. Heh, heh... So at the end, we added cast bows, and on reflection, I should have walked over to the puppet as well, since the puppeteer couldn't very well step out and take a bow too. Oh, well.

The end is near...

Tonight I write this as I should be partying instead. Tonight is the end-of-year cast party for the children's drama. Or rather, that is what the schedule says. The party was actually canceled due to lack of interest, plus a general grim outlook on people showing up on Wednesday nights for past rehearsals. If it was going to be anything like last year's get-together then I really won't miss it. It was a low turnout then and pretty unexciting. Some ice cream and drinks, and a little bit of small talk. The kids if I recall did some theatre games. Those theatre games used to be part of the rehearsals, but this year they got cut due to time, though the director did do some one of the nights.

In any event, the end may have arrived for rehearsals, but we

have one more weekend to perform- this coming weekend. I suggested we have the show "canceled" and have "extras" carry off pieces of the set as we do the drama. Unfortunately this suggestion was too late and Steve (children's ministry pastor) cringed at the thought of having to take down and put back up the set for each performance. I guess it was also kind of a negative note. The show rather ends more positively by finally discovering the formula my character has been searching for for so long. Of course the formula involves Jesus, the only super human. He is the one who makes super heroes out of all of us who are children of God. At the end we will take our final bows and the mock science show will end.

I *really* hope the performance goes without a hitch. Last week I was the only regular cast member there for my performance time. Another was prepared as a fill-in, but the rest just didn't show up. Steve said he knew a couple wouldn't be there, but my guess is he didn't have much advance notice as we had to scramble to get others to fill in, and needless to say they had to perform with scripts. Something that was actually quite regular last year, but praise God was not so much of a problem this year. The last episode is supposed to be the most memorable, so I pray that it is memorable in the right way...

Well, this wasn't my regular sub-post, but you already knew I had PE at the one school again. Basically, same thing different students. Softball all day with similar pluses and minuses as the previous days' kickball. Until tomorrow then, when it looks like I will break the middle-school rut with second grade. I will also get to sleep in an extra hour... ☐

Miscommunication

Well, I thought I was teaching at church today, but I found out otherwise- right before I was going to teach. As the kids sang worship songs, I went into an adjoining room to look over the lesson again. When I came out, the family pastor was there with his Bible ready to teach. Oh well. I was actually going to ask him last night, but I talked to another teacher who said he saw on the email the ones who would teach this weekend and he thought my name was on it- also that the email said that this month would be the same schedule as last month. So I decided not to bother John. It looks like I should have bothered him after all. Plus when I talked to him afterward I think I may have sounded like I was shifting the blame to that other teacher I talked to when in fact it was me who decided not to talk to the one I should have. I hope I'm just being critical of myself. Anyway, one of the kids I saw earlier this week made it to church, but the other one didn't. Oh well, I hope he shows up next week while I still remember his name. ☐

Well, perusing Worthyboards I encountered this Godtube video I thought I would share. It's about fitting into church. Just so you're prepared , it was in their humor forum...

[godtube]https://www.godtube.com/view_video.php?viewkey=a7bedeb99312cc5d7f4e[/godtube]

I also learned of another video site while looking for a teaching example- it is called [Teachertube](#)! Needless to say, I will be looking through some of these videos, hopefully to post about here!

Memory not as sharp as it used to be?

Memory for remembering scripts that is. We all know about my memory for names and faces by now. Memorizing scripts used to be a breeze, but now I just can't seem to get it right. I had two weeks this time, and it was better, but I still changed a few of my lines because I couldn't quite remember them. I know part of this is actual rehearsal time- we seem to be able to run through it an average of 1.5 times before the performance- but even with this handicap I feel I had a better handle on the memorization at the beginning of the year.

Today we also had a crisis getting props together. There was supposed to be a squirt gun, for example, but I had to improvise by using a flashlight instead (cool flashlight by the way, in the shape of a cordless drill so I think it worked). Also I had to make a backpack have *some* semblance of a rocket jet pack using some printed graphics and rolled-up paper tubes. Of course the tape on this and another prop failed. I will have to bring duct tape for the two groups tomorrow.

And now, I have to study the lesson for tomorrow's 4th/5th grade class- it is my turn to teach again, and this time I have more than a half-hour notice so it needs to sound like it. ☐

4th-grader I DID know!

Usually I go a long time between seeing kids from my church in their natural daily habitats. Tuesday was the super day, way

out of the ordinary. Today I ran into another one, apparently whose memory was not as good as the one I ran into on Tuesday. This time he wasn't in my class, but he was in a nearby 4th grade classroom. I passed him in the hall, then turned and did a double take- I actually recognized him. At the same time, he did his own double take, but he wasn't as sure. When I went to pick up my class from fine arts, there were two other classes in the same room, sort of a special fine arts day. His class was one of them, and his teacher was already leading the class away. He asked if he knew me, maybe from church. I just smiled and said, "I'll see you on Sunday, Brandon!" (okay, I guess first names are okay- I've been a bit paranoid on identifying people). Then he knew. At the end of the day I gave him a high five. So on Sunday, I will see two fourth-graders at 11:15 who I encountered this week, maybe three if Daniel (from Tuesday) brings his friend again.

As far as the day went, it was very easy- no teaching at all. Ordinarily this wouldn't make me happy, but it's been a long week and I was ready for some rest. I even made two errors this morning since I was so tired. This morning went like this: fine arts (combined classes), math test, fine arts (single class), finish math test, lunch. That was it. The afternoon was a little more complex with SSR (silent reading), spelling test, reading test, computer lab. Yes, they took three tests in one day- not a fun day for them. I guess I did do more than babysit in the afternoon. I of course had to give the words and sentences for the spelling test, and additionally I had to proofread and correct papers on the computer before the kids printed.

In any event, I am glad for the weekend. I enjoy what I do (mostly) but I need the break. Before I sign off, I should mention that all went well except for a couple of boys. One was *constantly* talking, even during the math test in the morning, which he did not have to take since he was in a different math class. Unlucky for me the teacher didn't tell

me what he should do so I had to find him something to do. He said he finished the poetry project, didn't have a book, and wasn't allowed to read one of the books in the room because they had to be "checked out" and he had lost a book so he couldn't check out another. I didn't think the teacher would mind, as long as he didn't bring it home, but no dice. Sigh. He was actually elsewhere for most of the afternoon, so that time went better. The other boy was really only a problem while the first one was in the room- they kind of fed off of each other.

Well, that's it for now. Time to torture myself by taking out my contacts, then winding down for bed. Yeah, I know- Friday night. Well, I still haven't gone back to the singles group. They have a movie night tonight, I am David, but I think I have seen it and I just didn't want to go. I really need to force myself next time. Why the torture? Well I just made myself some salsa, 3½ pasta-sauce-sized jars of it. Made with habanero, serrano, jalapeño, and other hot peppers, tomatillos, tomatoes, onions, and cilantro. The hot pepper juice of course clings to the skin for several hours, so hot pepper meets eye and... If I don't post tomorrow it may be because I'm blind from this. Anyway, goodnight.