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# JOE & BEV'S NEWSLETTER

To Glorify God – To Edify the Church – To Undo the Works of Satan

October

2020

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## Dear Family and Friends:

I'm so glad to be able to send this newsletter by email so that you can delete it with a tap of the finger if you want to, or you can save it on your computer if you want to. Either way, there's no pileup of crumpled paper cluttering your wastebasket. I hope you know that my reason for corresponding with you is not to raise money or to promote anything but Jesus and the Good News of his sacrifice for us, and the promises we have in Him.

### FIRST WORDS

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The first words a baby speaks are usually memorable, and repeated by the parents to anyone who will listen.

The first words of a book are important for their power to grab our interest and lead us into reading on through.

The first words of God were, you might say, the whole world to us, because he spoke everything into existence.

A good preacher studies to find the right words that will capture our attention right at the beginning of his sermon.

There is power in words, and first words are very important.

**Consider Lazarus: John 11:43** – *And when Jesus had thus spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth.*

It has been pointed out that, if the first word out of the mouth of Jesus had not been "Lazarus" every dead person in that tomb would likely have come out.

**Peter followed that example: Acts 9:40** – *But Peter put them all forth, and kneeled down, and prayed; and turning to the body said, Tabitha, arise. And she opened her eyes: and when she saw Peter, she sat up.*

There are several lessons to be earned from these two passages of scripture:

1. Let your words be few, but clear.
2. Don't be distracted by the presence of unbelievers when praying.
3. Sometimes the most effective message is the shortest one.

### Let me elaborate on that last point:

Both Jesus and Peter directed their words to a specific individual. They didn't speak into the air, in generalities. Jesus use three words to get the desired effect, Peter used only two. In both cases they spoke the words that applied to the specific need. Neither Tabitha nor Lazarus needed to hear a sermon on love, or faith, or patience. They were dead. What they needed was only one thing – life.

In a nutshell, that's my philosophy about preaching or teaching. Ask the Holy Spirit what your audience needs most, then say it with an economy of the most powerful words you can think of that apply to that specific problem.

## QUICKIE FORMULA

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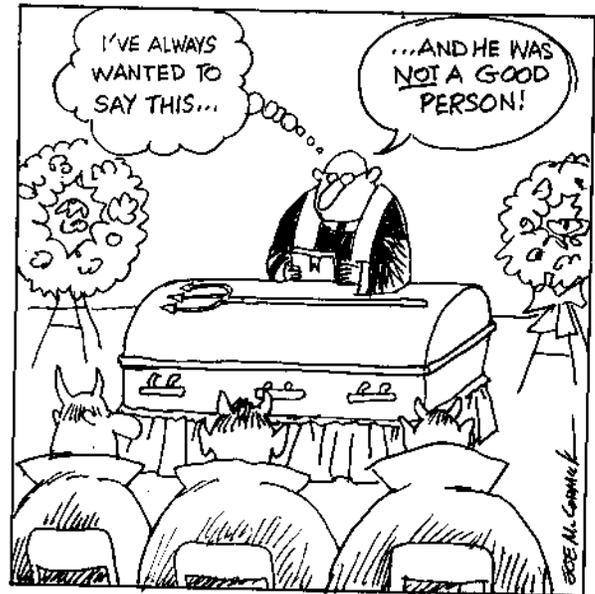
We all like to reduce everything to a formula that we can memorize... how's this for a teacher or preacher:

1. State the problem, giving examples.
2. State the solution with scriptures.
3. Sum up.
4. Shut up.

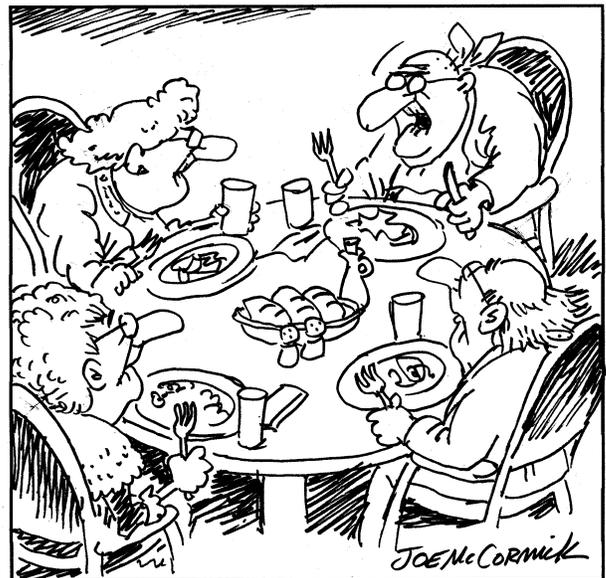
This is just me you understand. I would never presume to tell a preacher how to preach. It just seems to me that we get patted on the head too often with sermons we can "enjoy," and go home without ever having to confront our deepest need.

At any rate, that is not a problem that I expect to change with my obscure comments in a newsletter. I think what I really want to do is to encourage personal Bible study to find words that actually help, and to frame our words to others in such a way that they are actually edified. *"Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace to the hearers."* (Ephesians 4:29)

So we see that words are really more powerful than anything. With words God created the worlds. Jesus spoke words that gave life. His disciples did the same, and his disciples still have the power to do the things he did. As he neared the end of his ministry on earth, Jesus said in prayer to his heavenly Father, "I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me" (John 17:8). Remember, the sword of the spirit is the only weapon in the armor of God. That sword is His Word, the Bible. May we learn how to use it to overcome things that lead to death and how to use it to bring new life.



SATAN'S FUNERAL



"I'M STARVED...WHO'S GOT THE TEETH?"

"Nuff said for now, I guess. We're missing social distancing so, if you have a comment, we'd love to hear from you. Love, Joe & Bev