

© NEWSLETTER NO. 6, May 12, 2004

HUMOR, by Jim Burks

I've always laughed a lot. Trouble seems to wait just around the next laugh. I guess people think nobody can be that happy. But, I keep on smiling. Is it genetics, or am I just that way? Dad didn't laugh all that much and he could stop laughing in a split second, something I have never been able to do. It's all over when I get started. But, then Genes must have something to do with it. My Grandson, Brodie laughs even more than I used to when I was his age. But, that's o.k.

I have grown to like myself laughing. What the alternative, crying? Sure, any pastor worth his calling feels like crying, at times. It's just that I have found HUMOR to be a much better outlet. I don't mean within spiritual circumstances that touch the heart. Rather, it is at times when brethren act like, well... not brotherly. But, it's not a "in your face," kind of laugh. It's just that, through experience, I feel much better laughing than crying, or getting mad, etc. Humor does that. It allows the bigger picture to be seen, which most of the time reveals a much smaller me.

Besides the lack of brotherly love, there is other humor that tickles me. I like Wit! An example might be the copyright symbol at the top of the page, preceding the word NEWSLETTER. While looking for something to 'spice up' this presentation, a bit of irony struck me to use the copyright logo. But, don't worry, go ahead and use all the descriptions and accounts of this newsletter you want to, I have no intentions to sue.

Will Rogers was great at wit. "You can keep your mouth shut and let people think you are an idiot, or open it and remove all doubt," is as good as it gets. A great point made, humorously.

Funny people make us laugh and make a lot of money doing it. Remember Henny Youngman's line, "Take my wife, please"? Now, that's funny! Jerry Lewis used to be funny. But, slap- stick humor and Vaudeville comedy isn't around much anymore. May be Jim Carey or others will crack people up but, it seems there is no humor out there free from foul language or sexual connotations. Since I don't watch I don't know, for sure. Oh, yes! Bill Cosby is funny.

But, I'm no critic. Don't want to be. I have, voluntarily, limited myself-and my poor family-to antenna TV. In the 70's we had no TV, at all. Recently, I took cable TV, but without a box. It's the same as antenna TV, but with viewable reception. It has C SPAN, Infomercial stations, and 6 or 7 Spanish speaking channels. Talk about humor! Try watching a Charleston Heston flick dubbed in Spanish. And, a couple of minutes of John Wayne exclaiming, "Como esta, usted?" will have you in stitches. Even in Spanish though, John Wayne es un hombre muy grande.

There is Biblical humor, too, I think. No jokes, of course, yet the way many things are expressed puts a joyous smile on my face. John outrunning Peter is humorous to me. Two apostles racing seem so out of place that it's humorous. John said he outran Peter, but he writes in the third person, so there was no thought of winning the gold medal here. That's what excitement about the resurrection will do, for them and for us. Imagine the anticipation and joy within their hearts while running to the empty tomb?

I'll call the race-to-the-tomb "blessed humor." It's the kind that makes us want to join in and run with them. I see blessed humor when the woman touched Jesus' garment, Lk 8:44. Jesus asked, "Who touched me?" Peter seems to say, what do you mean? "Master, the multitude throng thee and press thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me?" A question impossible to answer, but it was. With Jesus, answers come even to impossible questions. What irony!

With the impossible task of the church, humor might develop a correct disposition that's needed to keep going. Indeed! What greater example of irony is there than the fact that we can do God's work? You and me! Therefore, doesn't the words, "God loves even me"

bring a smile to your face? You see humor does work! When men revile (Mt 5:11), a person must have a balanced heart that humor can produce. It's a heart that keeps God on the throne and us out of the way.