

April 24, 2022

John 20:19-31

¹⁹When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you.” ²⁰After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. ²¹Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. As God, my Parent, has sent me, so I send you.” ²²When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.” ²⁴But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. ²⁵So the other disciples told him, “We have seen the Lord.” But he said to them, “Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe.”

²⁶A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you.” ²⁷Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe.” ²⁸Thomas answered him, “My Lord and my God!” ²⁹Jesus said to him, “Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.” ³⁰Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. ³¹But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

For centuries in many countries the week following Easter Sunday was observed by the faithful as “days of joy and laughter” with parties and picnics to celebrate Jesus’ resurrection. The custom was rooted in the musings of early church theologians, who felt that God had played a practical joke on the devil by raising Jesus from the dead. “The Easter laugh,” was what the early theologians called it.

Now in more and more churches the Sunday following Easter is being called “Holy Humor Sunday.” Some have related this to the traditional Gospel reading for this Sunday – Doubting Thomas – by

saying that not only did the other disciples rejoice when they experienced the resurrected Jesus, but Thomas, who at first did not believe, must have also laughed with joy, if not giggled with delight, upon seeing Jesus again.

Trustees:

The minister was preoccupied with thoughts of how he was going to ask the congregation to come up with more money than they were expecting for repairs to the church building. Therefore, he was annoyed to find that the regular organist was sick and a substitute had been brought in at the last minute. The substitute wanted to know what to play. “Here’s a copy of the service,” he said impatiently. “But, you’ll have to think of something to play after I make the announcement about the finances.” During the service, the minister paused and said, “Brothers and Sisters, we are in great difficulty; the roof repairs cost twice as much as we expected and we need \$8,000 more. Any of you who can pledge \$100 or more, please stand up” At that moment, the substitute organist played “The Star Spangled Banner.” And that is how the substitute became the regular organist!

There is the story of a pastor who got up one Sunday and announced to his congregation: “I have good news and bad news. The good news is, we have enough money to pay for our new building program. The bad news is, it’s still out there in your pockets.”

Alternative Fuel Sources:

While driving in Pennsylvania, a family caught up to an Amish carriage. Attached to the back of the carriage was a hand printed sign:

“Energy efficient vehicle: Runs on oats and grass. Caution: Do not step in exhaust.”

Sermons:

After a very long and boring sermon the parishioners filed out of the church saying nothing to the preacher. Towards the end of the line was a thoughtful person who always commented on the sermons. She said, “Pastor, today your sermon reminded me of the peace and love of God!”

The pastor was thrilled. “No one has ever said anything like that about my preaching before. Tell me why.”

“Well – it reminded me of the Peace of God because it passed all understanding and the Love of God because it endured forever!”

Embodying Christ:

A man was being tailgated by a stressed out woman on a busy boulevard, when suddenly, just in front of him, the light turned yellow. He did the right thing and stopped, even though he could have beaten the red light by accelerating through the intersection.

The tailgating woman hit the roof, and the horn, screaming in frustration, as she missed her chance to get through the intersection.

As she was still in mid-rant, she heard a tap on her window and looked up into the face of a very serious police officer. The officer ordered her to exit her car with her hands up. He took her to the police station where she was searched, finger printed, photographed, and placed in a holding cell.

After several hours, a policeman approached the cell and opened the door. She was escorted back to the booking desk where the arresting officer was waiting with her personal effects.

He said, “I’m very sorry for this mistake. You see, I pulled up behind your car while you were blowing your horn, flipping off the guy in front of you, and cussing a blue streak at him. I noticed the ‘Choose Life’ license plate, the ‘What Would Jesus Do?’ bumper sticker, the ‘Follow Me to Sunday-School’ bumper sticker, and the chrome-plated Christian fish emblem on the trunk. Naturally, I assumed you had stolen the car.”

Three brief one liners:

Do you know what an agnostic dyslexic insomniac does?

He stays up all night wondering if there really is a dog!

What is the difference between government bonds and men?

Bonds mature.

What do you call a man with half a brain?

Gifted

A group of scientists had been working on breaking the genetic code of life. After well over a decade of failed attempts they were finally able to create a living cell out of dirt. Once they had perfected this process, they went on to grow the cell and get it to divide. After this they got the divided cells to merge and work together. They had created life out of a pile of dirt.

They were elated. Their work got peer-reviewed, articles were written, and they were famous. When they were nominated for a Nobel prize in both biology and chemistry they gathered together again to celebrate. It was at this gathering that one of the research scientists said, “Now that we can create life, we no longer need God.”

There was a brief pause, but then the room exploded with agreement. The lead researcher was selected to speak with God and inform God of their great success.

So, the lead researcher went off to talk with God. Arriving, she knocked on the door. God opened the door, said hello, and asked what she wanted. She told God about the work they had been doing and their success. She then thanked God for everything and told God that they, humanity, could take care of itself now. They no longer needed God.

God was impressed by the researchers’ accomplishments and asked if the lead researcher could demonstrate what they had done.

Very excited now, she said she would be delighted to show God their work. She ran outside, picked up a hand-full of dirt, and ran back in.

God said, “Wait! Wait! Stop right there!”

The woman was puzzled. “Why?”, she asked.

Then God said, “Get your own dirt!”