

One Thing Leads To Another

By Alan Smith

The story is told of a country lad who was hired for a salesman's job at a city department store. It was one of those massive stores that has every department imaginable. In fact, it was the biggest store in the world -- you could get anything there.

The boss said, "You can start tomorrow, Friday morning, and I'll come and see you when we close up."

When the boss looked up the young man the next day at closing time, he saw him shaking hands with a beaming customer. After they parted, he walked over and asked, "Well, that looked good! How many sales did you make today?"

"That was the only one," said the young salesman.

"Only one!" blurted the boss. "Most of my staff make 20 or 30 sales a day. You'll have to do better than that! Well, how much was the sale worth?"

"Two hundred twenty seven thousand, three hundred thirty four dollars and change," said the young man.

The boss paused for a moment, blinking a few times. "How did you manage that?"

"Well, when he came in this morning and I sold him a small fish hook. Then, I sold him a medium hook, and then a really large hook. Then I sold him a small fishing line, a medium one, and then a big one. I then sold him a spear-gun, a wet suit, scuba gear, nets, chum, and coolers. I asked him where he was going fishing and he said down the coast. We decided he would probably need a new boat, so I took him down to the boat department and sold him that twenty-foot schooner with the twin engines. Then, he said that his Volkswagen probably would not be able to pull it, so I took him to the car department and sold him the new Deluxe Cruiser, with a winch, storage rack, rustproofing, and a built-in refrigerator. Oh and floor mats."

The boss took two steps back and asked in astonishment, "You sold all that to a guy who came in for a fish hook?!"

"No," answered the salesman. "He came in to buy a blanket."

"A blanket?!"

"Yeah, an extra blanket for the couch. He just had a fight with his wife. I said to him, 'Well your weekend's ruined, so you may as well go fishing...'"

One thing leads to another. And that's the way it should work in our spiritual lives. As we grow and mature in Christ, we continue to add virtue upon virtue. "But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love." (2Peter 1:5-7). Wherever you are in your spiritual life, I pray that you'll take a step up today, adding something that will make you a little more in the image of Jesus Christ.

Unbelievable!

An Alabama girl, Katherine Laubenthal and a Michigan boy Ray Harshmann, went to work for Uncle Sam. They met at the 14th Street church, began dating and fell in love. On their wedding night, they started family worship by reading from the Bible and praying together. Then every day they made time for reading and praying together. When Ray had to leave home for army service in World War II, they determined to continue their regular schedule of Bible reading and to pray for each other every day. In this way they would have the joy of knowing that, although miles apart, each would be reading the same passage of Holy Writ.

"Missing in Action" was the phrase from Europe to Kathy after the Battle of the Bulge in Belgium. Grieving and hoping against hope, she continued their daily devotional, reading an

agreed upon chapter. Dare she trust the thought that Ray might be alive and might be reading the same words?

Thanks to a kind Providence, Ray was a prisoner undergoing rough treatment and a thin diet, but he was alive! When two years elapsed, Ray and Kathy were reunited kissed. Then when worship time came, they found that they were ready to read the same chapter! Neither had missed a day in prayer and reading. A husband in a prison camp in Europe, a wife on 14th Street in Small Town America, and a Father in heaven -- those three, many miles apart, yet so close together!

Now a half century later, Ray and Kathy still love each other and still read and pray together. (Hugo McCord, Gospel Advocate, Dec. 1994)

Satan's Emissaries

In 2Corinthians 11:13-15, Paul talks about certain people who are servants of the devil, who listen to and teach the will of the devil. "For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works." As surely as there is a force and being known as Satan, just that surely he has ministers, false apostles, deceitful workers. I am reminded of the old lady who never said anything bad about anyone; always good. Just in fun, she was asked what she thought of Satan. Her reply was, "Well, if we all worked as hard as he does, we would get more done for Christ." Satan never gives up, is always working. (Floyd Thompson)

Isn't It Funny...

How big a twenty dollar bill looks when you take it to church, but how small it is when you take it to the grocery store?

How much effort it takes to read a chapter or two of the Bible each day, but how easy it is to read the daily newspaper?

How much of a sacrifice it seems to spend an hour worshipping God, but how easy it is to spend an hour watching TV?

How easy it is to talk to your friends about your views on world affairs, but how hard it is to speak about your faith in Christ?

How difficult it is to work a special meeting at church into your schedule (including Bible study), but how easy it is to work in a social function?

How we can talk on the telephone for hours, but find it hard to talk to God in prayer for a couple of minutes each day.

God does not think this is funny at all. Jesus said, "Seek you first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be added unto you" (Matt. 6:33). (via Rays of Truth, Medina, OH, 8/31/97)