

## HEARTBEATS Staying Connected 11/6/2023

Dear Friends in CHRIST,

***ONE AT ONE*** – *Every day this week beginning on Tuesday, November 7, you are encouraged to pray for one minute at one o'clock. This week, pray for those who serve in our military. Ask that GOD keep them safe and that their service be meaningful to them. Also give thank for those who have served in the past and for the freedom and security that brings to our country.*

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I read an article recently that listed some things that are popularly believed to be included in the Bible, but aren't. Even many Christians believe some or all of these are in the Bible when they are not. It seems important that we know what the Bible does and does not say, first of all, for our own faith development, and second, so that we can challenge these claims when we encounter them from others. Therefore, here are some of those falsely believed ideas:

“THIS TOO SHALL PASS.” This phrase is not from the Bible. Rather it originates with Persia. While many things do pass, even difficult ones, this phrase is not in the Bible.

“CLEANLINESS IS NEXT TO GODLINESS.” Keeping oneself clean may be a societal value, and different folks have greater and lesser challenges in doing so, it is not from the Bible. Nor should we measure a person's cleanliness, and I guess that would be measured by our own standards, as a reference as to how close they are to GOD. Rather, the Bible tells us that it is in imitating CHRIST that we come closer to being the people GOD created us to be.

“MONEY IS THE ROOT OF ALL EVIL.” This is a misquote. The actual text states, “For the love of money is the root of all evil,” from I Timothy 6:10. Money is not the issue. Money is a tool that can be used for good or evil. Instead, it is the love of money, especially over and above our love of GOD, that is the problem.

“SPARE THE ROD, SPOIL THE CHILD.” This phrase is often claimed to be from the Bible, but it is not to be found there. Some who have quoted it as biblical have done so as justification for harsh treatment of children. A verse about raising children that I like much better is Proverbs 22:6 that reads, “Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old, they will not turn from it.”

“GOD HELPS THEM WHO HELP THEMSELVES.” Maybe the guy I caught shoplifting this week from a local store thought that the Bible allowed him to help himself to the item he tried to sneak out. While the phrase raises up taking initiative and being self-reliant, it is not from the Bible.

“PRIDE COMES BEFORE THE FALL.” The Bible does caution against pride and elevates the importance of humility, but this phrase is not from the Bible and accuracy in our quoting is crucial.

“GOD WORKS IN MYSTERIOUS WAYS.” This one is a little tougher. The sentiment it suggests is consistent with biblical themes, but the exact phrase is not in the Bible. GOD'S plans may not always be immediately clear to us, but we trust that GOD is working for our overall good.

Did any of these phrases surprise you? Maybe they are ones you use yourself, believing that they are from the Bible. There are likely others, too. It is important that we are accurate both in claiming things from the Bible and quoting them correctly. Different translations will list passages in varying ways. But the overall message should be consistent and used in ways that reflect our understanding of GOD'S will for all of us.

In CHRIST'S love,

Pastor Jeffrey