

Spiritually Speaking
 Father Thankachan Joseph



FORGIVING AND FORGETTING

The first reading and the Gospel this week call us to treat others (even enemies) “as you would like them to treat you.” We know exactly how we like others to treat us: to be forgiving, merciful, generous, and loving. But how many of us could say that we treat others in that way?

The First Book of Samuel (26:2, 7-9, 12-13, 22-23) shows how jealousy, envy, and hatred destroy every human. It describes Saul, who is jealous of the young David and pursues him, seeking to kill him. But the just Lord delivers Saul into the hands of David and his companions. David gets an opportunity to kill Saul, but he will not do so because he believes it would not be right before God.

I was reminded of an old story taught in catechism classes: A primary class teacher told each child to bring a plastic bag containing potatoes. Each potato was to be given the name of a person the child hated. When the day came, every child brought some potatoes - some had two potatoes; some three, while some had up to five potatoes. The teacher then told the children to carry the potatoes with them wherever they went (even to the restrooms) for one week. Days passed, and the children started to complain of the unpleasant smell of the rotten potatoes. And those having five potatoes also had to carry heavier bags. After one week, the children were relieved because the game finally ended.

The teacher asked, “How did you feel while carrying the potatoes with you for one week?” The children aired their frustrations and complained of the trouble they had to go through carrying the heavy and smelly potatoes wherever they went. The teacher said, “This is exactly the situation when you carry your hatred for somebody inside your heart. The stench of hatred will contaminate your heart and you will carry it with you wherever you go. If you cannot tolerate the smell of rotten potatoes for just one week, can you imagine what it is like to have the stench of hatred in your heart for your lifetime? This story teaches us to learn to forgive and forget.” The theme of forgiveness leads us to the following life lessons:

ACKNOWLEDGE OUR PAIN: The first step in forgiving is to acknowledge our pain to God. I am sure David would have cried out to God and told Him of his pain and hurt. David would have felt as did the psalmist: “My eyes are tired from crying so much; I am completely worn out. I am exhausted by sorrow, and weeping has shortened my life, I am weak from all my troubles; even my bones are wasting away” (Ps. 31:9-10). As we place our wounds before the Great Physician, He will begin to administer healing to us, as David did with Saul.

PRAY FOR THOSE WHO HAVE HURT US: David teaches the Christian quality of forgiveness, and the Gospel (Luke 6:27-38) offers these words of Jesus: “Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.” Jesus knew that the only way for us to overcome hurt is to pray for those who have hurt us. We can ask God to help us and to soften their hearts so that they can receive His peace and love. It is not easy to pray for the people who persecute us. When I began praying for my offenders, I felt insincere, but as I continued to pray for them, I began to desire that God bless their lives.

FORGIVING DOESN'T GUARANTEE A PERFECT RELATIONSHIP: We cannot make our offenders love us. That is not our job. We are called to love others.

LOVE OUR OFFENDERS: How can we possibly love someone who has so badly hurt us? Well, the Lord still loves and cares for us despite our imperfections and drawbacks. As we continue to pray for our offenders, love may grow. The Lord enables us to love those who have done us harm. In 1Cor.13, love is described as never keeping a record of wrong doings.

WE REALLY CAN FORGIVE: It may sound impossible to forgive the one who has hurt us, but it is possible. All we have to do is begin. God doesn't ask us to do the impossible. As we begin to follow His way, He is there to help us.

Morrow County officials discuss AI use

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of other government entities that do. Commissioner Jeff Wenholz didn't seem opposed but said he would like to know if AI met legal standards.

Morrow County Counsel Justin Nelson said AI is being used quite a bit.

“It depends on the AI,” he added.

Nelson, who is also Morrow County District Attorney, said the grand jury uses Google Recorder, which creates a transcript.

“It does its best and it tries to differentiate people,” he said. “The AI, I imagine, goes beyond that.”

“It'd be interesting to see how it does it,” he added.

Nelson also said he did not see why it would be a legal issue since BOC meeting minutes would also be backed up with audio and video recordings.

Sykes said if the other commissioners agreed, he would like to look into it more. Morrow County Finance Director Kevin Ince told the commissioners he has been working with the county's IT (information technology) department on testing out some of the AI functionality that's out there.

Specifically, he said, they had been looking at meeting transcription, both in Teams and with Zoom meetings. They were also looking at the Microsoft AI app Co-Pilot, which is integrated with the Microsoft 365 suite of applications.

“There's a lot of questions about appropriate use of AI in business,” Ince said, adding that they don't have a formal testing program right now. “We're just exploring it right now to identify if there's any technology concerns or security concerns, anything like that.”

Ince said there needs to be a “broader discussion” regarding licensing and government entities. However, he said the meeting transcription services he has been using have worked well.

“It's not something that you want to just publish the transcription,” Ince added. “You want to make sure that it summarizes things with the appropriate intent.”

There are a variety of AI programs, including programs designed specifically to take meeting minutes. Morrow County Broadband Consortium apparently uses Read Assistant, an AI powered meeting assistant.

The Heppner Gazette Times will print all letters to the Editor with the following criteria met: letters submitted to the newspaper will need to have the name of the sender along with a legible signature. We are also requesting that you provide your address and a phone number where you can be reached. The address and phone number will only be used for verification and will not be printed in the newspaper. Letters may not be libelous. The GT reserves the right to edit. The GT is not responsible for accuracy of statements made in letters. Any letters expressing thanks will be placed in the classifieds under “Card of Thanks” at a cost of \$15 Email to editor@rapidsolve.net or upload to Heppner.net.

SWAMP MONSTERS

Seems to me that the vile response to Elon Musk and the revelation of the criminal spending of our tax dollars speaks loudly of the evil that has been our government. But why would this audit elicit such a response from the whole Democratic Party? Now I understand how people can support some of the funding. I mean, who wouldn't wanna spend \$47,000 on a Transgender opera in Peru, 2 million for sex changes in Guatemala, or even hundreds of millions to support farming in Afghanistan.... for heroin production to benefit the Taliban? Sounds legit.

I can even understand why they would want their tax dollars to support their Liberal press mouthpieces. Can't have too much good press. But how can the everyday Woke Joe be ok with his paycheck going to the Wuhan lab, meals for al Qaeda fighters in Syria, or even Chelsea Clinton's wedding? Will they just jump on any bandwagon that has a Woke Flag? Why? Are they that insecure? Are the thieving Swamp Monsters invisible? Maybe they've reached a point where they've traded evil for good so long that they can't recognize the truth, even when it's right before their eyes.

I get that criminals are trying to keep doing what they do and don't want to be caught. They've gotten pretty used to their unabated freedom to steal. Their underhanded activities have gone unchecked for a long time. Enter Trump and his house-cleaning crew. Get out the sump pump. The swamp is just about to get a little less swampy. And hopefully, the Swamp Monsters will be no more.

This whole tax dollars down the toilet thing makes me think. What if we handled our finances like our

government? Husband: “Hey Debbie, there's a guy outside that says he's here to repo my truck. And I just looked at our checking and we're \$10,000 in the hole. Have you been depositing my paychecks? Hey...where did all this new furniture come from? And I thought we agreed we couldn't afford a trip to Hawaii this year. What are these tickets?”

Wife: “Don't raise your voice to me! Why were you getting into the checking account? I told you to let me handle the finances. And hey.... what I do with your money is my business. I knew you didn't trust me! Now out of my way.... I'm going to get my nails done”. Or it could be the other way around (not to offend any particular sex). “Hey Steve, I have no money for groceries, and you come home with a new Harley? Seriously?”

I've often thought it would be great to have a farmer's wife on the Budget Committee. She can sure stretch a budget and I'm pretty sure there would be no condoms heading to Africa if she had any say. Balanced budget, here we come. Elon would be proud. I hope they keep on digging until every foolishly spent dollar is exposed. And I believe it would be a better world if thieves were behind bars, and everyone could see the difference between good and evil.

“Look, the wages you withheld from the workmen who mowed your fields are crying out against you. The cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord of Hosts.” James 5:4

By Susie Crosby
 Prineville, OR

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From the Archives
 February 11, 1982 Gazette-Times

Mustangs bounce back, down Sherman

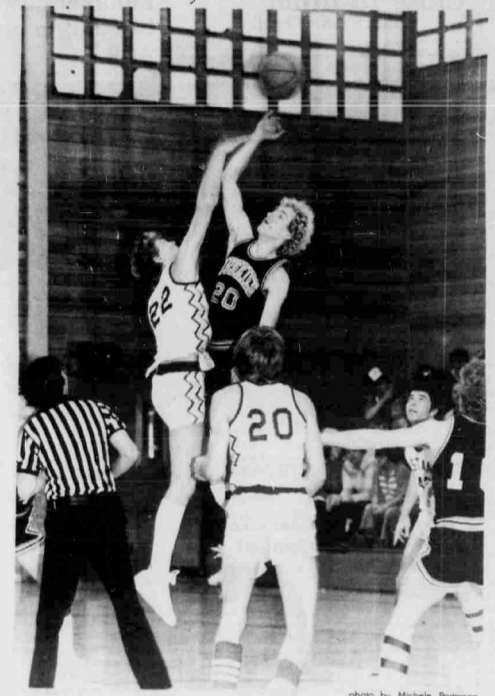
Bouncing back from a Friday night defeat at the hands of Pilot Rock, the Heppner Mustangs downed Sherman Saturday, 71-61.

“I thought we played an exceptional game,” Coach Dale Holland said, especially since the Mustangs' standout center 6'5” Robert Bier was out with a knee injury sustained in the Pilot Rock game.

Holland said he played only six people in the game, alternating Mike Currin and Jeff Orr at center. “They both did a good job,” he said.

But the real story of the game was the Mustang guard's ability to control the game. “(Doug) Holland and (Don) Lot dominated the game,” said Holland. Doug Holland scored a season-high 26 points in the Sherman contest.

“We beat them on the boards against a bigger ball club. And we played a much better ball game all around,” Holland said.



Sherman 15 13 18 28 61
 Heppner 16 22 14 19 71

	FG	FT	RB	F	A	T
J. Orr	1	2	3	4	0	4
Ferrar	9	2	10	4	4	20
Currin	2	2	7	3	2	6
Lot	4	5	10	3	5	13
Holland	4	10	3	6	26	
Murray	0	2	8	3	1	2

Heppner 17 46 20 18 71
 Sher. 24 13 30 20 61

	W	L
Heppner	8	1
Pilot Rock	7	2
Weston McEwen	5	4
Stanford	2	7
Umatilla	0	9

Dorian Ferrar leaps high against Sherman, while Jeff Orr(20) looks on.

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Holland said he played only six people in the game, alternating Mike Currin and Jeff Orr at center. “They both did a good job,” he said.

But the real story of the game was the Mustangs' guards' ability to control the game. “(Doug) Holland and (Don) dominated the game,” said Holland. Doug Holland scored a season-high 21 points in the Sherman contest.

“We beat them on the boards against a bigger ball club. And we played a much better ball game all around,” Holland said.

Seniors Matter February Menu

Feb 4 - Pork and Hashbrown Casserole
 Buttered Carrots
 Dessert

Feb 11 - Mini Pizzas
 Garden Salads
 Dessert

Feb 12 - Vets Meal
 Chicken Pot Pie, Peach Cobbler

Feb 18 - Beef Stroganoff over Mashed Potatoes
 Green Beans
 Dessert

Feb 25 - Tacos on a Plate
 Dessert

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