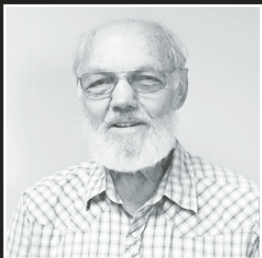


Kindling

BY
Jim Woodring

Sun-Courier
COLUMNIST



Forgiveness always has conditions

A 10 year old boy stole \$5 from his mom’s purse. He got caught and tried to lie his way out of it. Mom said, “ I love you son, but stealing and lying are not what we do here in this house. You are grounded now and give me your phone before you go up to your room. Dad will take care of you when he gets home.”

When the father heard the story, he went up to the boy’s room and said, “ Stealing and lying -what do you think I

should do?”

“Gee dad, I don’t know what got into me. I’m sorry. \$5 is my weekly allowance. I’ll work for it.”

Dad said, “You have the right idea, but we are Bible people. A rich man got confronted by Jesus for his stealing and cheating. He repaid the people he cheated 4 fold. You stole \$5, 4 fold makes it \$20, so you have 5 weeks of allowance to work off plus no phone, TV, or games.”

The boy had no

choice. How could he argue with Jesus, the Bible, and his father? In our adult world, that biblical standard for forgiveness sounds unreal. If the treasurer of some organization wanders off with \$5000, they would have to pay back 20,000. If \$100,000 were missing, then the amount due back would be close to a half million dollars. The biblical model is: confession of the sin, punishment, and restoration.

We may sometimes wonder if a fourfold restoration was unique to the rich man who made Jesus. Some would say, “He was rich so he could afford it.” However, it was the biblical standard of the time. 1000 years earlier, the prophet Nathan confronted King David with the king’s abuse of pow-

er by telling the story. David reacted in anger by saying that the villain should return the stolen lamb and four more. David did not pick that number off the wall. It came from Exodus, from the Laws of Moses. The message that runs through all of this is that forgiveness is always conditional. Our whole judicial system runs on this principle. If you break a law you will be forgiven by: fines, jail time, community service, restoration of property or money.

At the main gate of Fort Benning GA one cold November day, 1000 demon-

strators gathered. It was nonviolent, but there were plenty of songs of protest, speeches, signs and banners, and marches. On the Federal Property on the other side of the gate, the Security Personnel waited with clubs and bracelets. One young woman, in an act of conscience, climbed the fence to the cheers of the other demonstrators. When she came down on the other side, she was thrown to the ground, handcuffed, and marched into the waiting prison bus with those already there.

After the three day

weekend in prison, at her court hearing, the judge said, “How do you plead, guilty or not guilty?”

She said, “With all due respect your Honor, I was not a skydiver and got blown off my target area, nor was I a lost tourist. I climbed over a 10 foot high chain link fence topped with barbed wire. The guilty are those here in America, who teach Latin American soldiers how to keep their dictators in power.”

The Judge said, “Six months in federal prison and a \$5000 fine.” (Her conditions of forgiveness.)



Outdoor Truths

BY GARY MILLER

The summer can be slow for bass fishermen. The water is warm and the oxygen that fish need for peak activity is not found in warmer water. Therefore, they tend to go deeper or become more active when the days are at their coolest. That’s why early in the morning is some of the best times to be on the lake or river. My favorite way to start is by being ready to cast my first bait when the sun is barely peeking over the horizon. You have to take advantage of every minute the fish are active because in the summer those minutes are few. As many of you know, my favorite way to wake bass up this time of year is with a top water bait. The sound of this plug echoes for unknown distances at the break of day and each plop or buzz signals to the fisherman to be ready for what might

be lurking just below the surface. The combination of sight and sound can at times be just too much for nearby bass to ignore. And for the fisherman, the crash of water just behind that bait can also be as addictive as well. Once you see and hear that unique moment, you will place it in its own mental compartment, and nothing will ever join it.

Thankfully there are other moments that deserve their own special place. I imagine me making a file and labeling it with that moment but never adding anything else to the file except that which caused me to make it in the first place. It’s like making a folder on your computer for certain types of pictures or documents and only finding one picture or document that fits in the folder. In one way you are hoping for other occasions to add to the folder but

it seems that nothing ever fits like that first file. There are a few things like that in my life. A first degree. A first accomplishment. A first purchase. All of these things were so special to me then and still hold their own special place today. But what really matters are not fish or firsts but moments when someone wrote something or said something that caused me to change into a better man. It was a sentence that wowed me. It was a lesson that challenged me. It was a gesture that took me aback. You see while things like these may deserve a place in their own folder; unlike fish and firsts, their benefits continue not just as motivation but as actual ingredients that mold me every day. So, this week don’t forget that while you are making memories someone needs you to become a good one for them.



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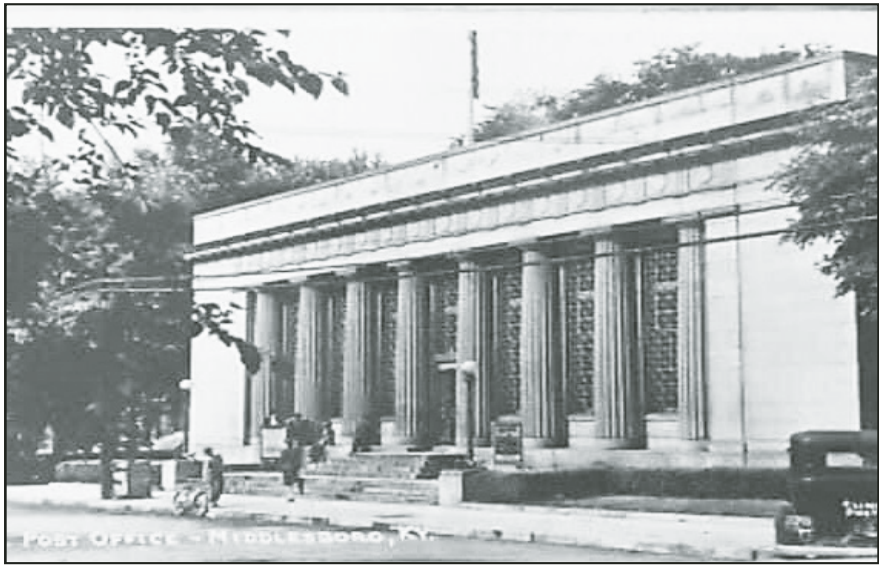
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Magic City Memories



Have a great week from the City of Middlesboro! Here is a picture from the early 20th Century of the Middlesboro Post Office located on North 20th Street!

(Photo provided by Boone Bowling)

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Café & Steakhouse

Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday: 11am - 9pm

Friday: 11am - 10pm

Saturday: 3pm - 10pm

CLOSED Sunday & Monday



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