

Just a Little Sin

You're a nice person. You don't commit *big* sins. You don't rob banks or murder people. So you sample a few grapes from the supermarket produce section. That's no big deal, right?

Well, actually, it is. You didn't pay for them—you stole them. And in God's eyes, even a small sin is the same as a big sin. The Bible doesn't provide a list that ranks sins according to their severity, or in order of God's displeasure with each transgression. In truth, the Bible states that *all* sin separates us from God.

On one occasion, Jesus was asked, "Of all the commandments, which is the most important?" (Mark 12:28). Jesus replied, "The most important commandment is this: . . . 'You must love the LORD your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and all your strength.' The second is equally important: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' No other commandment is greater than these" (Mark 12:29-31).

Do you love God with that intensity every moment of every day? Many of us experience hours or days when we hardly give God a second thought. And even then, we fall short of loving him

with absolute devotion. We face similar challenges when loving others.

In spite of our failures, God loves us and longs for a loving response from us. After the apostle Paul came to faith, he sensed this marvelous love of God—"who loved me and gave himself for me" (Galatians 2:20)—a love Jesus demonstrated in the ultimate price he paid when he suffered and died on the cross.

"In spite of our failures, God loves us and longs for a loving response from us."

When you experience God's love, it's likely it will be reflected in how you treat others: "We love each other because he loved us first" (1 John 4:19).

Your sin is forgiven the moment you admit your unworthiness and trust Jesus, who died for your sins, as your Savior and Lord.

Do you sense your need of God, his pardon, and his peace? Tell him right now. Then ask Jesus to be your Savior. He is willing and eager to come to you.

[Jim Kraus]

NAME & ADDRESS:

HAVE A GOOD DAY AND A SPLENDID *forever!*



|| February 2018 ||

Friendly Assistance

The senior citizen just wanted his money. Ninety-two-year-old Jesus Rangel of Montebello, California, went to his local Bank of America branch and presented his ID, per the bank's policy, so he could withdraw funds. But when the bank teller saw that Rangel's ID had expired, she couldn't complete the transaction. The customer couldn't understand what was happening and became overly agitated and unruly. The Montebello Police Department was called to assist with the situation.

When Officer Robert Josett responded, the bank teller explained the problem. As the customer continued to complain that no one would help him, Officer Josett decided to step in and go above and beyond the call of duty.

The policeman drove Rangel to the Department of Motor Vehicles so he could renew his identification card. Afterward, the two drove back to the bank, and Officer Josett escorted Rangel inside to complete his unfinished business. With money in hand, Rangel thanked the man in uniform for his assistance and left much happier than when he arrived.



A MESSAGE OF CHEER AND GOOD NEWS. *Pass it along!*

Neighbor Brigade

When Jennifer Simmons's husband was diagnosed with stage-four laryngeal cancer last year, she knew the road ahead would be tough. But as the pressures mounted on her to work full time, pay the bills, take care of her husband, and maintain their home, it all became too much for her to handle on her own.

To make matters worse, heavy rains battered their Tucson, Arizona, property,

which left the yard wildly overgrown. Simmons's husband always had taken care of the yard, but the chemo treatments made him overly sensitive to sunlight, so it was impossible for him to work outside. Simmons asked for help via social media and more than 100 volunteers showed up.

The turnout overwhelmed her in a different way—her “faith in humanity” was restored through the compassion and generosity of strangers.

Wondrous Steve

The aurora borealis (northern lights) never fails to amaze anyone fortunate to view the undulating horizontal panels of color painting the evening sky. The effect happens when highly charged solar wind electrons interact with neutral atoms in the earth's atmosphere at the northern pole.

That's why citizen scientists in Kakwa, Alberta, Canada, were thrilled when they caught sight of a never-before-seen vertical aurora on September 15, 2017. They named it “Steve,” inspired by the animated movie *Over the Hedge*, in which the main characters gave an animal they didn't know the moniker.

For now, NASA has kept Steve as the acronym to explain the phenomenon—Strong Thermal Emission Velocity Enhancement. Burcu Kosar, research scientist at NASA Goddard Space Flight Center admits scientists still don't know exactly how Steve is produced, but they think it might have both a magnetospheric and ionospheric origin.



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Preventing Alpine Envy

Last year, a law was passed in Bergün, Switzerland, that banned tourists from taking photographs of the quaint location nestled at the foot of the Alps.

According to the ordinance, any tourist caught taking a picture would be fined approximately 5 dollars. The reason behind the prohibition? “It is scientifically proven that beautiful holiday photos on social media make the viewer unhappy because they cannot be there themselves.”

That's definitely problematic for Bergün, since it is picturesque no matter what the season. When the village removed photographs from its own Facebook account, people started talking—and showing up to snap pictures. The publicity stunt worked exactly as intended. A few days later, visitors were granted “special permission” to capture digital memories. And, conveniently, the ban was lifted at the next village meeting.



Eye-Opening Experience

Nothing does a heart more good than helping those less fortunate. Just ask the 13- to 18-year-old members of the San Diego United Leo Club, an arm of the Lion's Club service organization. Last year they organized and led a free weeklong summer camp for homeless kids who live in shelters provided by the Interfaith Community Services of Escondido.

The Leos brought camp to the kids, offering activities such as soccer, drawing, dancing, gymnastics, and tae kwon do.

Not only was it a great experience for the campers, it impacted the volunteers as well. “I'm so lucky to have what I have, and it gives me satisfaction to help other people who aren't as fortunate,” says Leo's club president Cady Mariano, 15. “I don't ever want to take what I have for granted.”

Just for
laughs



“I didn't get you anything for Valentine's Day because we were hibernating!”



“Which do you want to yell at the TV about? News, sports, or politics?”

You're definitely a happy person if you enjoy the scenery on a detour.

A good deal of trouble has been caused by too much intelligence and too little wisdom.

Love is a fruit in season at all times, and within reach of every hand.
—Mother Teresa