

9/12/2010

THE PRAYER OF THE DAY Lord God of power and love, you desire that all people might come to you through faith in your Son, Jesus Christ. Help us, Lord, to use Your Word, and as Your Spirit works in our lives, fill us with faith and the gift of eternal life. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

THE OLD TESTAMENT LESSON Isaiah 55:10-11

(God's Word bears fruit when it is sown.)

10 As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater, 11 so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.

THE EPISTLE LESSON 2 Peter 3:17-18

(God calls us to growth as His children.)

17 Therefore, dear friends, since you already know this, be on your guard so that you may not be carried away by the error of lawless men and fall from your secure position.

18 But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever! Amen.

THE GOSPEL LESSON Luke 18:15-17

(Jesus calls the little children to Himself, and calls adults to child like faith.)

15 People were also bringing babies to Jesus to have him touch them. When the disciples saw this, they rebuked them. 16 But Jesus called the children to him and said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. 17 I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it."

THE SERMON - Growing in Grace

2 Timothy 3:14-17 **14 But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, 15 and how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. 16 All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, 17 so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.**

INTRO - The story is told about a man whose wife woke him up. "It's time to go to church, dear," she told him. "I'm not going," he said curtly. "But, it's time to go to church, dear," she told him again. "I'm not going. I don't want to go," he said. Finally she came to him again, "It's time to go to church, dear," she told him. "I told you, I'm not going," he replied. "I don't like the people, and they don't like me." Finally she yanked off the covers as she said, "It's time to go to church, dear," she told him. "Give me one good reason," he asked. "Well, for one," she said calmly, "you're the pastor."

That's intended to be funny, but it's also sad. Actually there are many times we are called to do something we may not want to do.

For example, today is the first day of Sunday School. Are you going to attend? Did you go? There are classes for all children from 18 months and older. There's a class for women, "The impact of a single Christian life." There is a class on "The Prophets" for adults, and a Class of "Bible stories for Adults." But, often when asked people say. "I don't want to attend. Why should I?"

Perhaps this skit can give us some beginning enlightenment on why we might want to study God's Word. It's called Keri and the Librarian by Glenn Hascall. I think you'll recognize them both.

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Keri & The Librarian by Glenn A. Hascall

***Summary** Keri enters a library and begins asking questions about a book that the up-tight librarian has never heard of. The longer Keri describes the book she is interested in the more the librarian finds that she is also interested. Soon, all library guests have just got to have that book. ++++++*

Back to our question. "**Why SHOULD I attend Sunday School or Bible Class?**" Because the Bible is such an interesting book? Well, the Bible is that. But there's an even better reason.

2 Timothy 3:14-15 says, **14 But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, 15 and how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.**

Not only is the Bible an interesting book, it points us to Jesus who has loved us, and lived for us, and died for us, and risen to save us for eternal life in heaven. God uses the words of Scripture to work faith in our hearts so we trust Jesus and receive eternal life by His grace and mercy. In other words, the Bible leads me to Jesus and to heaven.

That's eternally. That's after this life. Verses 16 - 17 then say **16 All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, 17 so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.** God not only works to save me eternally through the Bible, He also guides my life in a healthy way in this world through the Bible. Yes the Bible is

interesting. But the Bible is God's gift to give me life eternally, and to help my life in this world. So, "Why WOULD we want to go to Sunday School or Bible Class?"

When I was a child my mother told me, "Drink your milk." I probably would rather have had soda. She said, "It's good for you." So I drank my milk, and actually got to where I liked it. Why should we study God's word? It's good for us. God creates faith so we are saved by Jesus. He leads us and helps us in our life. And, you may be surprised, unlike the pastor in the joke at the beginning, you may find you like the people with whom you study, and you actually enjoy yourself.

Keri & The Librarian by Glenn A. Hascall

Summary - Keri enters a library and begins asking questions about a book that the up-tight librarian has never heard of. The longer Keri describes the book she is interested in the more the librarian finds that she is also interested. Soon, all library guests have just got to have that book.

Characters:

KERI (Jamie) - Full of herself
LIBRARIAN - (LuAnn) hair in a bun, reading glasses on tip of nose, conservative dress, dour look on face
PATRON 1 - (Nate) non-specific gender
PATRON 2 - (Hunter) non-specific gender

Script

(SETTING: Librarian sits at a desk stacked with books. She stamps cards and places them in a stack - a lady enters the library and speaks loudly)

KERI: Excuse me.
LIBRARIAN: SHHhhhhh!!! : (Only slightly subdued)
KERI: Oh, sorry about that. I mean, after all this is *a library*.
LIBRARIAN: Yes it is, and people are trying to study, so if you don't mind.
KERI: Oh, I don't mind at all (Looks around) you guys go ahead and study. Don't mind me.
LIBRARIAN: PLEASE!
KERI: Did you need something.
LIBRARIAN: Yes, for you to be quiet. (Pause) Now did you need something?
KERI: (Completely quiet)
LIBRARIAN: Well, are you going to stand there all day or are you going to tell me what you need?
KERI: (Smiles mischievously but says nothing)
LIBRARIAN: Well speak up - either you need something or you don't!
KERI: You told me to be quiet.
LIBRARIAN: You are *impossible!*
KERI: (Sticks out his hand) No, . . . I'm Keri Henderson. Pleased to meet you.
LIBRARIAN: (Looks at her hand but does not offer to shake it).
KERI: Well, (Pulls hand back) I was looking for a book of poetry.
LIBRARIAN: Try over there, you'll find Tennyson and Frost...
KERI: (Mischievous again) I think I'm becoming well acquainted with the works of *Frost* -ahem- right here (Chuckles at his own joke and notices that the Librarian is not laughing - the laughter dies quickly).
LIBRARIAN: (Not amused) Or if that's too cerebral for you, you might check over there. We have a wide selection of Dr. Seusse.
KERI: How about action.
LIBRARIAN: (Stamps a card and points to any area of the stage).
KERI: Love story?

LIBRARIAN: (Point to another area)

KERI: Genealogy?

LIBRARIAN: Check the computer files over there (Points again).

KERI: Prophecy.

LIBRARIAN: The works of Jean Dixon and Nostradamus are found over there (Points again) But I must remind you that there is a limit to the number of books you can check out.

KERI: Oh, don't you have a book that has all those things in it?

LIBRARIAN: (Clearly at her wits end) Mam, I have tried to help you find what you are looking for. Now you ask the impossible. Surely there is no one book that has poetry, action, love story and genealogy.

KERI: Oh and prophecy, don't forget prophecy.

LIBRARIAN: How could I forget.

KERI: So you know of no such book.

LIBRARIAN: I have been with the library for many...

KERI: Many?

LIBRARIAN: MANY years and I can state with absolute certainty that there is no such book. Now if there is nothing else...

KERI: What would you say if I told you that I have come across such a book.

LIBRARIAN: Then I'd be forced to ask why you bothered coming to the library and annoying me - Mam!

KERI: I figured that if you knew about a book that had all of those things, plus ancient history and the writings of the wisest king to ever rule on earth that you might be interested in putting it on your shelf.

LIBRARIAN: You're telling me that you know of such a book.

KERI: Yep!

LIBRARIAN: Who's the publisher (Takes a pen and a paper).

KERI: Oh, this book has been published by more publishing firms than I can name. LIBRARIAN: That's impossible. If there had been multiple publishing houses, certainly a library of our stature would have been made aware of such a rare literary masterpiece.

KERI: Would you be surprised to know that this book has, within its pages, the ability to change a person's life forever.

LIBRARIAN: (Skeptical) It might - IF such a book existed!

KERI: Oh, but it does and I'd like to give you a copy.

LIBRARIAN: (Warms slightly to KERI) You have a copy of this book?

KERI: Picked it up this morning.

LIBRARIAN: May I see it?

KERI: (Holds up a book bag and pulls out a copy of the Bible).

LIBRARIAN: (Instantly cold to KERI) You should have told me you were looking for fairy tales - they are over there (Points to yet another location on stage).

KERI: Some people think this is filled with fairy tales. I can understand that, if they have never read it.

LIBRARIAN: Well I...

KERI: You've read it, haven't you?

LIBRARIAN: (Searches for a response and then gives up) No, I have not!

KERI: Yet you seem to know so much about it.
LIBRARIAN: Enough I suppose.
KERI: Then you know of the many love stories found in here (holds up the book).
LIBRARIAN: I would be surprised to find a love story worth note in THAT book.
KERI: Here, (opens Bible) read this. (Other patrons come closer to hear what is to be read). LIBRARIAN: (Starts reading quietly)
KERI: Out loud please.
LIBRARIAN: (Upset but complies - Note: Reference is Song of Solomon 8:7) **Many waters cannot quench love, (Seems surprised as she reads on) nor will rivers overflow it; if a man were to give all the riches of his house for love, it would be utterly despised.** (Pause) That was beautiful.
KERI: So you have never read that before.
LIBRARIAN: (Confused) I had no idea that was in there.
KERI: And that's not even the best love story. You'd need to read Ruth, or Esther, or especially John for that.
LIBRARIAN: Really?
KERI: And the book is just full of action. Why, did you know that two women, Deborah and Jael, were used to defeat an army?
LIBRARIAN: That's in here?
KERI: The book of Judges.
LIBRARIAN: (Curious despite herself) You mentioned poetry?
KERI: May I (Motions toward the Bible she is looking at).
LIBRARIAN: (Reluctantly gives up the Bible)
KERI: (Reads Psalm 91:1-4 she closes her eyes and is moved by the passage) **He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will abide in the shadow of the Almighty. I will say to the LORD, "My refuge and my fortress, My God in whom I trust!" For it is He who delivers you from the snare of the trapper and from the deadly pestilence. He will cover you with His pinions, And under His wings you may seek refuge; His faithfulness is a shield and bulwark.**
LIBRARIAN: That was beautiful.
KERI: Genealogy is handled in books like first and second Chronicles and some in Matthew and Luke as well as other locations throughout the Book.
LIBRARIAN: You mentioned prophecy.
KERI: Daniel and Revelations are good places to start.
PATRON 1: You say that all of that is in that book?
KERI: Yes - and a whole lot more. Like guidance on everything from finances to finding the right person to marry.
PATRON 2: Could I check it out first?
LIBRARIAN: (Looks desperately at KERI) I believe she gave this to me as a personal gift?
KERI: Oh, yes I did. (Patrons upset) But I just so happen to have more.

(Pandemonium erupts as library patrons nearly mob Keri to get their own copy of the Bible)

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