

Serving in Hope and Mercy



Monday Morning Memo



I spent the last 4 days in Dayton, Ohio and found myself extremely grateful for our California weather. In the short time I was there we experienced torrential rain, snow, wind, and temperatures in the teens; with the windchill factor it was reported to be 1 degree outside! It has been a long time since I have been faced with such severe weather and feel truly blessed to live in a state that is so much more temperate and livable!

However, the purpose of the trip was to visit my niece and her family and celebrate her 60th birthday which is January 20th. She was quite taken with the date, 1-20-2020, and decided to have a Roaring Twenties theme party. It was great fun and very authentic, from the costumes, to the food, to the cocktails served. I was happy to be able to share this special day with her.

Today, January 20th, we celebrate the life of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. At an Exodus Advisory Committee Meeting last week Program Director Seth Castleman opened the meeting with a story he heard on *This American Life*, a weekly public radio program. Each week a theme is chosen and different stories surrounding that theme are presented.

The story Seth read can be found below. Even if you might think it kind of long, please do read it to the end. You won't be disappointed.

Have a blessed week and thanks for all you do,



Well, it all began at Christmas two years ago when my daughter was four years old. And it was the first time that she had ever asked about what did this holiday mean. And so I explained to her that this was celebrating the birth of Jesus. And she wanted to know more about that, and we went out and bought a kid's Bible and had these readings at night. She loved them - wanted to know everything about Jesus.

So we read a lot about his birth and about his teaching. And she would ask constantly what that phrase was. And I would explain to her that it was, do unto others as you would have them do unto you. And we would talk about those old words and what that all meant.

And then one day we were driving past a big church, and out front was an enormous crucifix. She said, who is that? And I guess I'd never really told that part of the story, so I had to sort of, yeah, well, that's Jesus, and I forgot to tell you the ending. Yeah. Well, you know, he ran afoul of the Roman government. This message that he had was so radical and unnerving to the prevailing authorities of the time that they had to kill him. They came to the conclusion that he would have to die. That message was too troublesome.

It was about a month later after that Christmas. We'd gone through the whole story of what Christmas meant. It was mid-January, and her preschool celebrates the same holidays as the local schools, so Martin Luther King Day was off. So I knocked off work that day and I decided we'd play, and I take her out to lunch. And we were sitting in there and right on the table where we happened to plop down was the art section of the local newspaper.

And there, big as his life, was a huge drawing by like a 10-year-old kid from the local schools of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. And she said, who's that? And I said, well, as it happens, that's Martin Luther King, and he's why you're not in school today. So we're celebrating his birthday. This is the day we celebrate his life. And she said, so who was he? I said, well, he was a preacher. And she looks up at me and goes, for Jesus? And I said yeah. Yeah, actually he was, but there was another thing that he was really famous for, which is that he had a message.



And you're trying to say this to a four-year-old. This is the first time they ever hear anything so you're just very careful about how you phrase everything. So I said, well, yeah, he was a preacher and he had a message. She said, what was his message? And I said, he said that you should treat everybody the same no matter what they look like. She thought about that for a minute, and she said, well, that's what Jesus said.

And I said, yeah, I guess it is. You know, I never thought of it that way, but yeah. And that is sort of like do unto others as you would have them do unto you.

And she thought for a minute and looked at me and said, did they kill him, too?

"If you can't fly then run, if you can't run then walk, if you can't walk then crawl, but whatever you do you have to keep moving forward."
~ Martin Luther King Jr.

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