

Inspirational Jokes

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Atheism

To the disciples' delight the Master said he wanted a new shirt for his birthday. The finest cloth was bought. The village tailor came in to have the Master measured, and promised, by the will of God, to make the shirt within a week.

A week went by and a disciple was dispatched to the tailor while the Master excitedly waited for his shirt. Said the tailor, "There has been a slight delay. But, by the will of God, it will be ready by tomorrow."

Next day the tailor said, "I'm sorry it isn't done. Try again tomorrow and, if God so wills, it will certainly be ready."

The following day the Master said, "Ask him how long it will take if he keeps God out of it."

Anthony de Mello, SJ
"One Minute Wisdom"

Earthquake

One day there was an earthquake that shook the entire Zen temple. Parts of it even collapsed! Many of the monks were terrified.

When the earthquake stopped the teacher said, "Now you have had the opportunity to see how a Zen man behaves in a crisis situation. You may have noticed that I did not panic.

I was quite aware of what was happening and what to do. I led you all to the kitchen, the strongest part of the temple.

It was a good decision, because you see we have all survived without any injuries.

However, despite my self-control and composure, I did feel a little bit tense-which you may have deduced from the fact that I drank a large glass of water, something I never do under ordinary circumstances."

One of the monks smiled, but didn't say anything.

"What are you laughing at? asked the teacher.

"That wasn't water," the monk replied, "it was a large glass of soy sauce."

Author Unknown

Enduring Labor

The nurse approached him, smiling. "The labor is going great," she said. "Wouldn't you like to come in?"

"Oh, no." The man shook his head.

The nurse returned to the mother's side, and the labor progressed smoothly. As the birth neared, the nurse returned to the man, now pacing frantically in the hall. "She's doing so well," she assured him. "Wouldn't you like to at least come in and see her?"

The man seemed to hesitate slightly, then shook his head again. "No, no, I couldn't do that." He jingled car keys in his sweaty palm and resumed his pacing.

The nurse went back into the room and coached Mom's valiant efforts in pushing the baby into the world. As the baby's head began to exit the birth canal, the nurse raced to the hall, grabbed the man by his elbow, and dragged him to the bedside saying, "You have got to see this!"

At that very moment, the baby boy was born and placed on the tummy of the mother whose radiant smile shone through her tears. The man began to cry openly. Turning to the nurse, he sobbed. "You were right! This is the greatest moment in my life!"

By now, the nurse, too, was tearful. She put her arm around him, and he rested his head on her shoulder. She soothed, "No one should miss the birth of their son."

"This isn't my son," the man blubbered. "This isn't even my wife. I've never seen her before in my life. I was just bringing the car keys to my buddy across the hall!"

LeAnn Thieman

"A Second Chicken Soup for the Woman's Soul"

Editor: Jack Canfield, Mark Victor Hansen and Heather McNamara

Humor Can Save Your Life

The story goes that a certain court jester went too far one day and insulted his king. The king became so infuriated he sentenced the jester to be executed. His court prayed upon the king to have mercy for this man who had served him well for so many years. After a time, the king relented only enough to give the jester his *choice* as to how he would like to die. *True to form, the jester replied, "If it's all the same to you, my Lord, I'd like to die of old age."* *Certainly in this case, a good sense of humor saved the man's life. It's true for us as well. We may not be faced with a situation where our wit will save us from an execution, but our sense of humor and the ability to laugh at things has proven health benefits that extend and improve our quality of life. Norman Cousins, in his book Anatomy of an Illness, wrote about how he cured himself of cancer by laughing a good part of each day. He rented films of comedies and watched them for hours on end in his hospital room. He had nothing to lose since he'd been diagnosed as terminal. His "experiment" turned out to be a classic example of the healing powers of laughter. If it worked for Cousins with a life-threatening illness, it can work for us to enhance and protect our good health. We should laugh often and heartily. It's good for our digestion and our disposition. Besides, life's too important to take seriously.*

Michael Angier

Success Networks

Imitation

Imitation can be the highest form of praise, but in some cases . . .

A new missionary recruit went to Venezuela for the first time. He was struggling with the language and didn't understand a whole lot of what was going on. Intending to visit one of the local churches, he got lost, but eventually got back on track and found the place. Having arrived late, the church was already packed. The only pew with a seat open was the one on the front row.

So as not to make a fool of himself, this recruit decided to pick someone out of the crowd to imitate. He chose to follow the man sitting next to him on the front pew. As they sang, the missionary tried to follow along.

When the man stood up to pray, the missionary recruit stood up too. When the man sat down, he sat down. When the man took the cup and bread for the Lord's Supper, he took the cup and bread. During the preaching, the recruit didn't understand a thing. He just sat there and tried to look just like that man in the front pew.

Then he perceived that the preacher was giving announcements. People clapped, so he looked to see if the man was clapping. He was, and so the recruit clapped too. Then the preacher said some words that he didn't understand and he saw the man next to him stand up. So he stood up too. Suddenly a hush fell over the entire congregation. A few people gasped.

He looked around and saw that nobody else was standing, so he sat down.

After the service ended, the preacher stood at the door shaking the hands of those who were leaving. When the missionary recruit stretched out his hand to greet the preacher, the preacher said, in English: "I take it you don't speak Spanish."

The missionary recruit replied: "No I don't. Is it that obvious?"

"Well yes," said the preacher, "I announced that the Acosta family had a new-born baby boy and would the proud father please stand up."

Author Unknown

Keep Quiet You!

A police officer in a small town stopped a motorist who was speeding down Main Street. "But officer," the man began, "I can explain..." "Just be quiet," snapped the officer. "I'm

going to let you cool your heels in jail until the chief gets back." "But, officer, I just wanted to say....," "And I said to keep quiet! You're going to jail!"

A few hours later the officer looked in on his prisoner and said, "Lucky for you that the chief's at his daughter's wedding. He'll be in a good mood when he gets back." "Don't count on it," answered the fellow in the cell. "I'm the groom."

Let Sleeping Dogs Lie

One afternoon, I was in the back yard hanging the laundry when an old, tired-looking dog wandered into the yard. I could tell from his collar and well-fed belly that he had a home. But when I walked into the house, he followed me, sauntered down the hall and fell asleep in a corner. An hour later, he went to the door, and I let him out. The next day he was back. He resumed his position in the hallway and slept for an hour.

This continued for several weeks. Curious, I pinned a note to his collar: "Every afternoon your dog comes to my house for a nap."

The next day he arrived with a different note pinned to his collar: "He lives in a home with ten children - he's trying to catch up on his sleep."

Susan F. Roman

"Chicken Soup for the Pet Lover's Soul"

Editor: Jack Canfield, Mark Victor Hansen, Marty Becker and Carol Kline

Millennium Dream

The daughter of comedian Groucho Marx was once denied admittance to an exclusive country club swimming pool with her friends because she and her family were not members. Realizing what had happened, embarrassed officials sent the Marx family an apology and an application to join. Groucho declined the invitation with the comment, "I wouldn't want to belong to any club that would have me as a member."

Someone still tried to smooth over the incident by persuading the comedian to allow an application to be submitted for membership. The country club was embarrassed further when the application was denied. The reason? The Marx family was Jewish and the club was "restricted."

True to form, Groucho wrote back: "My wife is not Jewish. Can she go swimming and let our daughter wade up to her waist?"

I love his use of humor, but Groucho effectively shines a spotlight on the prevalence and absurdity of prejudice. He must have felt, as did Sir Isaac Newton so many years earlier, that we *build too many walls and not enough bridges*.

I yearn for a time when we courageously break down those walls that divide and build wide bridges between one another. I long for a super-highway of compassion and acceptance spanning our differences to unite all humanity as one. I dream of a new millennium where people will be finally connected heart to heart and mind to mind.

And I will do my small part to make that future come true.

Steve Goodier

Mu

Before he became a hermit, Zarathud was a young Priest, and took great delight in making fools of his opponents, in front of his followers.

One day Zarathud took his students to a pleasant pasture and there he confronted The Sacred Chao while She was contentedly grazing.

"Tell me you dumb beast," demanded the Priest in his commanding voice, "why don't you do something worthwhile? What is your Purpose in Life, anyway?"

Munching the tasty grass, The Sacred Chao replied "MU". (The Chinese ideogram for NO-THING.)

Upon hearing this, absolutely nobody was enlightened.

Primarily because nobody understood Chinese.

Camden Benares

"Zen Without Zen Masters"

No God

A college student was in a philosophy class, where there was a class discussion about whether or not God exists, The professor had the following logic:

"Has anyone in this class heard God?" Nobody spoke.

"Has anyone in this class touched God?" Again, nobody spoke.

"Has anyone in this class seen God?" When nobody spoke for the third time, he simply stated, "Then there is no God."

The student did not like the sound of this at all, and asked for permission to speak. The professor granted it, and the student stood up and asked the following questions of his classmates:

"Has anyone in this class heard our professor's brain?" Silence.

"Has anyone in this class touched our professor's brain?"

Absolute silence.

"Has anyone in this class seen our professor's brain?" When nobody in the class dared to speak, the student concluded, "Then, according to our professor's logic, it must be true that our professor has no brain!"

The student received an "A" in the class.

Old West Justice

A man in the Old West was being tried for stealing a horse.

You need to remember that stealing a horse in the Old West was a very grave and serious offense. A person could be hanged if found guilty of such a deed.

It so happened that the man whose horse had been stolen had always made it a point to get the best of any person with whom he had any dealings. He had never tried to do anything good for anyone other than himself. Consequently, the man whose horse had been stolen didn't have a single friend in the entire town. The case was tried and presented to the jury.

The evidence against the accused man was pretty strong. After about thirty minutes of deliberation, the jury returned to the court chambers.

"Gentlemen of the jury, have you reached a verdict?" The judge asked. The chairman of the jury stood up. "Yes we have, your honor," he replied.

"What is your verdict?" inquired the judge.

There were a few moments of silence and then the chairman spoke. "We find the defendant not guilty if he will return the horse."

After the judge had silenced the laughter in the courtroom, he admonished the jury. "I cannot accept that verdict. You will have to retire until you reach another verdict," said the judge. The jury went back into their room to deliberate toward another verdict. No member of the jury had any particular liking for the man whose horse had been stolen. At one time or another he had gotten the best of each of them. About an hour passed before

the jury could reach another verdict. They re-entered the courtroom. They took their place in the jury box and the courtroom grew silent.

"Gentlemen of the jury," began the judge, "have you reached a verdict?" The chairman of the jury stood up.

"Yes we have, your honor," he replied. "What is your verdict?" asked the judge.

The courtroom was totally silent. You could have heard a pin drop. Everyone eagerly awaited the verdict. The chairman read the decision reached by the twelve good men, tried and true.

"We find the defendant **not** guilty, and he can **keep** the horse!"

The courtroom burst into laughter!

Moral of the story: If you spend your life trying to take advantage of others, never caring about them in any way except what you can get from them or what they can do for you, you will end up a loser, like the man who lost his horse.

If you desire a friend, then be a friend. If you desire for other people to help you, then help other people. If you desire justice at the hands of others, then practice justice toward them.

Regardless of what you may think, the old Biblical admonition is true. We do reap what we sow.

Author Unknown

Priorities

A grammarian fell into a well one day and had difficulty climbing up the slippery sides.

A little later, a Sufi chanced by and heard the man's cries for succor. In the casual language of everyday life, the Sufi offered aid.

The grammarian replied, "I would certainly appreciate your help. But by the way, you have committed an error in your speech," which the grammarian proceeded to specify.

"A good point," acknowledged the Sufi. "I had best go off awhile and try to improve my skills." And so he did, leaving the grammarian at the bottom of the well.

Author Unknown

Results

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A minister dies and, resplendent in his clerical collar and colorful robes, waits in line at the Pearly Gates. Just ahead of him is a guy dressed in sunglasses, a loud shirt, leather jacket, and jeans.

Saint Peter addresses this guy, "Who are you, so that I may know whether or not to admit you to the Kingdom of Heaven?"

The guy replies, "I'm Joe Green, taxi-driver, of Noo Yawk City."

Saint Peter consults his list, smiles and says to the taxi-driver, "Take this silken robe and golden staff, and enter into the Kingdom." So the taxi-driver enters Heaven with his robe and staff, and the minister is next in line.

Without being asked, he proclaims, "I am Michael O'Connor, head pastor of Saint Mary's for the last forty-three years." Saint Peter consults his list and says, "Take this cotton robe and wooden staff and enter the Kingdom of Heaven."

"Just a minute," says the preacher, "that man was a taxi-driver, and you issued him a silken robe and golden staff. But I get wood and cotton. How can this be?"

"Up here, we go by results," says Saint Peter. "While you preached, people slept -- while he drove, people prayed."

Author Unknown

The Emperor and Master Gudo

The Emperor asked Master Gudo, "What happens to a man of enlightenment after death?"

"How should I know?" replied Gudo.

"Because you are the master," answered the Emperor.

"Yes sir," said Gudo, "but not a dead one."

The Obstacle

A mother was convinced that her wayward son would become a Christian.

She pleaded with him to come to the faith. She sent him little cards with Bible verses on, tapes with sermons, spiritual books, but all to no avail.

One day she fell to her knees and prayed fervently to God that he would totally remove the obstacle to her son's conversion.

There was a blinding flash . . . {POOOOF!} . . . and she vanished.

Author Unknown

The World's Most Communicative Disease

There is a funny story in circulation about an optimistic farmer who couldn't wait to greet each new day with a resounding, "Good morning, God!" He lived near a woman whose morning greeting was more like, "Good God... morning?" They were each a trial to the other. Where he saw opportunity, she saw problems. Where he was satisfied, she was discontented.

One bright morning he exclaimed, "Look at the beautiful sky! Did you see that glorious sunrise?"

"Yeah," she countered. "It'll probably get so hot the crops will scorch!"

During an afternoon shower, he commented, "Isn't this wonderful? Mother Nature is giving the corn a drink today!"

"And if it doesn't stop before too long," came the sour reply, "we'll wish we'd taken out flood insurance on the crops!"

Convinced that he could instill some awe and wonder in her hardened attitude, he bought a remarkable dog. Not just any mutt, but the most expensive, highly-trained and gifted dog he could find. The animal was exquisite! It could perform remarkable and impossible feats which, the farmer thought, would surely amaze even his neighbor. So he invited her to watch his dog perform.

"Fetch!" he commanded, as he tossed a stick out into a lake, where it bobbed up and down in the rippling water. The dog bounded after the stick, walked ON the water, and retrieved it.

"What do you think of that?" he asked, smiling.

"Hmmm," she frowned. "Can't swim, can he?"

Sometimes I think that negative thoughts are the world's most communicative diseases. More catching than any known virus, and just as deadly. But an attitude of awe and wonder can be just as contagious!

Which will you be spreading today?

Steve Goodier

Track Tinkling

After a pretty successful Track season, I had one opportunity to make it to the Districts meet. A pretty big event. I had a reputation as one of the county's best milers. But I hadn't quite made the qualifying time required for Districts. The League meet was my final chance.

The meet took place on a Saturday. Ten teams had arrived on my high school campus for this last huge meet. Over a hundred runners and spectators were there. Afterwards, the season would end for the majority of us. If I ran a qualifying time in this meet, it would actually count twice, and I could go to Districts.

I warmed up, stretched, ran a few laps. And I also drank fluids so I wouldn't dehydrate. No one told me I should **not** have been drinking iced tea.

BANG! The gun sounded and off I ran around the track. I had a good start, and about six girls were before me, ten behind. I began to move up in the pack.

The first lap went well, my pace was great. Then to my horror, I realized too late I should have visited the locker room one last time...

A cramp took hold of my bladder and slowly began squeezing it . I imagined my bladder growing smaller and smaller, while its contents increased in volume. Pain shot through me with every pounding step I ran. And then the dam broke. Not a torrent or a stream that would have quickly relieved my agony, but a trickle that coursed down my legs and flew off in tiny droplets onto the track.

Whimpers of pain escaped my lips, and tears started flowing down my face almost as quickly as the pee-pee down my legs. Even worse, as a freshman, we had last choice when it came to our uniforms. I was wearing what the team called the "bloomers:" shorts with elastized legs holes that looked like diapers. How appropriate. I wished at that point they *were* diapers.

Somehow I managed to keep running despite my pain and embarrassment. I couldn't stop running; if I did, I'd have to explain why. And I no longer had control over my bladder so even if I stopped it wouldn't. I kept running knowing that as soon as I finished I could disappear and minimize my embarrassment further.

I passed people. Fifth, fourth, then third. Suddenly I found myself in second place! I wanted to get off that track as soon as possible and passing people along the way was incidental. By then a trail of liquid circled the track. Urine flicked off my shoes. "Boy, that girl really sweats!" was what I hoped the other runners thought.

The finish line came in sight. So did the hundred people watching from the stands, the track, and the field. Normally, when you finish your event, you come back to the timers to get your results. Not me! I sprinted across the finish line, off the track, and right into the school. Someone finally found me ten minutes later. In the bathroom, crying in pain, and still "going," luckily this time into the appropriate container.

Miracles do happen, I'm sure of it. Despite my pain and mental suffering I'd run my best mile ever. I came in second, won a medal, and ran my fastest mile, a 5:38. And yes, it was the exact time I needed to qualify for the Districts meet.

Michelle Watson

Two Words

There once was a monastery that was very strict. Following a vow of silence, no one was allowed to speak at all. But there was one exception to this rule. Every ten years, the monks were permitted to speak just two words. After spending his first ten years at the monastery, one monk went to the head monk. "It has been ten years," said the head monk. "What are the two words you would like to speak?"

"Bed... hard..." said the monk.

"I see," replied the head monk.

Ten years later, the monk returned to the head monk's office. "It has been ten more years," said the head monk. "What are the two words you would like to speak?"

"Food... stinks..." said the monk.

"I see," replied the head monk.

Yet another ten years passed and the monk again met with the head monk who asked, "What are your two words now, after these ten years?"

"I...quit!" said the monk.

"Well, I can see why," replied the head monk. "All you ever do is complain."

Author Unknown

What Will My Reward Be?

One day a fisherman was lying on a beautiful beach, with his fishing pole propped up in the sand and his solitary line cast out into the sparkling blue surf. He was enjoying the warmth of the afternoon sun and the prospect of catching a fish.

About that time, a businessman came walking down the beach, trying to relieve some of the stress of his workday. He noticed the fisherman sitting on the beach and decided to find out why this fisherman was fishing instead of working harder to make a living for himself and his family. "You aren't going to catch many fish that way," said the businessman to the fisherman. "You should be working rather than lying on the beach!"

The fisherman looked up at the businessman, smiled and replied, "And what will my reward be?" "Well, you can get bigger nets and catch more fish!" was the businessman's answer. "And then what will my reward be?" asked the fisherman, still smiling. The businessman replied, "You will make money and you'll be able to buy a boat, which will then result in larger catches of fish!" "And then what will my reward be?" asked the fisherman again. The businessman was beginning to get a little irritated with the fisherman's questions. "You can buy a bigger boat, and hire some people to work for you!" he said.

"And then what will my reward be?" repeated the fisherman. The businessman was getting angry. "Don't you understand? You can build up a fleet of fishing boats, sail all over the world, and let all your employees catch fish for you!" Once again the fisherman asked, "And then what will my reward be?" The businessman was red with rage and shouted at the fisherman, "Don't you understand that you can become so rich that you will never have to work for your living again! You can spend all the rest of your days sitting on this beach, looking at the sunset. You won't have a care in the world!"

The fisherman, still smiling, looked up and said, "And what do you think I'm doing right now?"

Which God?

When I was told to people of Northern Ireland that I was an atheist, a woman in the audience stood up and said, "Yes, but is it the God of the Catholics or the God of the Protestants in whom you don't believe?"

Quentin Crisp

Why Hath Thou Forsaken Me?

The Mississippi River was flooding its banks and the waters were rising around Clem's house. The waters had gotten to the level of the front porch where Clem was standing. A man in a rowboat came by and called to Clem, "Hop in and I'll take you to high ground."

Clem replied, "No, my God will save me!"

The river continued to rise to the second story windows and Clem, looking out, saw a powerboat come up. The man in the powerboat called to Clem, "Hop in and I'll take you to high ground."

Clem replied, "No, my God will save me!"

The river had now risen to the roof of the house. Clem was sitting on the ridge at the top of the house, with the waters swirling around his feet. He saw a helicopter fly over and the people inside yelled over a bull horn, "Grab the rope and climb in and we'll take you to high ground."

Clem replied, "No, my God will save me!"

The river continued to rise and finally it engulfed the house and Clem was drowned. The next thing he knew, Clem was standing before his God. In anger, he asked God, "I put my trust in you. Why have you forsaken me?"

And his God replied, "What do you want from me? I sent you a rowboat, a powerboat, and a helicopter!"

(adapted from Reader's Digest)
Found at: A Quiet Place for the Mind

Source: www.inspirationalstories.com