

Good morning to all rejoice in the Bethlehem event,

SCRIPTURE:

Mark 16:15 (MSG) – Larger reading: Mark 16:1-20

“...Then he said, “Go into the world. Go everywhere and announce the Message of God’s good news to one and all. “

STORY:

A man once criticized Dwight L. Moody for a grammatical error in one of his sermons. “I am using all the grammar I know for Jesus Christ. Are you?” Moody replied.

REFLECTION:

My sixth grade elementary school teacher was illustrating the cumulative effect has on various aspects of our life. As a way of illustrating this he showed a movie of the song “The 12 Days of Christmas.” It is the one that “my true love gave to me.” He introduces the idea that on each day of Christmas the true love gave a partridge and a pear tree ... by the end of the 12 days there would be 12 partridges and 12 pear trees. Then he showed the film. It was very funny to witness the cumulative effect that the gifts of each day brought to the home.

By the end of the song, along with the 12 partridges and 12 pear trees, there were: 22 turtle doves, 30 French hens, 36 calling birds, 45 golden rings, 42 geese-a-laying, 42 swans-a-swimming, 45 maids-a-milking, 36 ladies dancing, 30 lords-a-leaping, 22 pipers piping, and 12 drummers drumming (if I’ve done the math correctly). This doesn’t include the cows that the maids were milking or the water that the swans were swimming in or the number of eggs that the geese where laying. The house of the one receiving all these lovely expressions of affection was literally busting at the seams.

After we stopped laughing at the ridiculous turn of events in the song, the teacher dialogued with us about the cumulative effect that words and actions can have upon our thinking. One person shares a half-truth with another person who in turns shares it with another person and before too long everybody has heard it, but only the twisted truth because every time it is shared it just gets turned around a little more. The cumulative effect, like the preverbal snowball, simply builds the misguided statement ever larger.

Now imagine if we did the same thing with acts of love and kindness. What would be the end result following the rule of cumulative effect? It too would grow ever larger as one-person shares with another person and so forth and so on.

The best illustration that I can imagine is what happened in Bethlehem so many years ago. The angels told some shepherds and no doubt, they too shared what they had witnessed. How could they have kept silent? When Jesus began his ministry there were just 12 disciples; at Pentecost there were just 120 gathered in that Upper Room. How many Christ followers are there today? I don’t have a total, but they are in every

country and ever-spreading outward to include more. It is the cumulative effect of each one of us taking what has been given to us and sharing it with others. It is the ultimate in a glorious super-spreader event. The Good News just keeps spreading until all are saturated with the glorious news of God's love through Jesus Christ.

QUOTE:

"Kindness makes a person attractive. If you would win the world, melt it, do not hammer it." - Alexander Maclaren

PRAYER:

Help us, O Lord, to share the Good News spreading around the love and kindness found in the Babe of Bethlehem. After all Lord, we share so many other things why not your love?

And the faith journey continues, Pastor Jim
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Are you ready to experience The Joy of Christmas?

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