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IN EVERYDAY LIFE





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Weekly Brief At a Glance . . .

Keep It Real Monday

You know if you don't catch before, it gets crazy. So we catch it and we don't have to yell. Try it."

Summary: In a recent interview on the *Late Late Show*, Alicia Keys offers insights for enjoying a "fight-free" marriage.

Themes: conflict resolution, marriage, relationships



The Safest Man On Earth

Once you take that first step, the next step is easier, and the step after that becomes easier.

Summary: His 256 day journey around the world reveals that real safety might begin with a single step into uncertainty.

Themes: faith, step of faith journey taking risks



Give While You Live

Besides, it's a lot more fun to give while you live than give while you're dead.

Summary: A recent article in *Forbes* reported the conclusion of Chuck Feeney's efforts to go broke.

Themes: brief, giving, legacy, stewardship



The Hero of My Own Life

Whether I shall turn out to be the hero of my own life, or whether that station will be held by anybody else, these pages must show.

Summary: The retelling of the Dickens's semi-autobiographical classic raises an important question.

Themes: ommunity, end times, heaven, heroes, Jesus



The Sum of Human Knowledge

The breadth of human knowledge can be housed in the space where you shop for groceries.

Summary: A recent question concerning the size of the internet reveals the limits of human knowledge.

Themes: apologetics, atheism, God's ways, knowledge, naturalism, omniscience, wisdom



That Other Consequence of Sin

When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, "It may be that Joseph will hate us and pay us back for all the evil that we did to him."

(Genesis 50:15)

Summary: After the death of Jacob, Joseph's brothers assume the worst.

Themes: Sin and Forgiveness



Keep It Real Monday

In a recent interview with James Cordon on the Late Late Show, Alicia Keys offered some valuable insights for a “fight-free” marriage. During the interview, Cordon congratulated Keys on the celebration of her 10 year wedding anniversary.

Apparently, Keys and her husband, Kasseem Dean (a.k.a. Swizz Beatz) have never had an argument. Not one fight in a decade of marriage. And if you’re setting there right now thinking to yourself “that cannot be true,” you are not alone. Cordon, who has been married for 8 years, had trouble believing it too. He pressed her on the issue “Never? Never a cross word?” Then she shared this:

No. . .no. We don't raise our voices at each other. We definitely disagree. It's not that we haven't disagreed, or like he hasn't been uncomfortable with something I did or I'm uncomfortable with something he did. We've definitely had moments. . . But we definitely communicate in a way that we don't let it build up.

She explains one approach they have taken to address disagreements:

If it was Monday, we'd have a "keep it real Monday" conversation. At breakfast we'd be like later we need to have a keep it real Monday conversation." [to which he would respond] "Keep it real Monday conversation, Ok." And later we'd set down and I'd say, 'I've got to keep it real. This bothered be. . .' And he'd be like " Really, I didn't mean it like that." "I know but it came off crazy." "Oh my fault, I'm sorry." So we get a chance to converse before it turns into the big blowout. You know if you don't catch before, it gets crazy. So we catch it and we don't have to yell. Try it."

SOURCE: Keys Alicia. "Season 6, Episode 9." *The Late Late Show*. Interview by James Cordon. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D1uiLR>.



KEY PHRASE

“You know if you don’t catch before, it gets crazy. So we catch it and we don’t have to yell. Try it.”

THEMES

conflict resolution
marriage
relationships

PASSAGES

To make an apt answer is a joy to a man, and a word in season, how good it is!
Proverbs 15:23

Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger,
Ephesians 4:26

Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God.
James 1:19-21

Other Texts: *Lv 19:17; Pr 15:1; 23; 18:22; 19:14; 25:9; 27:5-6; Mt 5:24; 18:15; Ep 4:26; 5:25-34; 2Th 3:15; Jm 1:19-21*

The Safest Man On Earth

On October 27 of last year, Bert terHart boarded a 40' ocean fairing sailboat and sat sail from Victory, British Columbia. His objective was to become the first North American to ever circumnavigate the globe solo, using only a sextant, pen, paper, and almanac for navigation. On July 28th, after 267 days at sea, he sailed back into Victoria having accomplished his goal.

While on the open seas, he faced extreme weather with regular 12 to 14 ocean swells, unforeseen ship repairs that extended his journey by six to nine months, severe sleep deprivation (resting 4 hours each day in 2 hour increments while being strapped down in the boat). But in spite of these dangers, he was dubbed "the safest man on earth." You can probably guess why.

When terHart set sail, the world had never heard of Covid-19. While he was gone, we had to invent a whole new vocabulary with phrases like "social distancing," "flattening the curve," "shelter-in-place," and "self-quarantine." And while he was on the open ocean, terHart was safe from all of it.

In a recent interview with Travel and Leisure, terHart described what he hoped to accomplish by his journey;

"I wanted to inspire people to take that first step forward. . . Once you take that first step, the next step is easier, and the step after that becomes easier. And pretty soon, you're living your dream — whatever that may be, big or small."

Of course, as Christians, we are not out to live *our* dreams. We are seeking something far greater, God's dreams for us. Following God often means a journey into uncertain seas and uncomfortable waters. This often puts us into a posture of procrastination. We delay for a season as we wait to feel more certain, more safe. But this sense of security never comes because God sized goals are always risky.

Just take the first step forward. Then the next step will be easier and the step after that easier still. Pretty soon you will find yourself living God's dream for your life. And the truth is, you are never safer than when you are in the will of God. In fact we can confidently say that when you are living God's will for your life, you are "the safest man (or woman) on earth."

SOURCE: Source: Prakash, Alisha. "Canadian Man Takes Social Distancing to an Extreme and Sails Around the World Alone in 265-day Voyage. Travel And Leisure, September 2020. Retrieved from <https://www.travelandleisure.com/trip-ideas/solo-travel/canadian-man-sails-around-world-without-gps-during-coronavirus>.



KEY PHRASE

Once you take that first step, the next step is easier, and the step after that becomes easier.

THEMES

faith
journeys
step of faith
taking risks

PASSAGES

. . . fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.
Isaiah 41:10

But if not, be it known to you, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up.
Daniel 3:16–18

But the Lord stood by me and strengthened me, so that through me the message might be fully proclaimed and all the Gentiles might hear it. So I was rescued from the lion's mouth.
2 Timothy 4:17–18

Be strong and courageous, for you shall cause this people to inherit the land that I swore to their fathers to give them.
Joshua 1:6

Other Texts: Lv 25:18; Dt 31:6; Js 1:6 ; 1Sm 2:9; Ps 16:8–9; 34:4; 56:4; 118:6; Pr 1:33; 2:7–10; Is 41:10; Dn 3:16–18; Mt 10:28; Lk 12:4-5; Pp 1:6; 2Th 3:3; 2Tm 4:17–18; Hb 13:6

Give While You Live

A recent article in Forbes reported the conclusion of Chuck Feeney's journey to give away his fortune. The article was titled "The Billionaire Who Wanted To Die Broke . . . Is Now Officially Broke."

Charles "Chuck" Feeney, 89, who co-founded airport retailer Duty Free Shoppers with Robert Miller in 1960, amassed billions while living a life of monk-like frugality. Over the last four decades, Feeney has donated more than \$8 billion to charities, universities and foundations worldwide through his foundation, the Atlantic Philanthropies. And he did it all anonymously. Because of this clandestine, globe-trotting giving campaign, *Forbes* called him the *James Bond of Philanthropy*. And his example ignited a fire storm of radical generosity by other plutocrats (more than 210 billionaires have signed the Giving Pledge to date). Warren Buffet said of him; "Chuck's been the model for us all. If you have the right heroes in life, you're 90% of the way home. Chuck Feeney is a good hero to have."

In 2019, in an article title *Zero Is the Hero*, Feeney summarized his mission in a few sentences. "I see little reason to delay giving when so much good can be achieved through supporting worthwhile causes. Besides, it's a lot more fun to give while you live than give while you're dead." Now at the conclusion of his journey to "broke," Feeney tells *Forbes*.

We learned a lot. We would do some things differently, but I am very satisfied. I feel very good about completing this on my watch. My thanks to all who joined us on this journey. And to those wondering about Giving While Living: Try it, you'll like it.

SOURCE: Bertoni, Steven. "Exclusive: The Billionaire Who Wanted To Die Broke . . . Is Now Officially Broke." *Forbes*, September 15, 2020. Retrieve from https://www.forbes.com/sites/stevenbertoni/2020/09/15/exclusive-the-billionaire-who-wanted-to-die-broke-is-now-officially-broke/?utm_source=pocket-newtab#c2bc9423a2aa.



KEY PHRASE

"Besides, it's a lot more fun to give while you live than give while you're dead."

THEMES

giving
legacy
stewardship

PASSAGES

Surely a man goes about as a shadow! Surely for nothing they are in turmoil; man heaps up wealth and does not know who will gather!
Psalm 39:6

But godliness with contentment is great gain, for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world.
1 Timothy 6:6-7

And he answered them, "Whoever has two tunics is to share with him who has none, and whoever has food is to do likewise."
Luke 3:11

But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul is required of you, and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?' 21 So is the one who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God."
Luke 12:19-21

Other Texts:

Jb 27:19; Ps 39:6; 49:17; Pr 11:24
25; 19:17; 22:9; Mt 6:21; 10:8;
19:21; Mk 12:41-44; Lk 3:11;
12:19-21; 16:22-33; 19:8; Ac
20:35; 2Co 8:12; 9:6-8; 1Tm 6:6-7
; 17-19; Hb 13:16

The Hero of My Own Life

The film *A Personal History of David Copperfield*, tells the story of a middle aged novelist as he takes inventory of his own life, so far. As a retelling of Charles Dickens semi-autobiographical work, it highlights both the challenges and joys of the lead character's journey to becoming an author. Along the way he negotiates the challenges of antagonists like oppressive relatives, tyrannical employers, and cruel debt collectors (so, a lot like some of our stories today).

At the beginning of the film we find Copperfield on the stage of a crowded Victorian theatre, preparing to read his autobiography. The opening remarks of the novel are some of the most famous in literature:

Whether I shall turn out to be the hero of my own life, or whether that station will be held by anybody else, these pages must show. To begin my life with the beginning of my life, I record that I was born (as I have been informed and believe) on a Friday, at twelve o'clock at night.

We are all tempted to think of ourselves as the hero of our story. We imagine ourselves embracing the challenges of life, overcoming adversity, and pulling ourselves up by our own bootstraps (a feat that is physically impossible by the way). But Copperfield does not face life alone. As he shares his story, alongside the challenges, we are introduced to countless colorful characters that accompanied him on his journey. There is Mr. Dick (who is obsessed with thoughts of King Charles' detached head), Betsey Trotwood (who has an unusual distain for donkey's), and the Peggotty family (who reside in an upside down beached boat). And near the end of the film, Copperfield concludes his story this way:

And now I have nothing left to tell. Unless indeed I were to confess that this narrative is far more than mere fiction, it is in fact written memory wherein loss and love are forever side by side. Its people are as real as Earth. And my truest hope is that I might grow half as strong in the telling of their story as they have grown in the living of it.

Like Copperfield, you probably know how your story began. To begin your life with the beginning of your life, you can record that you were born. But how your story will unfold, and how it will conclude, are part of the suspense. The one thing that the "pages" of our story will show is that we are not the hero of our own story. That station belongs to another. When we arrive at the end of our life, we will have nothing left to tell than that loss and love walked side by side.

SOURCE: *The Personal Life of David Copperfield*. Directed by Armando Iannucci, performances by Dev Patel, Aneurin Barnard, and Peter Capaldi. SearchLight Picture, 2020.



KEY PHRASE

“Whether I shall turn out to be the hero of my own life, or whether that station will be held by anybody else, these pages must show.”

THEMES

community
end times
heroes
heaven
Jesus

PASSAGES

The Lord said to Gideon, “The people with you are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hand, lest Israel boast over me, saying, ‘My own hand has saved me.’
Judges 7:2

For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.
Ephesians 2:8–9

Not that we are sufficient in ourselves to claim anything as coming from us, but our sufficiency is from God,
2 Corinthians 3:5

the twenty-four elders fall down before him who is seated on the throne and worship him who lives forever and ever. They cast their crowns before the throne, saying,
Revelation 4:10

Other Texts: Ex 32:11; Dt 8:17; 9:4; Judges 7:2; 1Ch 29:11–16; Ps 115:1; Is 10:8–14; 48:11; Mt 16:17; Jn 1:12; 1:13; 1Co 15:10; 2Co 3:5; Ep 2:8–10; Rv 4:4–10

The Sum of Human Knowledge

When we compare the sum of human knowledge today with what it was just 100 years ago, we are sometimes tempted to think ourselves advanced.

Collectively, we have accumulated a great deal of information in recent years. The internet represents the amazing breath of human knowledge. According to current estimates, the web is just over 1 million exabytes in size. An exabyte is 1 billion billion bytes. A byte is a data unit comprising 8 bits, and is roughly equal to a single character of text. If you were to download the entire web, it would take approximately 11 trillion years.

Of course, not everything on the internet can pass as knowledge. Still, that is a lot of information. But while that knowledge may seem vast beyond comprehension, it is not infinite. It is quite small in fact.

According to one telecommunications company, you could store all of that data (every TedTalk, every course syllabus, every Facebook rant, and every cat video) on approximately half a million 2 terabyte hard drives. These hard drives could easily fit into 1,000 8'x10' rooms or one large 80,000 square feet room. Your local Walmart is around 180,000 square feet. Imagine that for a moment. The breadth of human knowledge can be housed in the space where you shop for groceries.

Our knowledge is truly vast, but it is the height of arrogance to assume we are approaching anywhere near the sum of what can be known.



KEY PHRASE

“The breadth of human knowledge can be housed in the space where you shop for groceries.”

THEMES

*apologetics
atheism
God's ways
knowledge
naturalism
omniscience
wisdom*

PASSAGES

*Claiming to be wise, they became fools
Romans 1:22–32*

*Do you see a man who is wise in his own eyes? There is more hope for a fool than for him.
Proverbs 26:12*

*then I saw all the work of God,
that man cannot find out the work that is done under the sun.
However much man may toil in seeking, he will not find it out.
Even though a wise man claims to know, he cannot find it out.
Ecclesiastes 8:17*

Other Texts: *Texts: Gn 3:19; Ps 14:1; 25:10; 36:5-7; 40:5; 92:5; Pr 21:8; 26:12; Ec 8:17; Is 55:8–9; Jr 8:8; 10:14; Mc 4:12; Mt 11:25; Ro 1:22–32; 1Co 1:19–21; 3:18-19*

SOURCE: Source: Starry. "How big is the internet?" Retrieved from <https://starry.com/blog/inside-the-internet/how-big-is-the-internet>.



That Other Consequence of Sin

Genesis 50:15-21

Sin and Forgiveness

After the death of Jacob, Joseph's brothers worried about their own personal safety. Their fears were not without warrant. They deserved to suffer for their actions. What if their father was the only thing keeping their powerful sibling from exacting vengeance.

When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, "It may be that Joseph will hate us and pay us back for all the evil that we did to him."

– Genesis 50:15

Imagine it, all the years they lived in Egypt, they carried with them this nagging weight. Someday Joseph would pay them back. They must have constantly looked over their shoulder wondering if today might be the day of judgment. Someday they were going to get what they deserved. Can you think of any fear more nightmarish for them, or for us.

Joseph wept when he learned of their fears. He set their mind at ease. What they intended for evil, God meant for good. "So do not fear," he said, "I will provide for you and your little ones." And he spoke kindly to them. In other words, not only did Joseph promise not to give them what they deserve (that's mercy), he gave them what they did not deserve (that's grace).

When we think of the consequences of sin, our minds normally travel to some sort of physical judgement (loss of a job, sickness, etc.). But one of the under-appreciated consequences of sin is the emotional burden it lays on us. For years, these brothers had been looking over their shoulders wondering what Joseph was really thinking. They had imagined that Joseph's love for his father was the only restraining force that held back his wrath. And now that this barrier is gone, they expect for decades of penned up anger to come pouring out of their betrayed brother's heart. But it does not.

Fear is a consequence of sin that can be avoided. Forgiveness, when it is accepted, brings an end to fear.



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