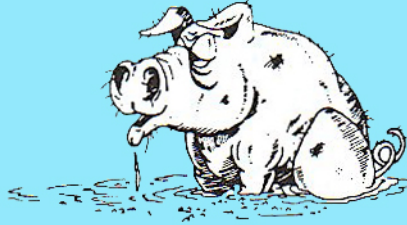


What I have learned in 66 years



1.

*Never try to teach
a pig to sing,
it wastes your time
and it annoys the pig.*



You can waste a lot of time trying to minister to the absolutely un-receptive when many, many others are in need of your care, prayer, and testimony. Look for those whom God has already softened and prepared to hear what He has given you to say. Nothing is more wearing than squandering your gifts and energy trying to accomplish the impossible.

I constantly remind myself that people do not need *me*, they need Jesus. If they will not allow me to point them to Him, perhaps someone else will. Believe me, there are isolated souls praying for God to send them a messenger.

2. Avoid battles if you can

When things happen that give opportunity for conflict, ask yourself if this battle really needs to be fought. Is it possible that this conflict will resolve itself simply by letting some time pass. It is always worth a try. If it continues to threaten, then maybe you will be forced to do battle, but maybe you can “just get past it.”

Remember Phl 2:3 “Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves.”



3. If you are forced to fight: *Win*



Some things are worth dying for. Blessed is he who sometime is called upon to represent a truly worthy cause with vigor and bravery. God needs advocates for the poor and downtrodden, the deceived and sick, the broken and discouraged. If you are fortunate enough to be called into a worthy battle, defend your calling when it is ignorantly attacked. It is no small thing to be a friend of God on assignment.



My most important realization

There is only one subject worth giving your life to promote: That men and women can be reconciled to God in a moment in time through the sacrifice of Christ.

My most important activity

Even more important than leading others to Christ is to keep hold of the certain knowledge that I am now—and ever shall be—righteous in the sight of Christ. Romans 8:3-4 teaches us that we *have met all the righteous requirements of the law*. I long for the days when the “Righteousness in Christ” message resonated regularly from pulpits. I say boldly and loudly what my old friend, Pastor Tim Marsh, taught me: *I WILL NOT RECEIVE CONDEMNATION!*

Why do I say keeping this thought uppermost in our minds is of prime importance? Because the devil knows that if he can bring you under condemnation, he has taken you out of the battle.

Philosophical Summary

As one of my mentors, Dr. Roy Hicks, Sr., said: “I’d rather have cancer than be religious. You can cure cancer.”

Miscellaneous

- Your wife will stick with you when no one else will
- Not much brings more joy than animals
- Except: Kids and Grand kids

Best things I have heard preachers teach

- 1. See Tim Marsh, above.
- 2. “Try to get over yourself.” Pastor Bob Caldwell
- 3. “When you worship Jesus you are cocooned in His glory and transformed by the experience. Rev. Chuck Flynn (See 2Cr 3:18)
- 4. The “Isaiah Chain.” The late Dr. Walter Martin (See my book *Have You Witnessed to a Mormon Lately? Chapter 8*, towards the end of the chapter under the heading “Third, demonstrate the biblical basis for monotheism. Online at: <http://www.mazeministry.com/resources/books/havetext/chap08.htm>)
- 5. Humor as demonstrated by Rev. Dick Mills
- 6. Vulnerability and transparency as demonstrated by my fellow pastors in the Foursquare Movement.
- 7. “Not as long as you don’t expect me to fix it.” (The answer I got from a pastor friend when I asked him if he minded that I had shared a marital problem with him.)
- 8. Same guy (who shall remain anonymous) when I told him the music at church was “way too sweet for me.” He said, “Of yeah, I know what you mean. Some of us refer to it as ‘Jesus is my girlfriend music.’”

Best compliments I ever received

- “You are my favorite preacher.” From my wife, Margareta.
- “If I were Jesus, I would want to hang out with you and me.” The late Ron Mehl.

My favorite dogs:

- The most faithful: The late Tiko, the Chihuahua; and Trixie, my blind Chihuahua
- My nicest dog: Oscar the Dachshund
- My funniest dog: Beau the Toy Poodle

My oddest mail

I get mail addressed to the Thirty-Second LDS Ward at my home in Boise.