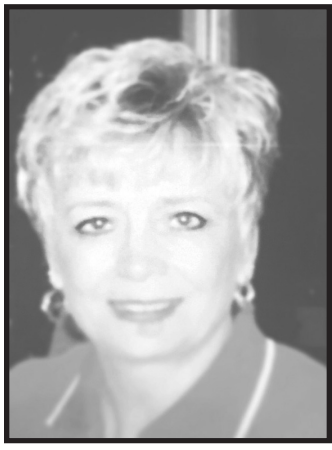


Easter Sunday Runaways



Times Remembered
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It was Easter Sunday 1964-65, in Irvine, when my girlfriend and I got this bright ideal right after Sunday school that we would sneak out of church.

Easter was the most important day in the Christian calendar next to Christmas, when people avoided church all year long but crowded the pews out of guilt to show off their Easter outfits.

As soon as Sunday school was over we checked out where everyone was sitting. We always sat in the back and her mother and sister-in-law sat up front, so they never saw us go out.

We went straight to the church parking lot. We

wanted to do something risky and different so we got the car keys from its hiding place under the driver's side floor mat and took off in my Dad's light blue 62 Chevy. I had my permit, but I'd been driving on the farm since I was 10.

We took off and headed straight up Broadway to Ravenna to check out the WigWam. We cruised around the WigWam, but no one was there, but still ordered cokes.

We were as excited as two kids playing hooky from school. We talked and laughed as we enjoyed drinking our cokes and watching everyone cruise around. Now the WigWam was the place to go in our day. It was the place to get a Country Boy and to check out all the guys that hung out. Except, there wasn't too many guys out that morning, but we didn't care. We were just doing something we weren't supposed to do and loving it.

We were feeling pretty cool sitting there in the car in our Easter frocks. Mine was just bought the day before Easter at Miss Brandenburg's store on Broadway. The dress was light yellow with white embroidery eyelets. My

friend wore a navy blue skirt and a white top. Oh! We both felt smashing.

Right there, we decided to have our own church service in the parking lot of the WigWam. I had a new testament in my purse and we took turns reading aloud the Easter story from the book of Luke. Then we prayed. Next we decided it was time to get back to church. We arrived and got parked just as you could hear the invitation song.

Then, just as church was letting out, we came in the basement door and up the steps to the front door to exit. Everyone was shaking hands with the preacher at the front church door. My friend's mother and sister-in-law never knew we weren't sitting behind them in the back rows of the sanctuary.

We could hardly contain ourselves; we were giggling so hard... thinking about our private Easter church service in our finest Easter dresses and sipping our cherry cokes at the WigWam.

Oh! We knew they would be mad if they found out, but we were sure God wouldn't care!

I don't advise any teenager to do this ...

Old bachelor chooses talking frog over beautiful princess



America's Heartland
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You may have heard about the old bachelor who was strolling through the woods one day when he heard a voice that sounded like a lovely lady. He looked around and found only a frog.

"Please sir," the frog said. "Help me. I was a beautiful princess but a witch put a spell on me and turned me into a frog."

The old bachelor picked up the frog and examined it more closely.

"The only thing that

can break the spell is for a man to kiss me," the frog explained. "If you will kiss me, I'll turn back into a princess. Then, we'll get married and I'll be your devoted wife."

The old bachelor stuffed the frog into his pocket, saying, "I'd rather have a talking frog."

I suppose a talking frog would be quite valuable. But there's something much more valuable than that, and that's the human soul. In fact, the Bible makes clear that nothing is more valuable.

"What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" (Mark 8:36).

All the money in the world won't ever equal the value of one soul. Our Heavenly Father showed the value He places on souls when He sent his only begotten Son to earth to redeem mankind.

While Jesus was engaging in his three-year public ministry, He offered insights into what is truly valuable. He

explained that earthly treasures are temporary, that we should lay up for ourselves treasures in heaven. He explained things in a way that we can easily understand. He told us at one point that "the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls: Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it" (Matthew 13:45-46).

In other words, when we realize the value of the great pearl of salvation, it becomes clear to us that nothing else even compares to it. Big homes, fancy automobiles, sizable bank accounts may seem alluring, but we understand that those things pale in comparison to the great gift of salvation provided through Jesus.

Nothing compares, not even a talking frog.

Roger Alford is pastor of South Fork Baptist Church. Reach him at P.O. Box 673, Owen-ton, Ky. 40359 or 502-514-6857.

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