

# Brazil News



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Editorial

## The Twitch

(Part 1)

A twitch is “a short spastic contraction of the muscle fibers: a simple muscular contraction: an involuntary muscular jerk...or motion of a body part” (Merriam-Webster 6).

John Foster Dulles (Feb 25, 1888–May 24, 1959) was a career diplomat who served as President Dwight D. Eisenhower’s Secretary of State from 1953–1959. A man of high moral standards, Dulles was known for his almost fanatical opposition to communism.

Dulles had a facial twitch that caused a rapid blink of one of his eyes, often interpreted as a wink by those meeting him for the first time.

Once when staying in a plush hotel on a diplomatic mission, a young man from room service knocked on the door and inquired if there was anything he desired. Yes, Mr. Dulles told him, just some water, please. His eye twitched.

The enterprising young man, anxious to please, and believing he understood the wink, soon returned carrying a tray laden with liquor.

No, Mr. Dulles, told him, he wanted *water*. Another wink.

A short time later there was a knock on the door. Waiting outside was a smiling call girl offering her services.

Twitches send an involuntary message—a message, interestingly, that is read and interpreted by the receiver, unbeknownst to the sender. A twitch can be compared to small children who unwittingly blurt out family secrets, unaware of the tsunami their innocent little words may be creating.

Some twitches are recognized for what they are. Twitches. Nothing more, nothing less. Some are read and totally misinterpreted, as in the case of Mr. Dulles. Some open the door of our internal safe and diffuse feelings and attitudes that we have consciously, or unconsciously, placed under lock and key.

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Parents learn to read the twitches of their small children, which may be a quivering lip, a flutter of the eyelids, a spasmodic arm or leg movement, among other involuntary manifestations. For parents intimate with their children, no polygraph could more accurately register their truthfulness or sincerity—or lack thereof—than the twitches. When asked a pointed question it isn't their words as much as the lips that form the words that tell the story.

A twitch is normally thought of as an involuntary visible muscular contraction. We want to suggest—without scientific backing—the existence of involuntary invisible character contractions. That's too complicated, hardly makes sense. So let's just say: *personality twitches*.

A personality twitch is a characteristic which others are able to see in us, but to which we are totally blind. The characteristic may be pointed out to us literally hundreds of times by those who know us best. And we have absolutely no idea of what they are talking about. In fact, with the passing of time, our emotional temperature gauge may go into the red when someone even alludes to our twitch. And thus we perpetuate our undesirable characteristics, intimidating into silence or rebellion those wishing to help us.

Personality twitches, measured on an emotional Richter scale, range from harmless to catastrophic. Modern science has a limited ability to predict natural quakes. Those closest to someone with a strong personality twitch have an uncanny ability to predict emotional quakes. Knowing they are powerless to remedy the situation, they instinctively flee—distance themselves from the one whom they increasingly see as their antagonist.

There are a variety of personality twitches, of which we will identify only two.

**1) Insensitivity twitch.** (Egotism would be a better word, but insensitivity will do.) It is only fair to say that some are born with a greater proclivity to insensitiveness. Let's just say they have a few extra markers in their DNA that create a natural seedbed for self-centeredness. Parents who fail to recognize and deal with this tendency in their child, at a very early age, turn them loose unarmed in the jungle of life. Survival will only come with a great effort.

Insensitivity is the inability to empathize, in this case to sense the pain their twitches inflicts on others. Since such people normally have a strong, inflexible ego, they constantly fortify the walls and enlarge the moat of their insular castle of insensitivity.

**2) Dominance.** A twitch that negatively impacts the lives of others normally does one of two things: a) It intimidates and causes the victim (yes, that's the proper term) to clam up and avoid intimacy with the perpetrator, or, b) it sparks open rebellion and virulent criticism.

In both cases the perpetrator has the tendency of going into defense mode. He sincerely believes he is being misunderstood and mistreated. And so, the wall of the castle grows more massive and the moat deeper. The predictable result is a deeply offended spirit.

Is this an incurable disease?

No.

Is it one of the most difficult to cure?

Yes, in advance stages it is. And here is the reason. This is a chronic problem and over the years multiple efforts have been made—some subtle and well-intentioned, some less than charitable—to correct it. As happens when antibiotics are taken over an extended period of time, resistance is built up, making it impervious to normal therapy.

When a doctor examines a patient, his first objective is to diagnose the illness. Since most pathologies have a textbook treatment, he prescribes the proper medication. There are those cases however, not rare, in which the physician is unable to reach a conclusive diagnosis. He then resorts to a symptomatic treatment, meaning he administers medications to alleviate the symptoms.

Since “twitchitis” (made that up) often goes undiagnosed, the treatment is symptomatic. With little or no results.

How would a medical textbook describe the symptoms of twitchitis? I really don’t know. A secondary heading would probably read “Superiority Complex.” One symptom we will list is very unpleasant. When examining a patient, a doctor does more than observe, ask questions, auscultate, palpate, ask for tests... He uses his nose. Certain pathologies have a characteristic odor. Some are strong enough to be perceived by others. In fact, in rare cases, the smell can be strong enough to repulse those coming near.

This characteristic odor not only repulses, but offends. Thus, in what surely must be a unique diagnostic procedure in the case of twitchitis, the “doctor” must examine those acquainted with the patient, starting with those who are nearest. The accuracy of the diagnosis will be confirmed by the number of loved ones and acquaintances who will spontaneously make reference to the same odor. Some will do so longingly, others bitterly.

For a cure, the patient must be helped to understand he is unable to cure himself. Speaking of lawyers, Abraham Lincoln once said, “He who represents himself [in court] has a fool for a client.” When the renowned trial lawyer, F. Lee Bailey, who represented such high profile clients as Sam Sheppard, O. J. Simpson and Patty Hearst, was arraigned in court for a number of counts of attorney misconduct, he hired a law firm to provide him with legal counsel in his trial.

Similarly, when one has been weighed in the balance and found wanting by those who love him most and know him best, the first step in the treatment consists in setting forth what trial lawyers know: the one who stands accused is not qualified to defend himself. Unless this point can be made, there will be no cure.

My wife and I have worked together for decades as a team in literature work. I print nothing of what I write or translate, not even a couple of short sentences, without having her first proofread it. In the case of books, I have a team of reviewers who check my work. The reason for this is very simple.

When writing I am constantly backspacing, deleting and replacing text as I try to fine tune my words. When I am satisfied with the text, I hand it to Faith. It comes back all marked up. The same is true when other reviewers return their copies. They have done their job.

When fine tuning my work, backspacing, deleting and replacing text, I often omit

words or fail to remove others no longer needed. The result is a jumbled text. Yet, when I attempt to review my own work, my mind reads the text the way *I mean it to be, not the way it is*. At times, even after seeing the corrections made, I must go back and ask what the problem is. Finally I say, “Ooooh! OK!”

When the one suffering from chronic twitchitis realizes he is unable to cure himself, there is light at the end of the tunnel.

(Part 2)

In a way, this is the most important part of this article. What has already been written is a basis for what I am about to say.

Twitchitis is a lot more prevalent than we believe. As in all illnesses, there are varying degrees. There are those in whom symptoms are less intense and thus more easily treated. Sometimes circumstances, or just the right touch, are sufficient to create a life-changing turnabout.

We referred to those living in close proximity with a twitchitis carrier as “victims.” It is to these that we direct the remainder of this writing.

There is an old saying, “You can’t unring a bell.” My keyboard has a backspace and a delete key, which as I have said, I use methodically. Not so a bell; it has no backspace nor delete key. Once it has been rung, there is no recalling of the peals.

When someone who has suffered from twitchitis finds relief, he feels a deep sense of remorse for the pain he has inflicted on others, especially those closest to him. He realizes acutely that it is impossible to unring the bell. He also discovers that to recognize past errors and ask for forgiveness does not necessarily bring about the hoped-for restoration. A wait-and-see stance is taken in which he is placed on parole.

For those who feel they have been wronged, possibly for years or decades, the parole seems to be an equitable compromise. After all, the loved one has been released from prison and a certain cordiality—not intimacy—reestablished.

It can be argued that the one who has caused distress in others over a period of years deserves the parole status. Maybe so.

Interestingly, the one who has found relief from the *besetting twitch* may graciously and uncomplainingly accept his parole status as just. He understands that it is impossible to unring the bell of his past.

No one is perfect. Even those with the best track record have need to be forgiven. Divine pardon does not distinguish between big sins and little sins. The sacrifice made was identical for both. Furthermore, God places no one on parole. He does not grant partial or conditional pardon. True, knowing the nature of the transgression, He may establish special boundaries or off-limit areas, not as punishment or parole, but as a protective hedge to avoid a relapse.

Life is fleeting. For those who feel they have been wronged, possibly for years, a non-aggression stance may seem fair. But is it? Let’s remember that non-aggression, or limited cordiality, may be a solution in political or diplomatic circles, but is it sufficient with a loved one?

Yes, life is fleeting. The possibility of holding someone at arm’s length—in truth,

parole—and then one day find that life has fled, is hardly a happy ending. That, also, is a bell that cannot be unring. Never.

Someone who has been truly cured of twitchitis, who wishes a thousand times over the bell could be unring, will very likely not try to force loved ones to believe he has changed. He will extend his arms, but not pull others into an embrace. The embrace will come when the one who has been harmed forgives and steps into the open arms.

The embrace will be warm. And rewarding.

For life is fleeting. ▲

## Economics

### Mr. Hadit

Here we go. Following is the financial report of a hypothetical American family:

Annual income	\$21,700
Total expenditures for one year	\$38,200
Unpaid debt accrued on credit card during one year	\$16,500
Outstanding negative balance on credit card	\$142,710
Total budget cuts to reduce deficit	\$38

You may not be a certified accountant, have a degree in economics or be a deacon, but don't let that disqualify you from at least trying to analyze this data. Since you may not have a calculator handy, let's take a look at our hypothetical family and do the math. We'll call them the Hadits, kind of a nice name. Since they are immigrant stock, their names are not run-of-the-mill..

Mr. Hadit works in the local lumberyard. He is one of those employees who helps load lumber, stocks shelves, waits on customers and on occasion sweeps the floors. His boss appreciates his versatility, but recognizes that he will never advance beyond what he is doing. Since he is now in his late fifties, other than for small raises, his wage will probably not advance either.

Mrs. Hadit doesn't have a job. She takes care of the house and their three children: two girls, twins, Wanna and Hafta, age 19, and son Gonna, age 21. None is married nor has a steady job. Mr. & Mrs. Hadit frequently disagree on their exact responsibility with their children. Mr. Hadit believes all three are old enough to be paddling their own canoe. Mrs. Hadit says they are entitled to some carefree years before facing the cruel world. So each has a car purchased in payments on the Hadit's credit card.

Between what Mrs. Hadit spends on herself and her children, at the end of each year they are owing an additional \$16,500 on their credit card. When Mr. Hadit, who believes in balancing the budget, opens his mouth to protest to the gross overspending, he is faced with four open mouths. Mrs. Hadit says, "My children are entitled to a decent living, and so am I." Each child nods his head and repeats, "That's right!" "That's right!" "That's right!"

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So one day Mr. Hadit calls his wife and children in for a meeting and explains that they are on a collision course with disaster. Something will have to be done. Reluctantly mom and children agree. But what? Gonna has the idea. If he and his sisters would during the course of the year each skip three visits to Starbucks, that would cut back on expenses, with a total annual savings of \$38,00. They all look pleased with themselves, except for Mr. Hadit, who walks around the block several times to calm his nerves.

When returning to the house from his walk, before opening the door, he hears daughter number one whining, “I wanna buy a new pair of shoes.”

Daughter number two says, “I hafta buy a new dress for the party tomorrow evening.

And son says, “I’m gonna take my friends out for dinner tonight.”

Mrs. Hadit says, “I know dad wouldn’t approve, but go ahead. You are entitled to some happiness.

Outside the screen door, the man of the house mutters, “We’ve hadit!”

Even I agree that that was sort of a dumb little story. But, before skipping the rest of this article, do this: Take the little financial report found at the beginning and add EIGHT zeros to each number, like this (except for the last figure, all others begin with the word “trillion.”):

Annual income . . . . .	\$170,000,000,000
Total expenditures for one year . . . . .	\$3,820,000,000,000
Money borrowed to operate one more year . . . . .	\$1,650,000,000,000
Total debt . . . . .	\$14,271,000,000,000
Total budget cuts to reduce deficit . . . . .	\$3,800,000,000

That, folks, is the situation of the US government. Don’t say that sounds just like me. I got these figures from the *Ontario Farmer*. And now a quote from the same paper:

“Here’s another way to look at the debt ceiling. Let’s say you come home from work and find there has been a sewer backup in your neighborhood and your home has sewage all the way up to the ceiling. What do you think should be done?

“Raise the ceiling, or...

“Remove the sewage?”

(And you say, Mr. Hadit?)



## Thinking Out Loud

### The Teeter-Totter

It has been quite a few moons since I used to ride a teeter-totter—a see-saw, if you please. I must say that it was a truly up and down experience and it is where I got some of my hardest knocks in life.

The teeter-totters, two of them, in the country school where I studied were the

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epitome of simplicity. With only one moving part, it was a two-by-eight plank some 15 feet long, hinged in the middle to a fulcrum about three and a half feet tall. Since the metal hinge was exposed to the elements and never oiled, it creaked and groaned whenever in use. That was all. No cushions underneath to provide a softer landing when the one, or ones, on the opposite side suddenly hit the ejection switch, no handles to hang on to, no paint to provide a smoother surface. They could almost be described as pre-historic, Flintstonish.

But, it was exactly the simplicity of these teeter-totters that made them memorable. With no handles, when two riders came aboard the difference in weight was quickly compensated by the heavier one moving ahead until a balance was achieved. Even better was the fact that they would hold up to ten riders at once, not necessarily a five/five arrangement, but four/six, or whatever, to equalize the weight.

In all fairness it must be pointed out that girls are much more humane than boys—at least back in those days. They saw riding a teeter-totter as an end in itself to be enjoyed. Boys, on the other hand, saw the ride as a means to an end, that is, to eject at the perfect moment to give the rider, or riders, at the other end of the plank the most bone-jarring experience possible.

There are a number of techniques that were employed quite successfully. When riders with a powerful set of legs came down, they would unexpectedly give a mighty push sending the opposite riders crashing to earth. The most sadistic was to simply slide off the seat when on the ground letting the partner, or partners, crash to earth with such force that by all logic should have shaken some fillings loose.

Of course, there were pleasant times, most of them, when a perfectly balanced plank would gently rise and descend (not fall). Up and down. Up and down...

Enough on teeter-totters.

So many things in life depend on balance. In fact, the success of almost everything we do depends on balance, on weighing pros and cons, seeing both sides of an issue, on knowing when to step on the gas or on the brake, which bring us to the diplomat and the soldier..

In just a word, a diplomat tries to talk his way out of problems, the soldier tries to shoot his way out.

We are living in an age in which political correctness and offensive behavior walk on the same side of the street. In fact, not unusually the same person can talk sweet or shoot straight, depending on the circumstances, and especially with whom he is dealing. It is as if the same fountain is sending out both sweet water and bitter. The person becomes a combination diplomat/soldier, a shadow of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde.

Needless to say, such behavior does not inspire confidence, neither is it Christian.

It is true that not all situations in life require the same action. In the White House situation room, where the president and his advisors meet to discuss crises, it isn't unusual for the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defense to be at odds. The Secretary of State believes there is a diplomatic solution, while the Secretary of Defense sees a show of arms or invasion as the best option.

The president listens to both, as well as to his other advisors and then announces the course to be taken.

Many terms are used to describe someone whom we admire. Probably one of the finest is to say that someone is well-balanced. That means that the person has the ability to calmly evaluate a situation and act, or react, in a prudent, predictable manner. It means he will neither flatter nor flatten.

In Colossians chapter 4, the Apostle Paul feels the need to speak “as I ought to speak [and to] walk in wisdom toward them that are without.” Doubtlessly this same aspiration would be directed to “them that are within.”

He concludes this thought with words of profound wisdom: “Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.”

I’m sure teeter-totters are still being used—more high tech and safer than the ones I used to ride—and surely most of you readers have seen several small children chatting and smiling as they gently rise and descend. I think the Apostle would have enjoyed watching them, for it is a beautiful picture of the balance we should have in our lives. ▲

## The Alligator

Since people have pigs for pets, I suppose maybe someplace on the face of the earth there is someone who has a pet alligator.

Be that as it may. The question is: What is the difference between an alligator and a human being?

Once when travelling, we stopped at a roadside tourist attraction that put on little shows with alligators. They demonstrated how that an alligator has tremendous strength to close its jaws, but almost none to open them. And that is what distinguishes an alligator from us. We have tremendous strength to open our mouth, but almost none to close it. ▲

## The Cow

Since I’m on kind of a biological streak, the subject now turns to the bovine species.

The question is: What is the difference between a cow and a human being?

A little background is in order. I have noticed that when we have visitors from N America in our church services, their jaws seem to be in perpetual motion. They aren’t saying “amen” or anything, just chewing.

So the other day I asked my niece, who has taught school in the US for a number of years if Americans are inveterate gum chewers.

She rolled her eyes and confirmed that—not in these exact words—that gum chewing is an American national sport.

And this is where the cow comes in. Having been raised on a farm, together with



a limited knowledge of biology, I know that cows have a number of stomachs, that they are able to gulp down their food, store it in one of their stomachs, and then when hungry, belch it up and finish chewing it. It is kind of like they create their own Trail Mix or Party Mix without having to go into a 7-Eleven and putting down cash on the counter to be able to snack.

Anyway, this brings us to some of the basic differences between bovines and homo sapiens.

- Cows chew their cud with their mouths closed. Not all humans do. In fact, in what the bovine race would surely consider a total breach of etiquette, humans not only chew with their mouths open, but often offer a free demonstration of the texture and color of their cud by letting it protrude from their mouths.
- When bovines finish chewing their cud, they swallow it, sending it back to another of their numerous stomachs. Not so humans. They have two spots, almost elevated to the status of shrines, where they discard their cud: on sidewalks and under church benches.
- No comments should be needed on the former item, but nevertheless we ask: Have you ever seen a cow walking to pasture with a long string of cud stretching from one of its hooves? Or one cow looking at another and saying (in bovine talk), “Hay! (cows don’t say “Hey!”) You stepped in some cud!”?
- Since cows chew with their mouths closed, they are saved the ignominy of going to a WalMart pharmacy and asking, “Ah, hum, do you have some kind of sunscreen to protect my gums from the sun?”
- In a word, the difference between cows and gum-chewing Americans? Juicy Cud and Juicy Fruit. ▲

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## The Cobbler

Maybe I told this one before. It’s true.

Sometime ago I reported on the death of our brother Ely Bessa. He has a cousin who is a cobbler and has had a shop in a little hole in the wall for as long as I can remember.

Luizmar, that’s his name, is a congenial fellow with a ready smile for everyone. However, before you notice his smile, your eyes will probably light on his hair, shoulder-length (extremely rare in Brazil) and sort of straggly.

In his dinky little shop he has a sewing machine, small counter and a work bench that runs the length of one wall. Underneath this bench there is an enormous heap of shoes. They are not tied together as pairs, nor are they labeled.

Once I took my mother-in-law’s shoes in for repairs. And forgot about them. A number of months later my wife reminded me about the shoes, so I went in to see about them, believing they probably had been discarded.

Not so. Without a question as to the make and model, he began digging in the heap and soon produced the shoes. As Americans like to say, “Cool!” or “Awesome!”

Anyway, that brings us to a little anecdote about the seamstress who always tossed the

clothes she made or repaired into a heap on the floor, instead of hanging them up. Asked about this, she replied, “You heap what you sew!” ▲

## Remembering

### **Drying Grain**

[This article was first printed 20 years ago in BN no. 20. Since most of you weren't subscribers back then, and since we are now in harvest, here is an updated reprint.]

Our electrical current here isn't stable like yours in N America. Because of all the electronic equipment I have in my office, I have a voltmeter on the wall right in front of me so I can monitor the voltage. Occasionally I have to shut down the equipment for short periods of time when the voltage either plummets or skyrockets.

Recently I noticed the voltage was constantly low. I couldn't imagine why, until suddenly it occurred to me that we are now in corn harvest and dryers all over the country are running. That means that for the next three months, at least, we have low voltage, until both corn and soybeans are harvested.

Twenty four years ago I don't know if we had more than one dryer around. Most of the grain, which was just a drop in the bucket compared to what is produced today, was dried in the sun.

On the fazendas grain was either dried on concrete slabs or on enormous sheets of unbleached muslin.

Rio Verde didn't have a lot of paved streets in the latter sixties and early seventies. At times it became difficult to drive in town as most of the streets were yellow with rice.

How was harvest back when we first came?

We'll talk about the days when Enos Miller lived across the river from Daniel Kramer and they farmed together. At that time I was teaching school and had the privilege of helping in the harvest during vacation.

Enos and Daniel had a little itsy-bitsy self-propelled combine, sometimes called the “pepper shaker.” It must have had about an 8-foot header and was powered by a little air-cooled VW engine. Since it had no grain bin, it took two men to run one of these machines: one man up front at the controls and another one alongside, on a platform, hanging empty sacks on a grain spout and sewing them up when they got full. The full sacks would then be toppled off the platform and onto the ground.

Now came the part of the second crew, usually three men, who would pick up the sacks. One would slowly drive a tractor alongside the sacks and the other two would toss them into the trailer. With two sure enough good tossers, the tractor would seldom have to stop.

Once the trailer was full, or all the sacks picked up, this crew would proceed to the “dryer.” An average size drying slab would be approximately 30x50 feet. When things got tight, all available tarps would be spread out too, plus the cotton tarp, already mentioned.

As the tractor slowly drove over the slab, the sacks would be tossed out so as to give

the right coverage over the entire drying area. After removing (never cutting) the string used to tie the sacks, they would be emptied on the slab.

The next step was to evenly spread the rice. This was done with the help of wooden affairs that looked like an oversized rake.

The actual drying procedure could be handled by one man. About every five to 10 minutes, he would push what resembled a large wooden hoe back and forth through the rice. This would, of course, create ridges and valleys across the entire drying area, having a stirring effect on the rice.

This was a pleasant job. To pick up a handful of rice, hold it for a few moments to try and determine its humidity, was a satisfying little ritual. Slowly, as the day progressed, the grain would become warmer and warmer – and lighter and lighter.

That's the bright side of the picture. It didn't always work like this.

Obviously these ecological dryers depended on the sun – and on the cooperation of the clouds. There were mornings when everyone would anxiously look at the clouds and try to decide if it was advisable to use the dryer. Finally it would be decided, "Let's try it." The slab would be covered with rice. And the clouds would begin to roll in. Then a few sprinkles. At this point, everyone, men, women and children, would be drafted into the service. The rice would be shoved into piles and covered with tarps, since there wasn't time to sack it up. Once the sun came out, the rice would be spread again. Sometimes one batch of rice might be out on the slab two or three days. And sometimes it would end up heating when the weather was bad.

Once the rice was dry enough to be stored, twenty liter cans would be used to scoop it into the sacks, which were then sewed up. Two men would lift the sack, placing it either on the head or back of one of them. He would then carry it into the shed where the rice would be stored until sold.

Frequently this job was done in the evening when it was too damp to cut. About ten o'clock, the rice all sacked up and under cover, everyone would head into the house for another one of Clara's delicious suppers.

Those truly were good days. There was a lot of hard work, a lot of team work, and a lot of happiness involved in bringing in the grain.

Now, back to the grain dryers used in town. We used to have crews specialized in drying rice for hire on Rio Verde's streets. The drying technique was much the same as used on the fazendas, except that their slab was asphalt – actually better, because the black surface heated up more.

Many of the streets were totally covered with rice, except approximately a car's width along one side where vehicles could get through.

One of the most distressing sights was to see a crew get caught in a sudden rainstorm before they had time to shove the rice into piles and cover it with tarps. Blocks away from where they were drying rice, the gutters would be a bright yellow with rice. When this happened, it wasn't unusual to see the poorer folks with large screens, dredging all the rice they could get for their own consumption. To say the least, this rice, unless very well cooked, must have brought on some real intestinal parasites for those who ate it.

Today the old street dryer is almost a thing of the past. So are most of the drying slabs on the fazendas. We human beings are a funny lot. When we dried grain by solar power, we longed for the day there would be enough dryers to not have to do it that way anymore. Now that there are, we long for the good old days, for the camaraderie of doing it on a solar-powered slab. ▲

## Readers Contribute

### Senior Version of “Jesus Loves Me”

While watching a little TV on Sunday instead of going to church, I watched a church in Atlanta honoring one of its senior pastors who had been retired many years. He was 92 at that time and I wondered why the church even bothered to ask the old gentleman to preach at that age. He was introduced and warmly welcomed. As the applause quieted down, he rose from his high-back chair and walked slowly, with great effort and a shuffling gait to the podium. Without a note or written paper of any kind he placed both hands on the pulpit to steady himself and then quietly and slowly he began to speak...

When I was asked to come here today and talk to you, your pastor asked me to tell you what was the greatest lesson ever learned in my 50-odd years of preaching. I thought about it for a few days and boiled it down to just one thing that made the most difference in my life and sustained me through all my trials. The one thing that I could always rely on when tears and heartbreak and pain and fear and sorrow paralyzed me...

The only thing that would comfort was this verse:

*Jesus loves me this I know,  
For the Bible tells me so.  
Little ones to Him belong,  
We are weak but He is strong;  
Yes, Jesus loves me, (3)  
The Bible tells me so.*

I always noticed that it was the adults who chose the children’s hymn *Jesus Loves Me* (for the children of course) during a hymn sing, and it was the adults who sang the loudest because I could see they knew it the best.

Here for you now is a senior version of *Jesus Loves Me*:

*Jesus loves me, this I know,  
Though my hair is white as snow  
Though my sight is growing dim,  
Still He bids me trust in Him.*

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Chorus

*Yes, Jesus loves me,*

*Yes, Jesus loves me..*

*Yes, Jesus loves me,*

*For the Bible tells me so.*

*Though my steps are oh! so slow,*

*With my hand in His I'll go*

*On through life, let come what may,*

*He'll be there to lead the way.*

(Chorus)

*When the nights are dark and long,*

*In my heart He puts a song.*

*Telling me in words so clear,*

*“Have no fear, for I am near.”*

(Chorus)

*When my work on earth is done,*

*And life's victories have been won.*

*He will take me home above,*

*Then I'll understand His love.*

(Chorus)

*I love Jesus, does He know?*

*Have I ever told Him so?*

*Jesus loves to hear me say,*

*That I love Him every day.*

(Chorus) ▲

## Quotes

- Your attitude, not your aptitude, will determine your altitude.
- You don't have to be great to start, but you have to start to be great.
- There are no traffic jams on the extra mile.
- If you aim at nothing, you will hit it every time
- Outstanding people have one thing in common: an absolute sense of mission.
- If you learn from defeat, you haven't really lost.
- A lot of people quit looking for work as soon as they find a job.
- Every choice you make has an end result.
- Lack of direction, not lack of time, is the problem. We all have 24-hour days.
- “If you go out looking for friends, you're going to find they are very scarce. If you go out to be a friend, you'll find them everywhere.

- It was character that got us out of bed, commitment that moved us into action, and discipline that enabled us to follow through. ▲

## The Difference Between Dads and Moms

(Translated from Portuguese)

When I was just two and a half years old my mom went downtown and left my dad to take care of me.

Someone had given me a little tea set as a gift and I didn't miss an opportunity to play with it.

My dad was in the living room watching TV when I took him his first cup of tea, which in reality was nothing more than water. He enthusiastically thanked me, so I kept bringing him more "tea," which he dutifully drank. This was still going on when my mom returned.

Dad asked mom to take a seat so that she could see how cute I was. She watched as my dad enthusiastically drank yet another cup of "tea."

When I was out of the room getting a refill, she said something to my dad that only a mom would know:

"Did it ever occur to you that there is only one place in the house that your daughter can reach to get your 'tea'? In the stool in the bathroom!"

Care for some tea? ▲

## Airline Announcements

A United Flight Attendant announced, 'People, people we're not picking out furniture here, find a seat and get in it!'

An airline pilot wrote that on this particular flight he had hammered his ship into the runway really hard. The airline had a policy which required the first officer to stand at the door while the passengers exited, smile, and give them a "Thanks for flying our airline." He said that, in light of his bad landing, he had a hard time looking the passengers in the eye, thinking that someone would have a smart comment. Finally everyone had gotten off except for a little old lady walking with a cane.

She said, "'Sir, do you mind if I ask you a question?'"

"Why, no, Ma'am," said the pilot. "What is it?"

The little old lady said, "Did we land, or were we shot down?"

A flight attendant's comment on a less than perfect landing: "We ask you to please remain seated as Captain Kangaroo bounces us to the terminal."

Overheard on an American Airlines flight into Amarillo, Texas on a particularly windy and turbulent day: During the final approach, the Captain was really having to fight it. After an extremely hard landing, the Flight Attendant said, "Ladies and Gentlemen, welcome to Amarillo. Please remain in your seats with your seat belts fastened while the Captain taxis what's left of our airplane to the gate!" ▲

## And for History Lovers

Robert Whiting, an elderly gentleman of 83, arrived in Paris by plane. At French Customs, he took a few minutes to locate his passport in his carry on.

"You have been to France before, monsieur?" the customs officer asked sarcastically.

Mr. Whiting admitted that he had been to France previously.

"Then you should know enough to have your passport ready."

The American said, "The last time I was here, I didn't have to show it."

"Impossible! Americans always have to show their passports on arrival in France!"

The American senior gave the Frenchman a long, penetrating look. Then he quietly explained, "Well, when I came ashore at Omaha Beach on D-Day in 1944 to help liberate this country, I couldn't find a single Frenchman to show a passport to." ▲