

A new adventure

I realize that most of us wake up everyday planning for a new adventure. We make sure that every thing we will need is in it's place and off we go to find a new challenge. Wait a minute, you don't do that? You wake up knowing that your day will be almost a carbon copy of the day before? You aren't looking forward to that daily grind? Life is static?

Do you remember the adventures? Your feelings before they happened? That can't hold me back attitude that a true adventure brings? Think about the feelings of that first day of school. The night before Christmas. The day before a special family trip. The first day at a new job. That drive to get going and tackle anything given to you that day.

We know what the feelings are like, but they don't happen everyday for most of us. I am determined to try to make each day an adventure. New experiences are just waiting for me to find them. And if this old man can find the old drive for a few extra days in the week, that would be something.

So tomorrow I will be off on a new grand adventure. Anyone with me?

Cool Summer

The kids are growing by leaps and bounds before my eyes, and it's unbelievable because I'm used to seeing them most of the day, every day – and I can still see the changes. They are growing up literally before my eyes!

So far this summer, the kids and I have carried a normal daily

schedule that finds our time divided between fun activities and miscellaneous appointments (like Bible study class, violin lessons, doctor's and dental appointments, etc). I think we've done a good job of making the days fun, and we've also had some great family weekends since school has let out. Father's Day weekend saw us heading out to the [African Wildlife Safari Park](#) in Port Clinton Ohio. We love that place, but it's almost 2 hours away so we hadn't made it out there in a few years. But there was a Groupon a few months ago, and we got a great price on admission, so Hubby planned a trip there. Can't go to Port Clinton Ohio and not stop at [Cheesehaven](#) – 88 types of cheese, meats, sauces... yummy stuff. They have free samples so you can try before you buy. Should you find yourself in this little Lake Erie town (which is near the more well known tourist attraction: roller-coaster filled Cedar Point), stop by Cheesehaven and get a fresh corned beef sandwich – YUM!!

The Safari Park is great – you drive around the animals' huge enclosure, and herds of all types of different animals approach your car looking for food! There are alpacas, llamas, white-tailed deer, elk, elands, bison, reindeer (I never found this one in the guidebook, but it looked like a reindeer to me!), even giraffes and zebras at the end (while you can still feed them, the giraffes and zebras are behind a fence whereas the other animals are not). It's so cool to feed all these guys! Some are dainty, skittish eaters (the smaller deer), while the huge animals like the bison will fill your car with this hot, half-digested hay breath. It's delightfully disgusting, and only animal lovers should attempt to stomach this! Here is the best video I could record while getting accosted by a thousand-pound bison (the kids were frustrating us adults since they would freak out and drop the carrot before the bison could grab it – we felt bad for the hungry fella!)

And what is the poor thing in the picture below? A llama, I think? He had a funny lip, which coupled with his flat ear gave him a whimsical look – he was a favorite to feed.



And next is a video of the giraffe – sorry for the shakiness, but he was too tall to get in one shot! You can see his curly tongue that came out and helped him grab his carrot. The car in front of us had the right idea – they were feeding the giraffe out of their sunroof – it was a sight to see and I should have taken video!

The Safari Park also has pig races, an animal show, a small walk-thru zoo, and pony and camel rides for the kids. It was a SUPER day, followed by a special day to celebrate Dads after
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My God is Not Dead, He's Surely Alive

'E'S BACK! Yes, I have returned from the state of Michigan to learn there was a tornado in the area while I was away. Two towns away, with little damage and no casualties, so not exactly those news breakers of weeks past. Moving on, in addition to the additions and subtractions they make from year to year (i.e., the Zorb this year replaced mountain biking), there are always differences in the kids and the weather. Each group of campers is different. I had ten boys in my cabin this year, and a junior leader who was one of my 4th/5th grade kids at church (not camp) from years past. I have had the sweetest kids you could know, and some, well, not quite the other end of the scale but leaning that way. Sometimes strongly. The most difficult one I had this year was mostly trouble at bedtime, not wanting to stay in bed, his own bed, etc. During the day he was great to lead. I originally had nine boys, but one was added at the last minute so in addition to the nine 5th graders, I had one 4th grader. I won't be able to form a strong relationship with him however, as his family will be moving out of state soon. Nor will I have any relationship at all with another, who came as a friend of one of our students. He has Christian parents however (and he already accepted Christ), unlike another guest I had a few years ago who came from a decidedly non-Christian family, though he did accept Jesus during his week at camp.

One of the new things this year was a talent show. I made sure to sign up for a skit, though I did come prepared with some songs from Oliver! in case we had to sing. You see, there was only one slot available each night for skits. This will have to be tweaked a bit for next year as no one signed up for the first night. Too little rehearsal time? Together we decided to do a backstage audition scene, though looking like an Idol episode with three judges holding their product-placement IBC root beer bottles. We came up with a script the first couple days, tweaking it even at the last rehearsal. I assigned three judge roles, one being kind of a mean one (yeah, you know...); six contestants in three acts (one became a security guard instead during a tweak); and one cameraman who dropped out when he wasn't feeling very well on the day of performance, giving me his line which didn't quite work out as it was meant for a cameraman, not someone yelling from offstage. The one who didn't want to even do a skit turned out to do a great job as a judge. I would say that they wrote half the script adding great ideas like a group doing a purposely bad "pattycake" routine, calling themselves the Pattycake Pros, or PPs for short (remember the audience/participant ages!). We also had a male diva contestant named Justin B-[eye]-ber, who the judges naturally mispronounce. The mispronounced name was my idea, but the kids came up with the contestant idea among others. He was dragged off by the security guard after hitting a judge, only to return later chased by that same security guard. The kids added being chased by some girls at the end, so we borrowed a few from a girl's cabin who would chase him thinking he must be the famous pop star, where he once again shouted that he was B-[eye]-ber, not B-[ee]-ber. The most amazing addition they came up with was changing my generic "Jesus Rocks" at the end of another bad performance (making it a smashing hit in the judges eyes as a result instead of another flop) to a bible verse from the lesson earlier that day about not fearing, finding comfort in God instead. I believe the verse was Psalm 27:1. That was the Holy Spirit talking through the

boy who came up with that change!

This post is getting kind of long, and I have to get a couple things done before I go to bed, so I will leave you with this video from the Zorb activity. This answers the question, "Is it safe to be in front of a moving Zorb?"

[vimeo]<https://vimeo.com/25643379>[/vimeo]

The beast had slept...

The beast had slept for thousands of years, but something or someone disturbed its slumber. It was now awake, and sacrifice would be required. Yes, the beast would be sated. Before this last slumber, the beast had battled the surface dwellers. They were bold, determined and tenacious, but with some forethought easy prey. They disturbed the balance again, and this would be the last time.

Slowly, quietly the beast made its way through the tunnels. Home for so many years, but now threatened. Yes the hunger was growing...

A lone man explores the vast network of caves and tunnels found during the ejustivation. He shouldn't be here and he really shouldn't be alone, and he should have told somebody. If anything happens, it will be weeks before anyone realizes that he is missing. He is confident in his abilities, but it was an obsession that got him moving. There was something in these caves, something living, something dangerous, something that killed.

Different Directions

As we go through life we have many choices laid out in front of us. Paths to travel, things to see, places to go and people to meet. As we make our choices, the paths, things, places and people change, move and diverge. Each choice, by its nature, limits the things that will happen in our lives. Because of this, people will often ask "What if?" or "If only I could?". Or to steal from a play I recently saw, "I wish I had..." Paths not taken, roads closed and detours set up.

There are many times in my life that I have played the games of "what if or I wish I had". Normally, when I feel life isn't going in the direction I like, I fall deep into those games.

And of course as we grow and gain experience we play those games to make plans for the future. What if I take this job? If I would put my money here. I think I will buy this thing. These thoughts can lead to comfort. Knowing that you planned for your future. Anticipating coming events. Or they can cause some trepidation. Fear of that Dr. Visit, maybe that big meeting coming up, or even wondering if something will or won't happen.

As with most things in life, these games, the planning are all wonderful if done in moderation. Too much wondering about the past "what ifs" leads us to forget about the present and the future. Too many "If i do this, or I think I wills" can lead us to stagnation contemplating our futures. Not enough of either can lead to an extreme "go with the flow" attitude. Not preparing for the future or learning from the past.

So after all this, here is to reaching that choice in life. Here is to following the path that you choose. Taking some

trips back down memory lane, and those trips made while planning for the future. While we live, there is always a new direction to take, just up the road...

no more questions

no more coming back for "just one more thing".

Yesterday (24/jun/2011) Actor Peter Falk died. I don't normally write about the death of actors, but Peter Falk was one of my favorites. I loved the frumpy detective he played in Columbo and The Cheap Detective or even Murder by Death. His characters were similar, but they all had great depth. A man who seemed to know his craft and he did it well. I think later I will dig out my copy of one of the movies he was in, just to remember. I think I will need to pick up a season or two of Columbo, because there is "just one more thing"...

Charm

Well... yesterday was another voice lesson. It went much better than last week's meeting... perhaps it was because I focused on 4 or 5 pieces I have been working on since almost the beginning. Once again, a deceptively simple song is one of the most problematic (well... the last part of it is rhythmically tricky, but will come). Another piece, I need to find that spot of greatest emotional impact. I KNOW where it needs to be but need to back off just a bit on some of those other big moments. I have to skip next week as the j-o-b

asked me to come in an hour early on Thursday.

Today, I had my first follow up with the doctor. He seems to think all is well... progressing nicely. He asked me what I have been doing... how long I am on my feet each day, etc.

Well... given my current job, I am on my feet probably 95% of the time. I have been taking short walks as the seasons have changed but not quite up to the 3-4 mile hikes I was accustomed to taking but those will come in time. As we have both commented, "I miss my walking buddy." I told the nurse, who lives two houses south of me, that I didn't think that trying out for [The Wizard of Oz](#) or [Annie](#) was such a good idea.

Once again, I did bring up the idea of trying out for Roosevelt and brought a chuckle. But I have been going to my weekly voice lesson so once my leg is closer to 100% I will once again be doing something. The actual appointment was nothing more than hearing things I had already known. He did feel my leg and commented that it is still a bit tight. I guess his prescribed 4 month check was nothing more than witnessing my charming personality ☐ KIDDING... I know it is necessary but doesn't hurt to display that indelible Jamiahsh charm.

Pottermore

Apparently, the end is just the beginning when it comes to the Harry Potter verse. July 15th will see the final cinematic adventure take place. BUT in October will come a website known as "[Pottermore](#)" created by J. K. Rowling herself. The content of the site is being held under wraps (for now, the site is "Coming Soon"). Speculation by fans ranges from an online community full of message boards and chat rooms (hopefully it is not that... do we really need another social

network?) to the e-book release of the seven novels to an on-line game of the world of Harry Potter. HMMM... the site has changed even since a few days ago when I heard of the site.

I'm of two minds on this. I'm not sure that this is not an attempt to bleed every drop out of the franchise... too much of a good thing and all that. However, if it is what the fans want... I guess it will be worth at least a peek once it is fully presented.

The Superhero Network

OK... I am about to illustrate my profound geekiness (or my wealth of Useless Knowledge, you decide). Way back in the mid to late 1970s, it seemed like at least two of the big three networks (remember those days?) had at least one live-action superhero show on the air. ABC had *The Six Million Dollar Man* which lead to the *Bionic Woman* (which jumped ship to NBC for its third and final season... told you I was going to demonstrate my geekiness ;). Over on CBS, you had *The Incredible Hulk*, *Wonder Woman* (which ABC tried for a season by putting the story in the original WWII time frame), and *The Amazing Spider-Man*.

The Hulk and Wonder Woman are much easier to track down than your friendly neighborhood web-crawler for a number of reasons. Sad to say the budget for the live-action Spider-Man was not over the top. After locating several of the 14 episodes via [youtube](#), the special effects definitely showed the lack of money put to it. The crawling up and down buildings left much to be desired and to save even more money, stock footage from the pilot episode would be used. Funny, but what finally spelled Spidey's doom was not the cheesy

effects but CBS' self-described fear of becoming THE Superhero Network. The Amazon Princess and the arachnid were given the ax while The Hulk continued on into the early 80s.

HOWEVER, this was not Spider-Man's first appearance as a live-action hero. Beginning in 1974, he was seen in short live action bits on the children's series *The Electric Company*.

Here is a Great pseudo cross-over Spider-Man episode tied with a classic episode with another series:

And here is an Electric Company short. Guess the voice of the narrator:

Ok... enough geekiness for one day. I won't go further by saying that Nicholas Hammond also played Fredrick (the oldest Von Trapp male child) in *The Sound of Music*... although I think I just did.

Highlights From A Beth Moore Bible Study

One of the activities that's been keeping me so busy lately is the Beth Moore Bible study I'm attending on Mondays, called Jesus The One and Only. It's great; I'm learning a lot, getting to know other women from my church, and it gets me and the kids out of the house for a few hours every Monday morning. The kids can blow off some steam while I go through the workbook with my small group and watch the dvd. A fun class, but there is a side effect of all the learning: homework. Our workbook is divided into weekly sessions, and there are 5 days of homework for every week's lesson. Each day has about 4-5 pages of homework that involves creative thinking and looking up passages in the Bible, contemplating them, comparing them, and answering thought-provoking questions. Time-wise, it's intense, especially for this pregnant mother of 4. This is the 3rd week of class, and so far I've been able to get all my homework finished on time and am really enjoying it. I struggled a bit at first with the stress of trying to find those extra hour 5 days a week that I was sure I didn't have, but I'm managing and reaping the rewards. Before I begin today's homework, I thought I'd share some things that I've highlighted in my workbook.

Before I do that, however, I will recap in a nutshell what the study itself is all about: Jesus. We began our discussions

talking about Mary, and Beth Moore is really great at delving more deeply into things and encouraging the student to give more thought. We talked about what Mary might have been like as a young Jewish woman (Mary was probably around 13 or 14 when she was told she was about to carry the Lord's child – did you know she was that young? I didn't!), and we talked about her pregnancy (of particular interest to me right now), her thoughts and feelings, her journey to see her cousin Elizabeth, and then we moved on to talking about Jesus himself. We talked about him as a baby, a child, and about how he was led into the desert, all while relating it to our own lives. Some of Beth Moore's statements that stuck out to me in the workbook are:

God seems to love little more than stunning the humble with His awesome intervention.

Seasons of intense temptation are not indications of God's displeasure.

God emphasized that the road to redemption would be costly and confrontational.

Luke was the only Gentile God inspired to write a Gospel.

God allows circumstances to exist in our lives that drive us to dependency on Him.

God is far too faithful to let anyone make it through life without confronting seasons of utter helplessness.

The good news Christ may want to preach to you today is that you don't have to subsist. You were meant to thrive.

I'm quite sure if my healing process had been painless, I would have relapsed.

Many people sincerely love God, but I don't think anyone stands to appreciate the unfailing love of God like the believer finally set free from failure.