

Thoughts and Smiles....Sept. 19, 2022

"It's madness
to hate all roses
because you got scratched
with one thorn,

to give up all dreams
because one of them
didn't come true,
to give up all attempts
because one of them failed.

It's folly to condemn
all your friends
because one has betrayed you,
to no longer believe in love
just because someone
was unfaithful
or didn't love you back,

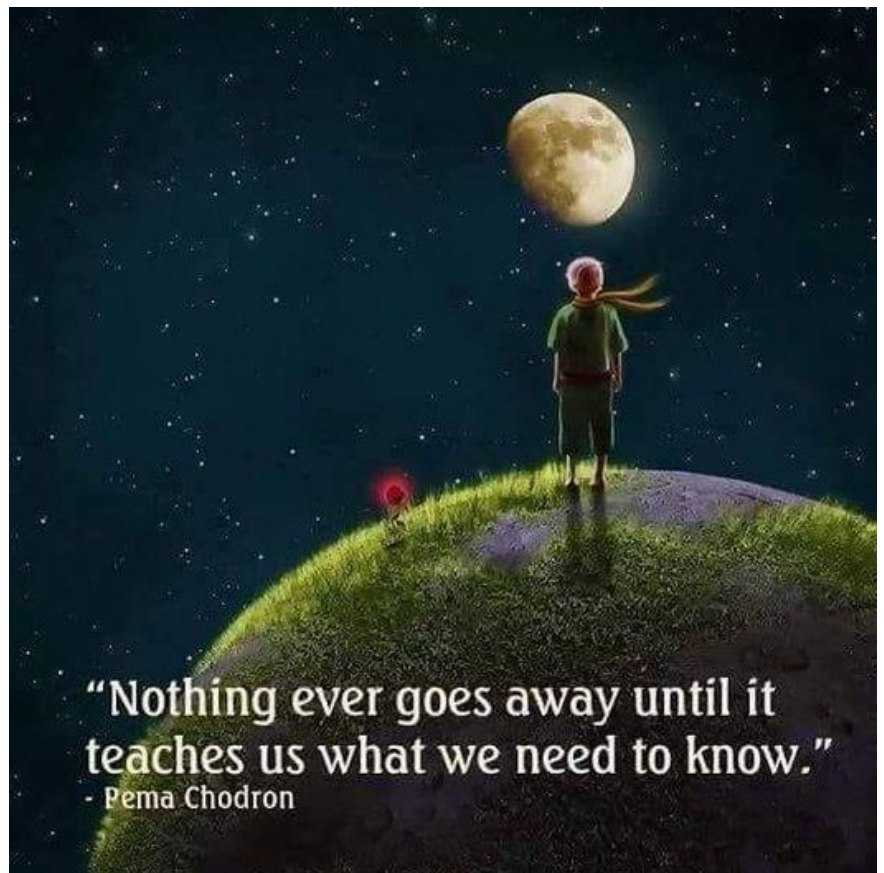
to throw away
all your chances to be happy
because something went wrong.

There will always
be another opportunity,
another friend,
another love,
a new strength.

For every end,
there is always
a new beginning.

And now here is my secret,
a very simple secret:
It is only with the heart
that one can see rightly;
what is essential,
is invisible to the eye."

🌹 Antoine de Saint-Exupéry
The Little Prince, 1943



In his colourful and straight forward style, C.S. Lewis paints a picture of a man he met who had an experience with God alone in the desert. This man was adamant that the experience surpassed any theological evaluation and rendered the task of theology meaningless. Lewis, while not discounting the man's experience, pushes back on the idea that experience always supersedes doctrine:

"Now in a sense I quite agreed with that man. I think he had probably had a real experience of God in the desert. And when he turned from that experience to the Christian creeds, I think he really was turning from something real to something less real.



In the same way, if a man has once looked at the Atlantic from the beach, and then goes and looks at a map of the Atlantic, he also will be turning from something real to something less real: turning from real waves to a bit of coloured paper. But here comes the point. The map is admittedly only coloured paper, but there are two things you have to remember about it.



In the first place, it is based on what hundreds and thousands of people have discovered by sailing the real Atlantic. In that way, it has behind it masses of experience just as real as the one you could have from the beach; only, while yours would be a single isolated glimpse, the map fits all those different experiences together.

In the second place, the map is absolutely necessary if you want to go anywhere. As long as you are content with walks on the beach, your own glimpses are far more

fun than looking at a map. But the map will be more beneficial than walks on the beach if you want to get to America.

Now, Theology is like a map. Merely learning and thinking about the Christian doctrines, if you stop there, is less real and less exciting than the sort of thing my friend got in the desert. Doctrines are not God: they are only a kind of map. But that map is based on the experience of hundreds of people who were in touch with God—experiences compared with which any thrills

or pious feelings you and I are likely to get on our own are very elementary and very confused. And secondly, if you want to get further, you must use the map."

Lewis reminds us that theological reflection, while necessary, is not ultimate—God is. Theology functions as a map, informed by centuries of church history, that helps us move beyond our limited experiences. In theology and church history, we are guided by a chorus of voices who help us to avoid wandering down the wrong path.

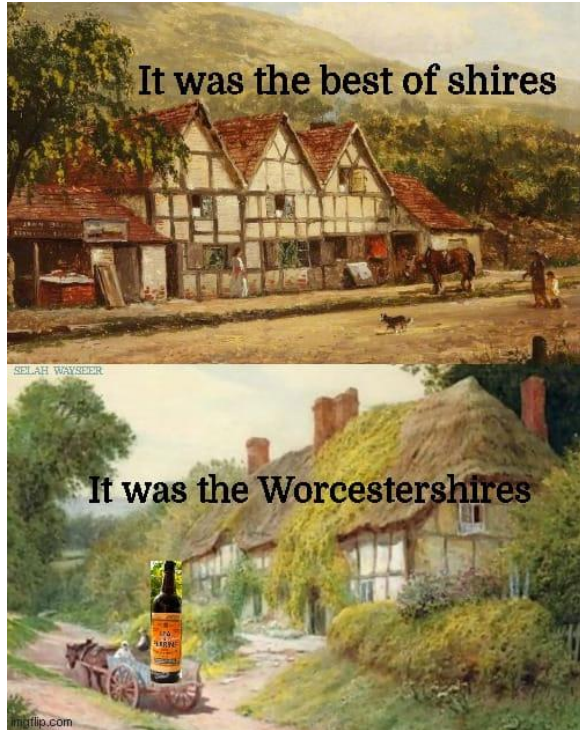
Studying theology and church history takes effort. But it's an essential endeavour for the health of our souls:



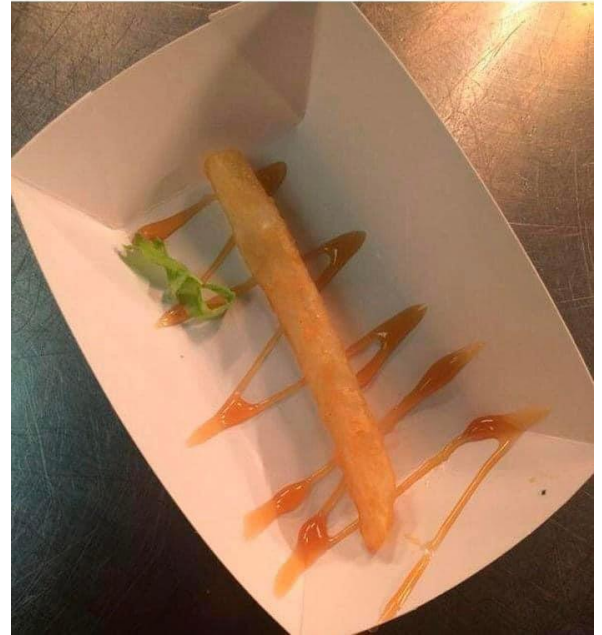
"You see, what happened to that man in the desert may have been real and was certainly exciting, but nothing comes of it. It leads nowhere. There is nothing to do about it. That is just why a vague religion—all about feeling God in nature and so on—is so attractive. It is all thrills and no work, like watching the waves from the beach. But you will not get to Newfoundland by studying the Atlantic that way, and you will not get eternal life by simply feeling the presence of God in flowers or music. Neither will you get anywhere by looking at maps without going to sea. Nor will you be very safe if you go to sea without a map."

- C.S. Lewis, Mere Christianity

And now, a little silliness....(aka, Groaners)



Airport be like \$16.75



There are 3 kinds of people in this world. Those who are good at math, and those who aren't.



I've been to a lot of places, but I've never been in Cahoots. Apparently you can't go alone, you have to be in Cahoots with someone. I've also never been in Cognito, either. I hear no one recognizes you there. I have, however been in Sane. They don't have an airport, you have to be driven there. I have made several trips.

And in honour of this particular day, an exceptional image for our reflection...

The very first photo to the very last
photo 1926-2022 💔



Instead of a sign
that says,
"Do not disturb"
I need one that
says,
"Already disturbed,
Proceed with
caution"

Have a terrific week!

Blessings to you all!



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Check out "David's Blog" on the Sauble Beach United Church website.

<https://saubleunitedchurch.ca/category/davids-blog/>

And if you want the online experience of the church worship services, follow the link here below...

www.saubleunitedchurch.ca and click: "Watch"
or the Hepworth page <https://youtu.be/ElyGpxv04E0>



**"For better digestion – I drink beer.
In the case of appetite loss, I drink
white wine. In the case of low blood
pressure, I drink red wine. In the
case of high blood pressure, I drink
scotch. And when I have a cold, I
drink Schnapps."**

"When do you drink water?"

"I've never been that sick."