**A Preacher’s World**

**During a children's sermon, Rev. Larry Eisenberg asked the children what “Amen” means. A little boy raised his hand and said: “It means – 'Tha-tha-tha-that's all folks!” *(Tidbits)***

**Arriving early for my son’s Little League baseball game, I was in time to hear their coach, who is the pastor of our church, deliver his pre-game pep talk out on the pitcher’s mound. Knowing his tendency toward lengthy sermons, I was amused to note that this talk ran true to form and the boys started shuffling their feet and moving around impatiently. After the game, I asked the pastor if he gave the team a pep talk before each game. With a sheepish smile, he replied that he did. Then he added, “You know, I like to think of it as my sermon on the mound.” *(S. L. Miller, In Reader’s Digest)***

**That is not the best sermon which makes the hearers go away talking to one another and praising the preacher, but which makes them go away thoughtful and serious, and hastening to be alone. (Gilbert Burnet)**

**Three little boys were bragging about whose father made the most money. “My dad sits down, scribbles a few words on a piece of paper, and get $100,” the first boy said. “That's nothing,” said the second boy. “My dad sits down, scribbles a few words, calls it a song, and get $200!” “I got you both beat,” said the third boy. “My dad sits down, scribbles a few words, calls it a sermon, and it takes eight people to collect all his money!” *(Vera Emmert Johansen)***

**The secret of a good sermon is to have a good beginning and a good ending, then having the two as close together as possible. *(George Burns)***

**A man was talking to his preacher and asked about the cut on the preacher's chin. "I was concentrating on my sermon while I was shaving and nicked my chin," the preacher said. "Next time," the man advised, "concentrate on shaving and cut your sermon." *(Rocky Mountain News)***

**The new pastor, being a helpful ex-farm boy, volunteered to cultivate corn for one of his parishioners. And as many tractor drivers do, he passed the time by singing -- at the top of his lungs so he could hear himself over the noise of the tractor. When he finished for the day, the pastor stopped to talk with the farmer and a neighbor who'd stopped by. One of them happened to mention he'd heard the pastor’s cornfield concert. “So, what'd you think?” the pastor asked with a good-natured grin. The farmer he'd been helping thought for a moment before answering: “Pastor, I think you should consider cultivating your voice.” His less diplomatic neighbor muttered, “Or maybe just plow it under!” *(Country magazine)***

**A man who was visiting a country church noticed that there was a lot of coughing during the sermon. When he asked whether everyone thereabouts had a bad cold, an old parishioner replied, “Those aren't coughs, they're time signals." *(Lowell Nussbaum, in Indianapolis Star)***

**My eight-year-old boy made my heart swell with pride one night when he secretly told me that he had decided to become a minister when he grew up. So at our next family Bible study, I discreetly suggested that it might be nice to ask each child his plans for the future. When my son's turn arrived, he proudly announced: "I've decided to become a minister. They only have to work one day a week, and there's nothing good on television Sunday morning anyway. *(Karen Patton, in Reader's Digest)***

**The most effective pastors minister from the marketplace up -- not the pulpit down. *(The Calling Newsletter)***

**When a widow decided to move from one apartment to another, she asked her minister son to help. Later, he asked her about the contents of some boxes he'd moved. “Mom,” he said, “there were two shoe boxes that I moved. One of them had four eggs in it.” She explained that every time he gave a sermon she did not like, she'd put an egg in the box. “I've been a preacher for many years,” the son thought. “Four eggs isn't bad.” “What about the other box?” he asked. “The one with $635 in it.” “When I had a dozen eggs,” his mother replied, “I sold them.” *(Samantha Mensack, in Reminisce magazine)***

**“I hope you didn't take it personally, Reverend,” an embarrassed woman said after a church service, “when my husband walked out during your sermon.” “I did find it rather disconcerting,” the preacher replied. “It's not a reflection on you, sir,” insisted the churchgoer. “Ralph has been walking in his sleep ever since he was a child.” *(Nuggets)***

**The good rain, like a bad preacher, does not know when to leave off. *(Ralph Waldo Emerson)***

**When the pastor of a rural Tennessee church died, the congregation insisted that my uncle, the most senior deacon, take over until a replacement could be found. My uncle approached the first Sunday’s service reluctantly, expecting a lot of criticism at his feeble efforts to fill the pastor’s shoes. He did not, however, come unprepared. “How many of you have brought a pencil?” he asked immediately before services. Hands went up all over the auditorium. “And a piece of paper?” he continued. Envelopes, cards and grocery lists were waved aloft. “Good!” he exclaimed. “We are going to have a contest. I want you to listen very carefully this morning for any mistake I might make and write it down. Don’t hold anything back. The more critical your lists the better. The lists will be taken up at the end of the service.” He then fixed the congregation with a stern gaze and paused for effect. “And the one who has made the longest list,” he pronounced, “will win the Grand Prize – of getting to preach next Sunday.” *(Joe Prentis, in Reader’s Digest)***

**Dennis mentions to the Pastor following the church service: “My Dad wants to know if you fall asleep when you're writing your sermons.” *(Hank Ketcham, in Dennis The Menace comic strip)***

**A preacher prepared for Sunday morning service, but only one person, a farmer, was there. He asked the farmer, "What do you think we should do?" The farmer replied with a drawl, "Well, if only one cow came into the barn, I'd feed it." So the preacher mounted the pulpit and began to preach . . . and preach . . . and preach. After about two hours, he concluded. Then he stepped down and said to the farmer, "So, what did you think?" The farmer replied, "Well, if only one cow came into the barn, I certainly wouldn't try to feed it all the hay." *(Tidbits)***

**A preacher who was in the habit of writing his sermons out carefully found himself at church one Sunday morning without his manuscript. “As I have forgotten my notes,” he said at the beginning of his sermon, “I will have to rely on the Lord for guidance. Tonight I shall come better prepared.” (Farmers' Almanac)**

**As part of his talk at a banquet, our minister told some jokes and a few funny stories. Since he planned to use the same anecdotes at a meeting the next day, he asked reporters covering the event not to include them in their articles. Reading the paper the following morning, he noticed that one well-meaning cub reporter had ended his story on the banquet with the observation “The minister told a number of stories that cannot be published.” *(Dan Betts, in Reader’s Digest)***

**A gray-haired old lady, long a member of her community and church, shook hands with the minister after the service one Sunday morning. “That was a wonderful sermon,” she told him,” – just wonderful. Everything you said applies to someone I know.” *(Bits & Pieces)***

**My 16-year-old daughter rushed into the room while I was having difficulty preparing a sermon. Searching for an idea, I asked her, “What’s the most inspiring sermon you have ever heard me preach?” “Dad,” she answered, “do you mean to the congregation or directly to me?” *(Robert Blanchard, in Reader’s Digest)***

**The parishioner says to the pastor following the church service: “Try not to hit so close to home, pastor! I get it in my ribs at least five times per sermon from my wife!” *(The Clergy Journal cartoon)***

**I am a pastor of a congregation in Wisconsin that cools the church the old-fashioned way -- we open the windows and hope for a breeze. Before service began on a summer Sunday, I said to one of the members, "If it starts to get warm in here, I want you to think of two words: 'Air conditioning.'" "Oh," he replied, "I was thinking: 'Short sermon.'" *(Rev. Joel S. Danner, in The Lutheran Witness)***

**The pastor says to the parishioner as he walks out of church following the service: “I'd like to mention, we have some very interesting sermon subjects going on here between Easter and Christmas!” *(The Clergy Journal cartoon)***

**After a church service on Sunday morning, a young boy suddenly announced to his mother, "Mom, I've decided to become a minister when I grow up." "That's okay with us, but what made you decide that?" "Well," said the little boy, "I have to go to church on Sunday anyway, and I figure it will be more fun to stand up and yell, than to sit and listen." *(Pulpit Helps)***

**At a monthly meeting of the board of trustees of a small rural church there was talk of giving the pastor a long-delayed raise in pay. When the idea was suggested to the preacher, the preacher declined. “Gentlemen,” he said, “I don’t want you to raise my salary any more. I’m having too much trouble collecting what you’re already paying me.” (Bits & Pieces)**

**The longest sermon on record was delivered by a minister in West Richland, Washington, in 1955. The declamation lasted 48 hours and 18 minutes. A congregation of eight was still present at the sermon's end. (James Meyers, in Mammoth Book of Trivia , p. 255))**

**Two preachers were talking. "Does it bother you when you see numbers of your congregation looking at their watches while you give your sermon?" asked one. "Somewhat," replied the other. "However, what really bothers me is when someone holds the watch up to their ear afterward to see if it's running." (John W. Klase, in The Saturday Evening Post)**

**Minister: “Brother Purvis, I noticed you falling asleep during the service yesterday.” Brother Purvis: “I wasn't sleeping. I was meditating.” Minister: “Oh? Meditating on what?” Brother Purvis: “On the message.” Minister: “And what was the message?” Brother Purvis: “You were there, don't you remember?” *(Jerry Bittle, in Geech comic strip)***

**As a visiting preacher, D. L. Moody was warned that some of the congregation usually left before the end of the sermon. When he rose to begin his sermon, he announced, “I am going to speak to two classes of people this morning; first to the sinners, then to the saints.” He proceeded to address the “sinners” for a while, and then said they could leave. For once, every member of the congregation stayed to the end of the sermon. (Viola Walden, in Sword of the Lord)**

**An elderly lady parked her car across the street from a church, depositing a quarter in the parking meter. My priest friend, known for his long-winded sermons, was greeting the churchgoers at the church entrance as the lady approached. "Are you going to be preaching at this Mass?" asked the lady. Flattered by her inquiry, he glowingly assured her that he was. She promptly returned to the parking meter and deposited two more quarters. *(Father John H. Hampsch, in Catholic Digest)***

**Never let a sermon get in the way of what you want to say . . . I only genuflect in its direction. *(Sig Paulson, Unity minister)***

**When a give a lecture, I accept that people look at their watches, but what I do not tolerate is when they look at it and raise it to their ear to find out if it stopped. *(Marcel Archard,, in Catholic Digest)***

**Churchgoer to pastor: "Your sermon reminded me of the mercies of God. I thought it would endure forever." *(Dennis R. Fakes, in Points With Punch)***

**A sermon is thirty minutes to raise the dead. *(John Ruskin)***

**I preach in these cartoons, and I reserve the same rights to say what I want to say as the minister in the pulpit. *(Charles M. Schulz, Creator of Peanuts)***

**At Mass, a priest visiting our parish gave a sermon about the special moments in his life that had left him with a feeling of awe. During the lengthy talk, he spoke of many things, including his college graduation and his ordination. Then, with a microphone on, he moved through the congregation to ask parishioners about our blessed moments. “Sir," he cheerfully addressed one gentleman, “can you tell us about a special moment in your life?” “Yes,” came the quick reply. “The time I went to Mass and we had a short sermon.” That ended the informal poll. *(Patrick O'Grady, in Reader's Digest)***

**Few sinners are saved after the first twenty minutes of a sermon. *(Mark Twain)***

**A churchgoer wrote a letter to the editor of the newspaper and complained that it made no sense to go to church every Sunday. "I've gone for 30 years now," he wrote, "and in that time I have heard something like 3,000 sermons. But for the life of me I can't remember a single one of them. So I think I'm wasting my time and the pastors are wasting theirs by giving sermons at all." This started a real controversy in the "Letters to the Editor" column, much to the delight of the editor. It went on for weeks until someone wrote this clincher: "I've been married for 30 years now. In that time my wife has cooked some 32,000 meals. But for the life of me, I cannot recall what the menu was for a single one of those meals. But I do know this: they all nourished me and gave me the strength I needed to do my work. If my wife had not given me those meals, I would be dead today." No comments were made on the sermon contents anymore. *(S.C.U.C.A. Regional Reporter)***

**A wealthy farmer decided to go to church one Sunday. After services, he approached the preacher with a great deal of enthusiasm. Farmer: “Reverend, that was a damned good sermon you gave, damn good!” Reverend: “I'm satisfied that you liked it, but I wish you wouldn't use those terms in expressing yourself.” Farmer: “I can't help it, Reverend. I still think it was a damned good sermon. I was so impressed that I put a hundred-dollar bill in the collection basket.” Reverend: “The hell you did!” *(Nebraska Smoke-Eater)***

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