

Daily View

“But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called ‘today’” Hebrews 3:13

April 24, 2020



Astronomical Clock, Prague. When the clock strikes the hour (from 9.00 a.m. to 11.00 p.m.), the procession of the Twelve Apostles sets in motion (ironic given the atheistic bent of the city of Prague). The clock was first installed in 1410; it is the oldest astronomical clock still operating.

Rube Walker

“Little Lies: Props to Hold Up a Shabby Life”

Pilate asked Jesus a question, perhaps the most important question ever asked. He said, “What is truth?” (John 18:38). The trouble is, Pilate walked away before getting the answer — he *literally* walked away from the Truth (John 1:38).

Truth is rare these days. If you think that during this pandemic you have not been lied to for some “noble” reason, well... bless your heart. Lies are dutiful servants for those who want something from us — our money, our loyalty, our vote... you name it. That is so obvious that I sort of admire the innocence of those who think otherwise. Of course, the word for that is “gullible” and you can’t go through life that way. Well...I guess you can but, not putting too fine a point on it, you’ll be broke and stupid. (not sure I’m supposed to use that word, but it’s true).

Enough with the doom and gloom. Let’s look at this from another perspective. There are a lot of reasons people veer away from telling the truth.

I have a baseball card of a Dodgers player sitting in a plastic stand on my desk. It is not Duke Snider, Maury Wills or Clayton Kershaw. It is *Rube Walker*. I have it sitting there for one purpose: to remind me to be truthful at all times.

As a young man, I suffered from a feeling of insecurity. In my defense, it may have been due to the frequent moves, but I don’t know. At times, I went to some length to make myself look better in the eyes of other kids. I could cite several instances, but I’ll stick to the one that stands out as the most ridiculous.

When I was in third grade, I carried that Rube Walker baseball card in my back pocket. When the time was right, I pulled it out, held it in the palm of my hand, and said, “this is my uncle.”

Like most stories, I’ve told this one a few times, and I still chuckle to myself when I say it. It is so weird, so incredibly dumb. For one thing, his name is **Walker**, not Posey (or even my mom’s maiden name, Myers). If Buster Posey was around back then, not telling what I might have done. To this day, I have no idea why I

chose Rube Walker as the hero of my lie. Rube was a second string catcher for the Dodgers with a .214 career batting average. He was a pro, but not a famous, or very good, one.

Later, as an adult, when I recalled this event, I was shocked by how calculated this little lie was. Clearly, I chose Rube because if I chose someone famous, like Duke Snider (who actually looked very much like a family member), no one would believe me. I chose Rube Walker because he sort of looked like my uncle Pooch, but no one knew who he was, either. However, he had a baseball card, so he must be “somebody.”

About 25 years ago, Dee Bowman was one of the editors of *Christianity Magazine* and he asked me to write an article. The article assigned to me was, “*Little Lies: Props to Hold Up a Shabby Life.*” I began the article with the line, “I don’t know how shabby a third grader’s life can be...” and then went on to tell the Rube Walker story.

I also told it a time or two in sermons. In fact, I have the baseball card because our daughter-in-law’s mother, Jeanette Norton, having heard the illustration, found a card on Ebay and gave it to me. I keep it on my desk to remind me of my devious third-grade ways.

Why did I do it? It’s not complicated. I did it to look good — *better* — in front of my fellow third-graders. The “little lies” were “props” to hold up a life that I, apparently, thought was pretty “shabby” at the time — or at least not as worthy of admiration as I would have liked. Unfortunately, *little* lies are just the seeds of big lies and “all liars will have their place in the lake of fire” (Revelation 21:8). At some point, I decided I didn’t want to be a liar — little or big.

