

Daily View

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

May 6, 2020

Ice Capades



The Grand Tetons. View from the lobby of the Jackson Lake Lodge in Jackson Hole, WY. You can often spot a moose or three in the meadow.

In 1977, we took a road trip to Jackson Hole, Wyoming, to enjoy a company-sponsored vacation. Dave and Angie were about 6 and 3 respectively. On the way, we stopped at a McDonalds to get lunch. Christie and Dave were sitting across the table from Angie and me.

I had a Coke, Christie had ice tea and Dave and Angie had milkshakes. While waiting for our meal, I spotted a tiny piece of ice on the table and flicked it toward Dave. I didn't even know if it hit him or not.

It must have been at least three minutes later when I was looking down, a little bored, and all of a sudden, I found myself drenched in chocolate milkshake. The milk and the shake was in my hair, on my shirt and streaming down my glasses. I did not know what hit me until I looked across the table and Dave was sitting there, staring at me with a deadpan look on his face, and a straw still dangling from his mouth.

You probably think I disciplined the boy, perhaps with some posterior application of a superior force, and you probably think I would have been totally justified in doing so. But there was a huge problem with that approach at that moment. My lovely wife and mother of my children was laughing her head off. She had seen me flick the ice, she saw it hit Dave, she saw his look. She then witnessed the crime — or, as Dave apparently thought, the appropriate retaliation — and she couldn't contain herself.

Have you ever tried to discipline a child for doing something while the other parent is laughing uncontrollably at what the child did? Impossible. Meanwhile, Christie, trying her best, and failing, to stifle her giggling, says “here let me help clean your glasses.” I respectfully declined, humiliated and... not happy.

This was a little incident in the big scheme of things but it reminded me that actions have consequences and the consequences are not always equivalent to the action. I flicked a piece of ice at Dave and got a straw full of milkshake aim at my head in return.

Sometimes, we say things or do things, maybe in a joking way, maybe thinking “it's not big deal,” but it **is** a big deal to the person on the receiving end of it.

“Like a madman who throws firebrands, arrows, and death is the man who deceives his neighbor and says, “I am only joking!” *Proverbs 26:18-19*

I probably should have used that event to teach Dave a lesson about revenge. I should have quoted and explained Romans 12:17-19,

Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.”

I should have... but I wasn't in the mood.