

“Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.”
—First Amendment to the United States Constitution

Opinions & Letters

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OPINIONS SHARED REPRESENT ONLY THOSE OF THE WRITER AND NOT THE NEWSPAPER STAFF OR OWNERSHIP.

“In the First Amendment, the Founding Fathers gave the free press the protection it must have to fulfill its essential role in our democracy. The press was to serve the governed, not the governors... Only a free and unrestrained press can effectively expose deception in government.”
— U.S. Supreme Court Justice Hugo Black, *New York Times v. United States*.

May God Bless America, Again

This weekend many of us will celebrate our nation’s birthday—it’s independence day—with family and friends. Many will fire up the grills and shoot off fireworks. While we celebrate our nation’s independence from the rule of a monarchy this weekend, let us be reminded that we do not have, nor will we have, a king. Our country was founded on multiple principles, but one of the main principles was to leave class rule and the

THE PUBLISHER'S NOTEBOOK
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monarchy model in the past. A lot of people feel like we’re on a fast track back to those dark ages, the time before we could celebrate the freedom we now know. As our lawmakers bicker and debate to decide what makes them the richest while ignoring the hurting constituents back home, let us remember

who calls the shots. It isn’t the occupant at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue. It isn’t a senator or congressman. It’s us, the voters. Take time this weekend to reflect on our great nation, and what makes it great. It isn’t beating our chest to the rest of the world. What makes us great was what we once aspired to be—the shining light on the hill. We can be that again, if we fight for it. May God bless America, again.



Sometimes we need a bump on the head to think clearly

The story is told of a rather odd fellow who sat beneath a walnut tree one day thinking odd thoughts. “It was so silly,” he thought, “for God to put little walnuts on such a big tree and then put huge watermelons on flimsy little vines.” Just at that moment a walnut fell from the tree and conked him on the head. “Thank God that wasn’t a watermelon,” he thought. That bump on the head did a lot to clear up that fellow’s thinking. Perhaps you know people who could benefit from such a bump. It’s silly that

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people would second guess our Creator when it comes to his design for the amazing world we live in. Every born-again believer understands that “by him were all things created that are in heaven and that are in the earth, visible and invisible” (Colossians 1:16). But there are others who have no such understanding because they have never been told about how God spoke everything into

existence. They haven’t heard about the fall of mankind through Adam. And they haven’t heard the good news of Christ, the redeemer of fallen man. A very pertinent question is asked in Romans 10:14: “How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?” (Romans 10:14). Thank God that we have preachers like Kentucky’s Doyle Spry who has spent his life telling everyone who would listen about Jesus. From his base in tiny

community of Log Lick on the outskirts of the Appalachians, this 97-year-old preacher has touched many lives and continues to do so. In fact, he will be preaching at Bethel Christian Church near Irvine, Ky., on July 19 at 11 a.m. Brother Doyle always had very touching words that reflect his love for Christ. Years ago, he shared some prose with me that went something like this: “I can envision a tree without branches. I can envision a church without pews. I can envision a well without

water. But, Lord, I can’t envision me without you.” As Brother Doyle closes in on 100 years on this earth, he remains the same bold advocate for the Gospel that he has always been. He has been through good times and bad during his lifetime. He survived the Great Depression as a boy. He survived the Korean War. He experienced the heartache of losing a beloved wife. Through all that and more, he will tell you that the Lord was always there for him. And he will tell you that the Lord

will be there for you, too, because he will never leave you nor forsake you. The fellow who sat beneath the tree questioning God’s design realized his folly when the walnut bounced off his noggin. But good men like Brother Doyle would never be so silly as to question God, because they declare with the prophet Jeremiah, “Ah Lord God! Behold, thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for thee.”

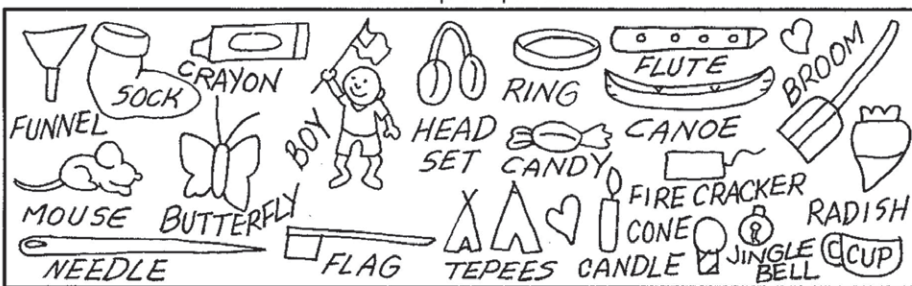
Feed courage, not fear!

William Shakespeare said, “Our doubts are traitors, and make us lose the good we oft might win, by fearing to attempt.” Doubt is something that we have all dealt with. When doubt, according to Billy Graham, reigns in our heart, faith cannot abide. Moses an example of doubt crowding out faith. When God called Moses to free his people from Pharaoh, he had many reasons for resisting God’s call. He first said he was just a nobody! “And Moses said unto God, Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?” (Exodus 3:11) Have you felt that way when called to do something? I’m nobody special; I can’t do that! He continues to resist God by pointing out his poor speech. He explained to God that he was no great orator. (Exodus 4:10) He then pleads for

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God to send someone else. (Exodus 4:13) Moses tried to get out of doing what God had called him to do, simply because he had doubt in his heart. Doubt focuses on self, whereas faith focuses on God. God fought against Moses doubt’ by reminding Moses God was with him. When Moses says, “Who am I”, he is reassured that he is a representative of God, not himself. When Moses brings up his lack of oration, he is reminded that God will instruct him on what to say. When he pleads for God to send someone else, God further encouraged him by providing him a helper. Paul prays in Hebrews 13:20-21, “Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting

covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.” Do you see that Paul is praying for God to equip these Christians with what is needed to accomplish the call? Before I stepped out to preach, I voiced all of my inabilities to my pastor. He replied “Son, God doesn’t call the equipped. He equips the called.” If you are doubting a new position at work, a call to ministry work, or a new opportunity in life, pray about it. If it is God’s will for you, he will equip you with what is needed to fulfill that call. Don’t let your heart be occupied with doubt, let it be occupied with faith. Faith in God feeds courage needed to accept the call. Doubt in God feeds fear that holds us back. Feed the courage and accept the call!



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