

Welcome to “J-Talk”

Sunnyside Road Church of Christ

October 9, 2022

Holy Bug Zappers



My Grandmother use to say, “Where there’s light, there’s bugs.” By that she reminded me that if you start a good work, there would always be someone to criticize what you’re doing. So, don’t get discouraged if people are complaining.

That’s great in theory but I’d also like to get a hold of the person who first said, “Sticks and stones may hurt my bones, but names will never hurt me.” He was wrong. Words wound.

Let me tell you a story about my grandfather, “Papa.” Papa and Memaw lived in Oklahoma City. They had a giant backyard (long but skinny) with a couple of great cherry trees to play in and lots of horned toads for grandsons to catch. We loved playing in the backyard, but one-day Papa’s neighbor brought home a dozen beehives. He thought it would be great to raise them in his backyard. The bees might have been great for the cherry trees, but they weren’t great for barbecues or little boys.

Papa went and talked nicely with his neighbor who could have cared less. He was a greasy-haired young man who always had a cigarette dangling from his mouth who only owned torn t-shirts. He laughed and slammed his door.

Papa checked with the city and yes, you couldn’t raise cattle in the backyard but there was no ordinance pertaining to bee-keeping. As strange as it sounds Papa’s neighbor was fully within his rights to keep the hives back there.

Time stretched on and things only got worse. The gruff neighbor didn’t even share his honey! And then

Papa got an idea. He went to the hardware store and bought several electric bug zappers and lined them up on the fence that divided their yards. I can still remember the little grin that use to cross Papa's face every time we heard a "crack!" "Pop!" or "Sizzle."

The church isn't full of perfect people. In fact, we have a few that call for more grace than you might expect. There aren't any "Holy Bug Zappers" so that tells me God

expects us to act otherwise. Here are a few rules I've found helpful when I'm called on to show a little extra patience with people.

- When dealing with problem people, don't become a problem yourself. (See the Golden Rule for a further explanation.)

- When you are being drawn into a conflict, draw closer to God!
- Even though that person may express himself in an annoying way, listen to what he says. He might just be right!
- The object is not to "squash the bug," or run them away. The goal is always "transformation." (See Romans 12:1, 2.)

God doesn't call on us to only love the nice people. We are to love people - stingers and all!

Blessings,

