

Living with Frogs

December 4, 2022

I was reading an excellent book on marriage counseling this week, and the author presented an illustration that began, “two frogs fell into a vat of buttermilk.” The frogs were frantic, and they splashed and churned, trying desperately to get out. The conclusion of the illustration came when the exhausted frogs gave up their struggle and prepared to sink down into the vat and go to froggy heaven. Only then did they realize their frantic efforts had produced a huge island of butter that became their salvation. The author’s point was: couples often need to relax and quit struggling, and the solution will become evident. My problem was my imagination. “How did two frogs fall into a vat of buttermilk in the first place?”

It’s very much like the illustration of the frog in the kettle. I am told that if you place a frog in a pot of water and turn up the heat slowly, the water will boil, and the frog will never jump out. In other words, subtle, apparently harmless little changes can lead to disastrous results. But again, my imagination asks, “What kind of sick, twisted person would boil a live frog in the first place?”

Of course, most people could care less about frogs. They are wonderful at catching bugs and make great cartoon characters, but unlike dogs and cats, you rarely find one in your bed unless you were an Egyptian. Do you remem-

ber the second plague (Exodus 8:1-4)?

Then the LORD said to Moses, “Go in to Pharaoh and say to him, ‘Thus says the LORD, “Let my people go, that they may serve me. But if you refuse to let them go, behold, I will plague all your country with frogs. The Nile shall swarm with frogs that shall come up into your house and into your bedroom and on your bed and into the houses of your servants and your people, and into your ovens and your kneading bowls. The frogs shall come up on you and on your people and on all your servants.”’”

And they did! The frogs were everywhere: in their bread bowls, in their beds -- everywhere! Pharaoh repented and begged Moses to put an end to the plague of frogs. Then something surprising happened. When Moses asked, “When?” Pharaoh said, “Tomorrow” (v. 10). So why wouldn’t Pharaoh (who was probably standing in the middle of a swarm of frogs) shout, “Now! I want those dreadful amphibians out of here now!” But he didn’t. Why?

It is a strange quirk of human nature that we often delay salvation. “I’ll just take one more drink and then I’ll start attending meetings.” “This is my last cigarette.” “This is the last time I will _____.”

Herod Antipas, “the fox,” spent time talking with John the



Baptist. “Herod feared John and protected him, knowing him to be a righteous and holy man. When Herod heard John, he was greatly puzzled, yet he liked to listen to him,” (Mark 6:20).

Are we the same? Do we enjoy dabbling in religion, filled with good intentions, but never quite able to commit? Don’t spend another day “living with the frogs”!



Exercise

1. New Year’s Day is coming. Have you made any resolutions?
2. Why didn’t Pharaoh ask Moses to get rid of the frogs *immediately*?
3. Are you “sleeping with any frogs” that you’d like to get rid of?