
From Pastor Jayneann's Pen

Pastor Jayneann McIntosh

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I know today's thoughts don't relate to our sermon theme this summer or maybe much of anything at church. They do however relate to the world and to life. (And my brain and eyes are tired.) So as Pooh says, "They wanted to come... so I let them"

I have a sticker on my desk. It's a replacement for the bumper sticker that was on my 2005 gray Prius that died last June. I was sad to see it go. While I was at the dealership haggling rather unsuccessfully, my daughter Kellyn ordered a replacement. Only it's not a bumper sticker. Each letter, each symbol is actually a separate sticker that I can peel and stick onto a window (or bumper).



While I appreciate the gift, I don't exactly know what to do with it. So my desk has been its home these last 12 months. Maybe it's because I just finished a sermon on this gift of life that God gives us, but I'm thinking, "How well am I celebrating Kellyn's gift?" Not very well.

Some people don't like all the hype of the "Coexist" idea. When I was looking for the picture (above) I noticed one example that said that it's not Jesus' message.

Well, no. He was more about healing the ones who need healing, feeding the ones who are hungry and making sure that all women, men and children know that God cares about them, them – just as they were.

He probably didn't know any Buddhists or Hindus, although he may have met some. (After all, Palestine was the access point between Asia & Europe and Egypt & Africa.) He certainly made a point not to exclude people. When he got called on it, like when he told a mother, "It's not good to take the children's bread and toss it to dogs," he accepted her response, "But even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall off their masters' table," with grace. And he changed his tune.

But back to my dilemma. What shall I do with this gift? I'd thought about putting it on my office windows. No. I'd want to put it on the inside of a car window but it's not reversed!

Sometimes we're given gifts that are more trouble than they're worth. I know of a man who deeded some land to his four adult sons, then secured a building permit. Although the younger men hadn't been thinking about building a hunting place right then, they did. It worked out in the short run. In the longer run, when some of the brothers were looking to sell and others wanted to keep the property, this gift led to hard feelings and alienation. Not at all what the father intended.

I don't have any good answers. Like you, I just try to do the best I have with what I have. I assure my kids I'm fine with them regifting anything that doesn't work for them. I've moved so often that I don't collect knick-knacks so no one should ever get into an argument about Mama's good dishes.

grace

Second thought, though, I do have an answer. What does grace look like to you? Let me know!

Amplana