

from our viewpoint...

Open government central to freedom

“I can’t think of an issue that’s more central to who we are than open government.” — Sen. John Cornyn .

Sen. John Cornyn, a conservative Texas Republican, and Sen. Patrick Leahy, a liberal Vermont Democrat, are co-sponsoring a bill to open up the federal government in everything that will not endanger our national security.

Speaking to members of the National Newspaper Association in Washington last week, Sen. Cornyn said that freedom is impossible without a free and honest press and an open and accessible government.

An open government is the bedrock of our democracy, he said. “It allows taxpayers to see where their money is going.”

The senator, a former Texas attorney general and Supreme Court justice, said that he was shocked that the federal government is less open and accessible to its citizens than that of most states.

In Kansas, we have good open government laws, and most of those who work in government try to do what is right.

We have laws to allow us to see where our money is going.

That’s one of the reasons that the six papers that make up Nor’ West Newspapers are asking government officials for their salaries.

One of the most common questions we’ve been asked, as we go from school districts to county clerks to hospital administrators, is why are we gathering this information and what do we plan to do with it.

We’re doing this because it’s your money, and you have a right to know where it goes.

Everyone who pays state and federal taxes has a stake in how that money is spent. Everyone who buys merchandise and pays sales taxes has a right to know how their money is used. Everyone who owns property should know where the tax money they pay is going.

Soon, we will be publishing stories on what government officials and supervisors make in city, county, state and federal jobs. We are coordinating this effort so that we can show what those in similar jobs make in the other counties. We will also tell how we went about getting this information, and what roadblocks our reporters faced.

Salaries are only part of what government spends, but they are a big part, and while we aren’t going to record every penny everyone in government makes, we are going to show people that they have the right to that knowledge and explain how to go about getting it.

With free and open access to government, we can find out about fraud and abuse, Sen. Cornyn said. But many times, we’ll discover how good a job the men and women in government are doing.

The press is the primary way people get information about government, the senator continued.

“But this is not about the news media,” he said. “It’s about you and me getting information about our government.

We agree.

This is national Sunshine Week — a time for government officials to make a stand and pledge to work in the light, not hide what they do from the people who pay the bills. That’s the way it should be in a democracy.— *Cynthia Haynes*

The Goodland Star-News

(USPS No. 222-460. ISSN 0893-0562)

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Inland Press Association Colorado Press Association
National Newspaper Association
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Published every Tuesday and Friday except the days observed for New Year’s Day and Christmas Day, at 1205 Main Ave., Goodland, Kan. 67735. Periodicals postage paid at Goodland, Kan. 67735; entered at the Goodland, Kan., Post Office under the Act of Congress of March 8, 1878.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Goodland Star-News, 1205 Main Ave., Goodland, Kan. 67735.

TELEPHONE: (785) 899-2338. Editorial e-mail: star-news@nwkanssas.com. Advertising questions can be sent to: goodlandads@nwkanssas.com

The Goodland Star-News assumes no liability for mistakes or omissions in advertising or failure to publish beyond the actual cost of the ad.

SUBSCRIPTIONS: In Sherman County and adjacent counties: three months, \$24; six months, \$42; 12 months, \$76. Out of area, weekly mailing of two issues: three months, \$34; six months, \$49; 12 months, \$84. Mailed individually each day: 12 months, \$119. (All tax included.)

Incorporating:

The Goodland Daily News

1932-2003

The Sherman
County Herald

Founded by Thomas McCants
1935-1989

THE SHERMAN COUNTY
STAR

Founded by Eric and
Roxie Yonkey
1994-2001

Nor’West Newspapers

Haynes Publishing Company



I’m enjoying the sings of spring

I don’t know about you, but I’m still enjoying the signs of spring.

I gave you some things to think about last week, but I found some more quotes, which hopefully will tickle your intellect too. God is re-awakening his dormant world all around us; we need to look and enjoy with an appreciative attitude. Think about these things:

1) “Fate delights in the unexpected rabbit punch.” Lawrence Sanders in McNally’s Secret. (Well, that’s not a great one to start. Unfortunately though, it seems to be true.)

2) “The relationships of life often are determined by what we look for. To a considerable degree, people become what we expect them to be.” Unknown

3) “In my experience, lights at the end of the tunnel tend to flicker out.” Maevie Binchy, Light a Penny Candle.

4) “For a long time it had seemed to me that life was about to begin — real life. But there was always some obstacle in the way, something to be got through first, some unfinished



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business, time still to be served, a debt to be paid. Then life would begin. At last it dawned on me that these obstacles were my life.” Father Alfred D’Souza in James Patterson’s Sam’s Letter to Jennifer (What opportunities are passing you by because you’re looking past them, expecting something better? — LGT).

5) “Life is a great big canvas. Throw all the paint you can at it.” Danny Kaye.

6) “I think your problem is low self-esteem. It is very common among losers.” Unknown. (Ouch! - LGT).

And here are some words of wisdom from an e-mail. I don’t know who wrote them, but I enjoyed them:

1) “If raising children was going to be easy,

it never would have started with something called labor!”

2) “Brain cells come and brain cells go, but fat cells live forever.”

3) “Nobody cares if you can’t dance well. Just get up and dance.”

4) “When everything’s coming your way, you’re in the wrong lane.”

5) “If ignorance is bliss, why aren’t there more happy people?”

6) “Some mistakes are too much fun to only make once.”

7) “A truly happy person is one who can enjoy the scenery on a detour.”

I hope you’ve enjoyed sharing these quotes with me. If not, you wasted some precious moments of your life on them, and I’m sorry. Life is too precious to waste.

We all know life passes with every click of the clock. We have a choice in how we spend our time and how we choose to view life’s situations.

So much of happiness depends on our attitudes. How is yours?

Origin of Jesus can cause lots of confusion

To the Editor:

Sharon Corcoran’s column (Page 9, Friday, Feb. 11, *Goodland Star-News*) on the origin of Jesus does indeed create a lot of confusion. That Jesus is God in the flesh is so well-documented in scripture as to be accepted as fact by all but a handful of sects.

The concept of image or eikon, as found in Colossians 1:15, cannot support Jesus being merely a creation of God.

Eikon means image and is used in I Corinthians 15:49 to show the descendants of Adam bear his humanity. So also, image here means that Jesus bore in human form all the deity of God. Colossians 2:9 says the same thing in different words.

In the second place, the concept of firstborn in scripture sometimes goes beyond the literal meaning of the first one born. In Exodus 4:22, God says he will make Israel his first born. Everyone knows, or should know, that Israel was not the first nation. They were, however, the preeminent nation under the economy of the Mosaic system.

Context is important, and the rest of the passage, which I will discuss in detail later, leads us to understand firstborn here as not the literal first creation, but the preeminent being.

In Psalm 89:27, accepted as messianic by most credible scholars, God promises to appoint the Messiah as firstborn. If that is to be taken as the literal first creation, one cannot be appointed. However, as that is again a position of preeminence, one understands that he is to be above all others.

Though Christ was already exalted, he chose to divest himself of that glory in order to cure the sins of the creation, cf. Philippians 2:5-12.

Another hole in Corcoran’s argument, perhaps the biggest flaw, in fact, is the text she was following evidently did not come from any known Greek text, or she would not have added the word “other” in Colossians 1:16. The proper sense of this verse is given in the New



from our
readers

• to the editor

American Standard Bible, which says, “For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities — all things have been created through Him and for Him.”

It is not all other things that were created by him. The word other is not found in the text, nor is there any inference to it. It is all things that were created by him and for him. He is the creator, and sustainer of life, John 1:3.

While the text is correct from Revelation 3:14, understanding of the language is faulty. Jesus is in fact the beginning of the creation of God. The Greek word is Arche, meaning an active cause or prime mover.

Jesus is indeed the beginning of creation in the sense that He is the one who got everything going. As for Proverbs Chapter 8, the only way it may be applied to Jesus is to remove it from its context and make it a pretext. The writer is

speaking metaphorically of wisdom — not the Messiah.

Corcoran says Jesus was a man and, in that she is right. Jesus was both fully man and fully God, though Adam did not pass sin to all mankind as much as he introduced it. When you read Romans 5:12, you find that sin entered the world through Adam, but it spread to each person by their own sin. We are not born sinners; it is learned behavior.

One of the first rules of Biblical interpretation is to let the simple passages explain the more difficult. I will leave you with a list of simple passages which proclaim the deity and humanity of Jesus Christ. Jesus is God — John 1:1; 10:30; 14:9; Colossians 2:9; Hebrews 1:3. Jesus is man — Matthew 1:23; John 1:14-18; Romans 1:4; Philippians 2:5-7; Hebrews 2:14-18; I Timothy 2:5-6.

Denial of the deity of Christ is a serious matter. Those who would like a fuller discussion of the Messiah and His mission could call Brent Flanders at the Goodland Church of Christ, 890-6185, or me at the Colby Church of Christ, 460-6322. My e-mail is jkelley@nw-kanssas.com.

A. Jay Kelley, evangelist
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