

In Other Words...

A RESEARCH SERVICE OF FACTS & HUMOR FOR CHRISTIAN LEADERS

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ABORTION: Ben Carson was named by Time magazine as one of America's twenty foremost physicians and selected by the Library of Congress as one of eighty-nine "Living Legends." He grew up with a liberal worldview that was further fostered by his education at Yale, University of Michigan and Johns Hopkins. He embraced the line of thinking that even though he didn't agree with abortion personally, he didn't have any right to force his belief on others. His epiphany came when he realized that abortion treats an unborn child as less than human, which is very similar to slavery. This forced him to consider, "What if abolitionists had taken the same position on slavery that I am taking on abortion? What if they said, 'I don't believe in slavery personally, but I don't want to force my beliefs on slaveholders?' Where would I be today?" His intellectual integrity demanded a philosophical shift and he's been pro-life ever since. *DenisonForum.org, 11/18/21*

AMBITION: Taylor Swift was Time Magazine's Person of the Year for 2023. Just weeks after gracing the cover of Time, Swift surpassed Elvis Presley for the most weeks at Billboard's Number 1 spot by a soloist. She's the most popular artist on both Apple Music & Spotify and she's very comfortable with her superstar status. But she's not without fear...she claims to have "a ridiculously, terrifyingly long list" of fears. So, what's her greatest fear? "I'm intimidated by the fear of being average." It's extremely doubtful that any of us will fill a stadium with people anxious to hear us sing, nor does that need to be our ambition. Often ambition is greatest when we simply rise above the tendency to settle for mediocrity. *Wall Street Journal, 12/23/23, p.B1*

COMFORT: During a podcast, Gavin Adams referenced a quote from his interview with Frank Blake, the former CEO of Home Depot. Blake said, "People are always looking to maximize their personal predictability." We value comfort above almost anything else so we work hard to keep things familiar, but growth usually occurs in discomfort. *Andy Stanley Leadership Podcast, 1/1/24*

EFFORT: Kenneth Gorelick shortened his name and lengthened his work-ethic to find success. Saxophonist Kenny G's career spans four decades with countless concerts and 20 albums. He holds the Guinness World Record for best-selling jazz artist and has won a Grammy. His most recent album, *Innocence*, debuted on December 1, 2023 and that prompted an interview. He acknowledged his good fortune with success and "the intangibles" that have helped. But one thing that stands out is his regimen for practice: "I practice every day for three hours – every single day." Effort is most always a tangible piece in the puzzle of success. *Beaumont Enterprise, 12/1/23, p.B7*

FAITHFULNESS: Dr. Jim Denison has repeatedly referenced something a mentor told him decades ago: "Stay faithful to the last word you heard from God and open to the next." That's wisdom worth repeating often and practicing continuously. *DenisonForum.org*

FEAR: In a podcast dialogue about fear, two well-known Christian leaders said this: "What you fear the most is where you trust God the least." (Craig Groeschel) Erwin McManus followed up by saying, "Fear is a wonderful reminder that we're designed for faith." He stated, "All fear is, is a negative projection of the future." And then McManus noted, "When a person says, 'I'm not a person of faith,' I can guarantee you they are a person of fear." It's impossible to please God without the kind of faith that overcomes fear. *Craig Groeschel Leadership Podcast, 11/16/23*

GENEROSITY: How'd you like to be more generous than one of the world's richest billionaires? If you tithe...you're already more generous than Warren Buffett. *The Chronicle of Philanthropy*

released their annual list of biggest charitable donations and the CEO of Berkshire Hathaway topped the list with a contribution of \$541 million dollars in stocks to the Susan Thompson Buffett Foundation, which is named after his late first wife. He gave an additional \$325 million to other charities for a total of \$866 million. It's doubtful that anyone reading this will even come close to earning a fraction of that amount in their lifetime, but you can still exceed it in generosity. Buffett's estimated worth by Forbes is \$119 billion. The Oracle of Omaha led his company to a 22% gross profit increase in 2023, yet his total charitable donations amounted to less than 1% of his holdings. Bottom line, if you tithe on your salary - regardless of its size - you're exceedingly more generous than the richest people in the world. *Beaumont Enterprise*, 1/3/24, p.A7; *Reuters.com*, 11/21/23

HEALTH: Pull-ups are now trendy and identified as "the unicorn exercise." Few people can do just one and even fewer can do more...thus the draw. Trainers are being acquired to overcome this deficit but they remind clients that the process can take 12 to 16 weeks...just to do one pull-up. Both humor & truth are found in a trainer's quoted recommendation for those aspiring to accomplish this feat...'focus on losing weight before trying pull-ups.' You'd hope the pull-ups would help with the weight but it's the opposite. Much of our success is like that...moving forward requires leaving some things behind. Whether it's sin or simply bad habits, that which makes us healthy usually involves abandoning something else. *Wall Street Journal*, 8/7/23,p.A11

PUNCTUALITY: Each New Year begins at 11:45 pm in Green Bay, Wisconsin. In honor of legendary Packers coach Vince Lombardi, a large clock at the main entrance of Lambeau Field runs 15 minutes fast. It's a tribute to the late coach's demand that all of his players arrive 15 minutes early, or expect a fine for being late. He believed that success required the discipline & courtesy to never keep others waiting. Lombardi Time guarantees you're never late because you always arrive a quarter-hour early. The great coach knew that punctuality is more than being time-conscious...it's about arriving with expectant anticipation. *Wall Street Journal*, 12/29/23, p.A15

WORRY: Too often we worry about the opinions of others so Donald DeGreve's death can actually be a healthy reminder to abandon such concerns. DeGreve died of a massive heart attack on the 16th green at Willowbrook Golf Course in Winter Haven, Florida. Because rescue workers can't transport deceased bodies, DeGreve was covered with a sheet for two hours while his widow was located and a funeral home could be contacted. Golfers, who were DeGreve's friends & neighbors from their near-by Swiss Home Mobile Home Park, continued playing golf. Robert Alexander said, "It was a real shock to all of us, but there was nothing we could do. Life goes on, so we had to keep going." They simply skipped the 16th hole and continued on. That all happened on October 15, 1991, but the message is timeless. For all of the fuss we make about what others think, when we die everyone else will just play on through without us. *Houston Post*, 11/16/1991

EVERYDAY HUMOR

EXERCISE: Loretta explained to her husband that his \$40-per-month gym membership averaged out to \$480 per visit. *Beaumont Enterprise*, 10/15/23, p.SC4

FITNESS: Ed knew he needed to lose weight so he ordered a pair of running shoes from Amazon and was amazed at how quickly they'd arrive. He told his wife delivery would be tomorrow and she replied, "That's the fastest those shoes will ever move." *Beaumont Enterprise*, 9/27/23, p.B8

PROCRASTINATION: Procrastination is a perennial headliner for New Year's resolutions, but if you want to hold off on that goal, you might consider joining the Procrastinator's Club of America. They formed in 1956 and members receive a report called *Last Month's Newsletter*. In 1966, the group held a peace march at Philadelphia City Hall calling for an end to the War of 1812. Their activism proved that procrastination does indeed work. *Reader's Digest*, March 2017, p.87

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