

THOUGHTS

BY DOUGLAS W. SCHROEDER
SPEAKER ON THE WORD TODAY

A

SLAP FIGHTING

This “sport” is a wonderful demonstration of the ability of humans to do stupid things for money. It is a violent activity for the sake of bragging and betting.

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SADFISHING

It's nothing more than narcissistic behavior in support of online addiction. It's done for one reason, to see how many hits the depressive post garnishes. The individual is so sad, so troubled, but must find out how many people will respond to their post! The people who really struggle with mental health disorders do not post on TikTok and track responses. Just as the transgender movement is one big, “Look at me,” posturing arising from immaturity, so sadfishing is a come-on, thinly disguised manipulation.

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CLINGING TO LIFE

The Lord has put His life force into every living thing, and it causes man and animal to strive to continue living. Plants, although not sentient, expend energy to live even in difficult conditions.

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In my effort to live healthier and hopefully longer, I have made a change to my workout regimen, shifting from shorter and aggressive (at least for me) cardio workouts to longer and less aggressive ones. As I am reading about the critical nature of diet and metabolism over general health and avoidance of disease, the universal recommendation is to walk more. That is my objective, and to accomplish it I am lowering the pace of my cardio and approximately doubling its duration or distance. It's working! I am slowly witting off the pounds that I have struggled for 30 years to lose! Praise God!

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I have always felt that I needed somewhat aggressive workouts to prepare me for sports, and after I stopped playing sports, for contingencies such as arduous workdays or unusual events that called for strength and resilience. I want to be in good shape for construction mission trips and other physically taxing events. I have often been sore and tired physically but have accepted that as part of the process of maintaining fitness. But along the way, I have carried an extra 25-30 pounds of fat. I shudder to think of how that has compromised my body for the long run (pun)!

T

2024

As I walked this morning through a parkway near our home, I made sure to glance at the broken tree. We have lived in this area for 32 years and for about 20 of those years I occasionally ran through that area of the parkway, noticing the large tree that had been damaged severely many years ago. Its top had been sheared clean off perhaps 15 feet up from its base by a storm, I presume. But the power of its roots had caused a large branch to grow out of one side of the sheared off trunk and it became the new extended trunk of the tree! It has been growing strongly over the years.



*The Bible is God's Word...Jesus is God's "Word" made flesh...
His death and resurrection, the message needed Today.*

AUGUST

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But in the past several years the damage to the lower trunk is compromising the tree and it is starting to rot. As I looked at it closely today, I saw that the inside is exposed badly to the point that there is now an approximately 6" hole open on the opposite side; the tree is doomed. I marveled at how good the side trunk/branch looks for the tree being so compromised. But in time it will fail, as all living things do.

In his book Lies I Taught in Medical School, Robert Lufkin, MD, discusses animals that seem to live inordinately long. HELA cells are a still surviving strain of cancer cells dating back to the treatment of Henrietta Lacks in 1951, which have been cultured and used in cancer research for decades. As they have been kept in laboratories, they show no sign of dying off but keep reproducing. Supposedly, a species of deep-sea sponge, *Monorhaphis chuni* can live up to 11,000 years. I suspect the estimate is wrong. The *Turritopsis dohrnii*, called the immortal jellyfish, uses a process called transdifferentiation to revert to an earlier life stage, effectively intermittently becoming younger. Impressive, but not immortal. At some point the cells die, the sponge dies, and the jellyfish dies. They are creatures, not the Creator. Immortality is the domain of God, not earthbound living things.

We cling to life tenaciously, too. There are many accounts of the human drive to survive. Recently, I saw a video of a woman paraglider who was caught up in a convergence of two clouds that turned out to be storm systems. The updraft of the collision of the clouds shot her up to nearly 10,000 meters to the edge of the Troposphere. Theoretically, she should have died, but a convergence of events, including her losing consciousness during a part of the flight, preserved her life. If you wish to view the account, see the YouTube video "Sucked into a Thunderstorm/Paraglider Carried Up to the Death Zone".

Audaciously, mankind is starting to manipulate microscopic structures medically in a bid to extend our longevity. There is talk of mankind eventually becoming immortal, either through the preservation of the body's cells, transferring the mind to a different form, i.e., robotic, or both. This is a return to the Tower of Babel with technological hubris. The Lord will not accept it, and the rush of humanity to seize immortality may be a definitive sign of the return of Christ being near. I am not a date-setter, so I consider such signs as warnings to be ever vigilant and working for the Master when He returns.

Or I will die, as all things will. That is not a problem for the Christian, because we believe God will transform our lowly bodies and give us a heavenly body, one fit for immortality. Jesus describes the transition as becoming like the angels (see I Corinthians 15; Mark 12:18-27). The Christian has an exciting future! This is but one reason we are filled with joy!

Blessings,
Douglas W. Schroeder