

Whatever you think

When I was a kid my mother, most of you know my mother, used to have this secret weapon. Okay she had a few but we are going to talk about the wooden spoon right now. No the weapon I am talking about was far more subtle, more painful and ultimately more effective. I realize it is difficult to imagine anything more effective, (or painful for that matter) than the wooden spoon but stay with me here.

This weapon of personal destruction or WPD as I like to call it, was reserved for specific times and certain circumstances. It was not used as punishment, though it felt like it at the time, no it was a first strike weapon, a preemptive assault, as it were. It came about when we wanted to do something and we both knew it was not a particularly good thing.

It was called the “***you do whatever you think is right***” assault. This bit of psychological Judo was devastating and virtually unbeatable.

You see what she did don't you? She put the onus back on us to make that decision. We would plead with her, please Mom just tell us what to do so we can blame you and move on with our life. But nooo. She would force us to make the decision and then suffer the consequences of that decision. It was a no win situation.

Here's how it worked; you wanted to do A because your friends were doing A, everybody was doing A. Probably even those kids over in India (you know the ones they always bring up when you don't finish your dinner) were doing A. She wanted you to do B. You knew you were supposed to do B but you wanted to do A. If she would just tell you to do B you go tell your friends, my mom won't let me. I have to go do B now, and you became a martyr. But nooo. You have to make the decision, right there with her watching you.

Clearly this is against all the rules of the Geneva Convention.

Of course as we get older we have to make these decisions on our own anyway, but when you are 10, that doesn't really matter. You want comfort, not responsibility.

In a lot of ways it is that comfort level that we still seek today. We say we don't want anybody telling us what to do or what to think but it is so much easier that way.

There are several stories in the Gospel about the Pharisees going back to the rule of law to determine what exactly they should be doing. Not only themselves but everyone else as well. They questioned when Jesus healed on a Sabbath. They questioned when his followers picked food on the Sabbath. They brought us all sorts of laws and rules.

Jesus then pulled out the ultimate weapon, the WPD (okay that really that stands for **weapon of personal development**) and told them to take responsibility for their own actions and stop looking to written rules.

“Love your God above all others. Love your neighbor as yourself.”

You can use this measure as a guide for decisions. There are tons of rules and regulations in the Bible, especially in the Old Testament. There are rules on how to treat your slaves, how to eat, how to act, whom to stone, and just about every aspect of your life.

Jesus then came along and whipped out this WPD and told us to take responsibility for our own actions. Then gave us the criteria to do so.

If your actions fall into these categories you will probably make the right choices without any other rules or codes. No wooden spoon is needed.

I cut this writing a little short this week in order to take this opportunity to wish my sister a very **Happy Birthday**. This is the @* anniversary of her birth. If you see her at church today, (she's the skinny girl in the choir) wish her a happy birthday. You may have to say it kind of loud cause she's pretty old now. Of course she will be quick to point out that she is my younger sister. When we are kids we talk about how we never want to get old. Then at some point a couple of things occur to us. One is old isn't as old as it used to seem. The other is that there is really only one alternative for getting old. When you think about it that way, getting older doesn't seem like such a bad idea.

If you have questions or comments about these writings please call me.
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