

The Lakeside



Message in a bottle

Verse of the day for Monday March 23, 2025 - Romans 8: 31-32

**31 What, then, shall we say in response to these things. If God is for us,
who can be against us?**

**32 He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will
he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?**

Read Romans 8 for meditation and inspiration.



Dear Lakesiders and friends,

Words are not always as accurate as we may hope. When did everything become “Perfect” if you listen perfect is used all the time. You give your name or address, and the feedback is “Perfect!” Now, which item would you like from our menu? Whatever you answer, the comeback is “Perfect.” It seems that every group today is the “Community.” The community of tomato pickers or the community of salvage yard owners. You wonder if they really are all in some community.

In a recent magazine cartoon, a mother peers over her teenager's shoulder. The teen is intently working at her laptop, apparently writing a paper. In the caption, the mother suggests to her daughter, "You might want to keep your words-to-exclamation-points ratio higher than one to one."

I think we can all relate to that. Have you noticed how email messages and texts are so often prone to such excessive use of over-the-top emphasis?

It's hard to figure out exactly when it started, but in like fashion, the word "awesome," hijacked by popular culture, has undergone a radical change in meaning. Once reserved for the loftiest descriptions, the term has been dumbed down to a mere expression of approval -- nothing more than a thumbs up or smiley face. Indeed, how often we hear "awesome" in answer to questions like "how was your macaroni and cheese," or "what do you think of your new sneakers?" Let's not forget that "awesome" was once a term reserved for something inducing awe, as its root tells us. It was a word used to describe an inspiring or overwhelming feeling of reverence, admiration, or fear. "Awful" (filled with awe) and "Awesome" (awe inspiring) used to have about the same meaning but at some point they parted ways.

We are called to simply tell the story of Jesus and His love. We can use all the words, stories, and examples that make sense in our day and time. The question is only, "Will we be faithful to tell that old, old story of Jesus and His love?" If you do that, you will be perfect and seriously awesome as you join the community of disciples.

In Jesus' love,