

## Ya “Gotta be nuts”

The story is told of two guys building a fence to go around a private yard. As they proceeded on with their construction project, complications ensued. They made several attempts to circumvent these problems, but all seemed to fail. The final decision was made to affix the main structure of the fence to a solid object with which they could apply tension. After much deliberation, they settled on anchoring the fence to the bumper of the truck belonging to one of the two guys.

This worked like a charm: the fence was tight and straight, and they saved so much time that they went inside to cool off with “a couple of brews”. When it came time to leave, the two took one last admiring glance towards their project, patted themselves on the back for the brilliant move, and the one guy jumped into his truck (to which the fence was still affixed) and took off like a jack rabbit, ripping up the entire line of fence they had just put in.... Ya gotta be nuts.

My cousin took me with him in the late 1950’s to “shoot stumps”. I thought that sounded cool, but all I had to shoot anything with was my 22 special. When I told him this, he laughed.

We arrived at the scene of the “shooting”, without my 22 special. He had intended to blow the stumps loose with dynamite, a full case of which he had with him.

He augured a tunnel under one stump, bored a hole in a half stick of dynamite, and threaded an electric blasting cap into the hole. He then pushed the half stick under the stump in the previously augured tunnel and moving some distance back, “touched off” the half stick under the stump.

I was disappointed about the noiseless demonstration. He followed this half stick procedure with a follow up demonstration using two sticks of dynamite which loosened the stump completely. This too, was noiseless. The morning went on like that until we arrived at the last stump. It was larger than the rest. He then did the usual procedure with the one half stick. This half stick procedure was for the purpose of enlarging the hole he had augured under the stump. Up until this point, he had been using two or at most three sticks of dynamite to loosen the stump. He now was faced with a larger stump, which at best would have required the use of a larger front end loader than what was available at the time....If, the stump were only loose. So, he followed up the one half stick procedure with sixteen sticks of dynamite pushed into the hole, with an electric blasting cap pushed through a hole bored in one of the sixteen sticks. . We got back a “good healthy stones throw and then some” from the stump.

He let me move the electric wire up to the “hot” side of the tractor battery. I could hear the idling diesel tractor, and feel the force as the electric spark jumped to the electric wire....I did not get shocked, but I felt the electricity jump from the battery to the wire, completing the circuit.

Electricity is a marvelous thing. We take it for granted. It runs our TV’s, radios, refrigerators, lights and other miscellaneous items we now find ourselves unable to live without in our modern world. But, I digress.

The next sound I heard was the rain of debris coming down. The hole left by the dynamite was large enough to swallow a large dump truck. No evidence of the stump remained. My ten year old eyes were wide open and my mouth was agape. He just laughed....Ya gotta be nuts.

Too often we find ourselves in a situation which we have taken too seriously. I think we learn this from our elders. Jesus said we should change and become like little children[1] in order to inherit the kingdom of God. Children have a “spark and a zest for life” which, sadly, is absent from the hearts of most adults. We pass this over serious attitude on to our children which, like a cancer infests every aspect of our being and theirs as well. A spirit of levity helps us to relax and be in a position where we can assimilate the teachings of Jesus more effectively.

From this dynamite episode, I learned that a good comparison to the power of God through prayer is the sixteen sticks of dynamite under the seemingly overwhelming stump. If we allow Him to do so, God not only gets rid of the

overwhelming problem, but does so with such panache that our eyes are agape with surprise. He then laughs in a loving way at our “solution” to the problem (shooting the “stump” with a 22 special) as He eliminates the problem and leaves no trace at all where the problem once was.

We tie God’s hands as we put restrictions on how He is to handle the problems. Through faith we can see God’s eye opening solutions to our most perplexing problems. The overwhelming problem of Sin was solved through the Love of God[2]. After innumerable attempts to resolve the Terror of Sin which came up in the Garden of Eden[3], (by comparison equal to shooting a large stump with a 22 special), God puts sixteen sticks under the problem and eliminates it entirely. All we need to do is to accept His solution by faith. This would be equivalent to touching the battery terminal with the wire. I would be there still, almost fifty years later, waiting for something to happen unless I had the faith to follow my cousin’s instructions to touch the wire to the battery terminal. No wonder my eyes stand agape at God’s Agape Love....And He Laughs with Joy at my acceptance of His Gift.

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[1] Matthew 18:3

[2] John 3:16; Romans 6:23

[3] Romans 3