

Ordinary 19A - 2026

In one of his books, **Mark Twain** recalls a visit to the Holy Land and a stay in Capernaum. It was a moonlit night, so he decided to take his wife on a romantic boat ride on the Sea of Galilee. Twain asked a man in a rowboat how much he would charge to take them out on the water. The man saw Twain's white suit, white shoes and white hat and supposed he was a rich Texan. So, he said the cost would be twenty-five dollars. Twain walked away as he said, *"Now I know why Jesus walked on water."*

Motorcycle Churches

Even churches can know what it is to walk on the water. Wes Seliger is an unconventional Episcopal clergyman who loves motorcycles. He tells about being in a motorcycle shop one day, drooling over a huge Honda 750 and wishing that he could buy it. A salesman came over and began to talk about his product. He talked about speed, acceleration, excitement, the attention-getting growl of the pipes, racing, risk. He talked about how the good-looking girls would be attracted to anyone riding on such a cycle.

Then he discovered that Wes was a minister. It always happens, doesn't it? Immediately the salesman changed his language and even the tone of his voice. He spoke quietly and talked about good mileage and visibility. It was indeed a "practical" vehicle.

Wes observed: "Lawnmower salespersons are not surprised to find clergypersons looking at their merchandise; motorcycle salespersons are. Why? Does this tell us something about clergypersons and about the church? Lawnmowers are slow, safe, sane, practical, and middle-class. Motorcycles are fast, dangerous, wild, thrilling."

Then Wes asks a question: "Is being a Christian more like mowing a lawn or like riding a motorcycle? Is the Christian life **safe and sound or dangerous and exciting?**" He concludes, "The common image of the church is pure lawnmower--slow, deliberate, plodding. Our task is to take the church out on the open road, give it the gas, and see what the old baby will do!" Is our church a lawn mower church or a motorcycle church? Maybe it's time we took more risks for God. (by King Duncan from *Don't Look Down* at www.eSermons.com)

"Have Faith my child":

For the umpteenth time Mrs. Youngston came to her pastor to tell him, *"I'm so scared! Joe says he's going to kill me if I continue to come to your Church."* *"Yes, yes, my child,"* replied the pastor, more than a little tired of hearing this over and over. *"I will continue to pray for you, Mrs. Youngston. Have Faith - the Lord will watch over you."* *"Oh yes, He has kept me safe thus far, only....."* *"Only what, my child?"* *"Well, now Joe says if I keep coming to your church, he's going to kill YOU!"* *"Well, now,"* said the pastor, *"Perhaps it's time for you to check out that little parish on the other side of town."*

"God sometimes whispers."

There is a story told about a young man and an old preacher. The young man had lost his job and didn't know which way to turn. So, he went to see the old preacher. Pacing about the preacher's study, the young man ranted about his problem. Finally, he clenched his fist and shouted, *"I've begged God to say something to help me. Tell me, Preacher, why doesn't God answer?"*

The old preacher, who sat across the room, spoke something in reply - something so hushed, it was indistinguishable. The young man stepped across the room. *"What did you say?"* he asked. The preacher repeated himself, but again in a tone as soft as a whisper. So, the young man moved closer until he was leaning on the preacher's chair. *"Sorry,"* he said. *"I still didn't hear you."* With their heads bent together, the old preacher spoke once more. *"God sometimes whispers,"* he said, *"so that we will move closer to hear Him."* This time the young man heard, and he understood.

We all want God's voice to thunder through the air with the answer to our problem. But God's is the still, small voice... the gentle whisper. Perhaps there's a reason. Nothing draws human focus quite like a whisper. God's whisper means I must stop my ranting and move close to Him, until my head is bent together with His. Then, as I listen, I will find my answer. Better still, I find myself closer to God.