

Sermon for 8:30 a.m. 20 February 2022@ Bethesda UMC/Baltimore
Seventh Sunday after The Epiphany
Scriptures: Genesis 45:3-11, 15; Psalm 37:1-11, 39-40; 1 Corinthians 15:35-38, 42-50; Luke 6:27-38
“Stars in our eyes”

Where do we get this outlandish Gospel stuff?

A friend I love and trust told me lately that the ingredient all computers have to have is rare, and the Chinese are big proprietors of it ... and we have lodes of it in our U.S. Southwest ... like in Arizona or someplace. That's "L..O..D..E...S."

What if we run out of it? It's like fairy tales, or stories nobody believes any more now that science rules and magic is no longer part of basic human experience.

What will we do? That which has taken over so fast that everybody has to have a little electric box in her hand everywhere she goes, and nobody talks plain English any more. Megabites. Ethernet. I can't even remember the newer ones. You can't get anywhere near service without them. Call AAA or the police and you'll wait all night unless you use them. I did last Friday. A car was stopped in the middle lane @ North Avenue and North Calvert Street ... right by old Poly, what we now .. or a few years back, speak of as "Alice's Palace" ... just after dark. I pulled over and found a lady stuck in her Honda Civic, with a big, burley guy out of his tow truck instructing her on how to let him push her by hand out of the crossing. "Do you want help?" I asked. "No," he said. "Why not?" I asked after about a minute. "Because I don't want you to get hurt," he smiled and answered. As the car began moving by his push, I joined and added my two cents ... I didn't know I looked that decrepit, and we did get to the curb a bit faster together. He then spoke a few words to her, got in his truck, and drove away. I stayed, and she rolled down her window and said she was going to call AAA. I waited with her for thirty minutes or so, called the police and got a lady who promised to send an officer, and finally left @ her insistence and thanks, giving her my phone number and even finding a Honda dealer a few blocks away ... closed, but better than the Essex garage she said she wanted the car towed to (the AAA operator, who was on the phone from Chicago or someplace, had a hard time getting her location down, after asking all sorts of identity and car make and model) ... and even talking through the glass to a guy @ a Firestone place over on Howard Street who said if she'd get her car towed to him, he'd work on the car tomorrow if it got towed there and she dropped a car key and her identification through a mail slot there ... I drove back with this information and found AAA had said they'd be there in about ninety minutes ... by then it had been 45 minutes since I'd called the police, but they hadn't showed up. I went home ... but as I turned the

corner into my alley, found myself blocked by ... guess what? ... another stalled car with a lady who was about to call AAA ... and after waiting for her to get off the phone, I collected two neighbors who were either just walking past or just pulling away from the parking space behind St. John's Church @ 27th Street and Lovegrove, and after consulting with her, we pushed her car into the church's parking space and saw her into her apartment @ the Normandy Apartments nearby.

Both ladies were profusely grateful, and the first one called me about an hour later to thank me and say AAA was promising to be there in another 30 minutes ... which would be two hours after she'd called them first ... but no police officer had ever come. We had a delightful conversation ... she's from Romania, getting a Ph.D. in anthropology @ Univ. of Maryland ... she's a dentist, but while waiting to get clearance to practice ... it took years ... she entered graduate school and was nearly finished now ... lives in Parkville ... said again how grateful she was for my help and promised to call when she had more to report.

The only thing I could conclude was that, if people don't try to be helpful, the world will never get any nearer out of this mess we're all in now... With the police not coming and even people who have AAA in the center of town for hours, we're in worse shape than even the news says... and the paper says what is it, 60% of the children who used to be 40% that were in poverty are now in it since CoVid...

And that's what this talk about loving your neighbor and finding help in trouble, and how to act and where it's all headed ... all these fantastical things the Bible keeps throwing at us, along with a lot of family feuds like between Jacob and Esau, and national history like 400 years of American racism and yet the majority of Blacks are religious with what was once the white man's religion?

This is crazy, folks. What are we talking about? How do we get anywhere with this stuff?
Can you believe it?

Amen.