

You Can't Fix Stupid

Never argue with stupid people. They will drag you down to their level and beat you with experience. - Mark Twain

Maybe this isn't the correct title for the direction this writing is headed but it sure seems fitting for the times. There's a saying that "you can't fix stupid." We've all heard it and on occasion, we have all felt we've achieved status in this category of people by committing an act completely devoid of any common sense. Well, hang in there, we're not stupid.

Stupid, by definition according to the on-line dictionary is: an adjective, having or showing a great lack of *intelligence* or *common sense*. Now don't confuse stupid with ignorant. Ignorant by definition (same source) is: an adjective, lacking *knowledge* or *awareness* in general. I believe the primary difference between the two words is that ignorance can be fixed, stupid cannot.

Also, don't confuse educated with intelligent either. I've known numerous folks with more degrees than a thermometer who butcher the Queen's English and couldn't pour urine out of a boot if the instructions were on the heel. My grandfather always said, "you can have all the book smarts in the world but it isn't worth a thing without common sense."

I found an interesting article from the Chicago Tribune by Dave Rutter: Science Finally Proves You Can't Fix Stupid. In reviewing highlights from his article, he reviews a study conducted by a Cornell University psychologist, David Dunning. "He's spent 15 years studying stupid people (must have been easy with a never-ending source...). Ever since 1999, when he offered the original theory and research, Dunning has been advancing the cause of Stupid Study, the regime of inquiry that assesses how totally brick-headed people are, and how little any of them realize it."

"Dunning's premise based on thousands of interviews seems to demonstrate that dumb people don't – or rather can't – tell they are stupid. In fact, the very factors that impose human incompetence also make them incapable of realizing it. Dumb people – or rather, for more scientific clarity, the profoundly really numbskulled – never get less stupid. As noted philosopher and Scotch drinker Ron White suggests: "You can't fix stupid."

"People who insist they never make the same mistake twice are the ones who always make the same mistake twice. And, in fact, never stop making the same mistake."

“Conversely, Dunning shows that the very lack of competence in some people is the same characteristic that prevents them from *realizing* their stupidity. As far as I can tell, this explains most former brothers-in-law as a general class of people.”

"What's curious is that, in many cases, incompetence does not leave people disoriented, perplexed, or cautious," he has written in the Journal of Personality and Social Psychology. "Instead, the incompetent are often blessed with an inappropriate confidence, buoyed by something that feels to them like knowledge. A whole battery of studies ... have confirmed that people who don't know much about a given set of cognitive, technical or social skills tend to grossly overestimate their prowess and performance, whether it's grammar, emotional intelligence, logical reasoning, firearm care and safety, debating or financial knowledge."

Dunning also says the inductive application of this reasoning is also true. If you doubt your own wisdom, if you worry about being a witless dope, then chances are you are far smarter than you realize. Doubting yourself is the first sign of cognitive self-awareness.

While that fact alone does not prove your smartness, it's a sign you're not stupid. You take good news wherever you can find it.”

Well, that’s a relief. I’m not as dumb as I thought I was. Quotes from today’s politicians provides a well spring of stupidity. “We have to pass this so we can find

out what's in it", Nancy Pelosi referring to the Obamacare package. And even Obama's quote, "The police acted stupidly..." ranks up there with profound uttered words of genius. I'm not picking on liberals but if their collective IQ was gasoline, it wouldn't fuel an ant's motorcycle to run around the inside of a Cheerio. And even smarter still are those who support and vote for them. If aliens landed here and said "take me to your leader" would you feel confident in doing so based on who is in charge? Me either.

I put these thoughts together with some of the scriptures I read this week and one in particular stuck for some reason. It is the story of Jesus casting out the demons from the possessed man and allowed them to go into a herd of swine.

Mark 5:1-17- "And they came to the other side of the sea, to the country of the Gadarenes. And as soon as He had left the ship, there met Him from out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit, who had his dwelling among the tombs; and no one had the power to restrain him even with chains; For he had often been bound with fetters and chains, but the chains had been torn to pieces by him, and the fetters had been shattered; and no one had the strength to subdue him. And continually, night and day, in the mountains and in the tombs, he was screaming and cutting himself with stones. But when he saw Jesus from afar, he ran and worshiped Him. And crying out with a loud voice, he said, "What have I to do with You, Jesus, Son of God the Most High? I adjure You by God, do not torment me."

For He was saying to it, "Unclean spirit, come out of the man." And He asked it, "What is your name?" And it answered, "My name is Legion, because we are many." And it begged Him again and again that He would not send them out of the country. Now near the mountain, there was a large herd of swine feeding; And all the demons pleaded with Him, saying, "Send us to the swine, so that we may enter into them." Then Jesus immediately permitted them to go. And the unclean spirits went out of the man and entered into the swine; and the herd stampeded down the steep slope into the sea (now they were about two thousand), and they all drowned in the sea. And those who were feeding the swine fled in fear and reported it in the city and in the country. Then they went out to see what it was that had been done. And they came to Jesus and saw the man who had been possessed by demons, the one who had the Legion, sitting and clothed and of a sound mind; and they were afraid. Then those who had seen it reported to them what had happened to the one who had been possessed by demons, and the things concerning the swine. And they began to urge Him to depart from their borders. **(Matt. 8:28-34, Luke 8:26-39)** (AFV).

Can you imagine that? A whole community going out to tell Jesus to basically "get lost, we don't want you here" after hearing and or witnessing the miracle He had just performed? The region's citizens should be grateful for this miracle, but the people only see a loss of income from the death of their animals. Seeking material

prosperity at the expense of true life, these men beg Jesus to leave. Preferring pigs and profit over The Savior and salvation. Were they afraid of Him or what they would have to give up? Sounds like today's society where an entire nation has told God to take a hike and where stupidity is considered almost a virtue.

But looking back through the Bible, this isn't the first-time human stupidity reveals itself. "No new thing under the sun." as Andrea always says from **Ecc. 1:9**. For example, the Nation of Israel that left Egypt. Throughout the Book of Exodus, they witnessed the plagues, the pillar of fire, the parting of the Red Sea, manna and so on and still had the diminished capacity to demand Aaron fashion a calf of gold! I'd call that stupid by any standard, but the Bible refers to it as rebellion.

Maybe there's a correlation between stupid and rebellion? (**Isa. 30:1, 9, Ezek.2:3, Dan. 9:9**) You decide. I always picture Edward G. Robinson's character of Dathan from the movie "The Ten Commandments" firing up the crowd with spews of lies and hate about Moses deserting them. I'm sure God's actual depiction of the immediate judgement was quite more theatric than Cecil B. Demille's version (**Exod. 32:26-28**).

Here we are 2000 years later and we're still telling The Lord, "Go away". In 200+ years, we went from an undeveloped wilderness to the number one industrial nation on Earth, founded on Biblical principles. In just a few decades, we've removed God from our schools, our government and from our churches and look

where we're at! In rejecting Christ, the people of the Gadarenes rejected the One Who sent Him (**John 13:20**). We're doing the same thing. I remember discussing the Sabbath with a pastor of a big Sunday church. He told me, "*We choose to honor Jesus by worshipping Him on a Sunday.*" Is he reading the same Bible? How can these so-called pastors and "Christians" be so stupid? Jesus kept the Sabbath as God's 4th Commandment tells us all too. They reject God and His Commandments for tradition (**Matt. 15:3, Mark 7:8-9, 13**). They still preach you go to heaven when you die, ignoring **Genesis 3:19** and **John 3:13**. Jesus never preached Jesus anyway, He was all about doing the will of God The Father (**Matt. 12:50, John 5:30**).

We are blessed to have the complete Bible. We may not have witnessed any miracles of a Red Sea class (Grandchildren to me are the best example of miracles) but "blessed are the ones who have not seen, but have believed."- **John 20:29**. God has imparted His wisdom to us through His Word and His Spirit. He gave us His only Son.

For lack of better terms, wisdom is key to not being stupid. It seems that most people choose to remain being stupid rather than seek wisdom. Just read the Psalms and Proverbs. All of them. I would say that if someone is reading them, they're on the right path to understanding but in speaking with that pastor, I think not. It's not yet their time. While we may not be able to fix stupid, we can correct

ignorance. “But sanctify the Lord God in your own hearts. And always be prepared to give an answer to anyone who asks you the reason for the hope *that is* in you, with meekness and reverence.”- **1 Peter 3:15**.

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