

By
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Jesus and Moses—A Modern Twist

A burglar was looking for goods and money to steal in an empty house while the homeowners were away. He was using only a small flashlight while making his search, so as to avoid lights being seen from the outside. As he searched the drawers of a credenza, he heard a voice say, “Jesus is watching you.”

Startled because he thought he was alone, the burglar quickly turned off his flashlight and stood frozen. When he didn’t hear anything else for a few minutes, the burglar turned his flashlight on and went back to work at his nefarious task. Then he heard the voice say again, “Jesus is watching you.”

Rather than switching off his light, he began directing the beam of light around the room, trying to find the source of the voice. After a moment, the burglar spotted a parrot on a perch. When he held his beam on the bird, the parrot repeated, “Jesus is watching you.”

The burglar made a sigh of relief and said, “You scared me to death. I’m glad you’re just a parrot. What’s your name?” The parrot responded, “Moses.” The burglar laughed and said, “Moses? What sort of people name their bird Moses?”

The parrot responded, “The same sort of people who name their Rottweiler Jesus.”

I’d say being detected and arrested by the police was the least of this burglar’s problems at the moment. Although this is a humorous story, there are actually some pretty good moral lessons to learn from here.

I was originally going to write about the seventh and tenth commandments. Instead, I decided to write about our belief in God, and Jesus watching us. No, I’m not making any comparison between Jesus and a dog. However, the observant mastiff in our story should remind us that Jesus is always watching us... even as we completely ignore Him.

We in the Western world take entirely too many things for granted. Unlike the people of Venezuela, we don’t know what it is to be hungry and have to eat from the garbage, so we take it for granted then we stop at a fast food store for a burger. Our transportation doesn’t limited us to being pedestrian, so we take it for granted that all we have to do is get into a vehicle, put it in “D” for “do it,” and take off—maybe to some place a hundred miles away. We take things for granted because we’re in a land of plenty, and those things just don’t seem worthy of a lot of consideration.

Some things we take for granted are really sort of superfluous, and our lives wouldn’t be all that impacted if they were suddenly gone. Computers suddenly gone? Resort to an old typewriter. TV and radio suddenly gone? Resort to reading a book. (Hey, that’s a novel idea! No pun intended)

If other things were suddenly gone we wouldn't know what to do or how to survive, because we've had those things all our lives and yet never given them a second thought. After all, how many of us would be able to survive if grocery stores suddenly disappeared?

We grew up in a land where we just took for granted that God is real, because the people in our lives we most trusted and loved (usually our parents) told us He exists. But do we *really* believe it? That was a question recently asked of seminarians by Archbishop Charles Chaput at the Pontifical College Josephinum in Columbus, Ohio. (Archbishop Chaput is one of my favorite bishops!)

During his address, Archbishop Chaput said, "Do we really believe in Jesus Christ or not? That's the central question in our lives. Everything turns on the answer. Because if our Christian faith really grounds and organizes our lives, then we have no reason to fear, and we have every reason to hope."

What a stunning question to ask seminarians at the Josephinum. An affirmative answer comes so easily for most of us. Of course we believe in Jesus Christ. We say so every Sunday during the Creed. But Archbishop Chaput adds the important qualifier: do we *really* believe in Jesus Christ? He asks us to go beyond mere words recited by rote. There are consequences to believing in Jesus Christ. Most modern Catholics don't think about that, though.

Do we really believe that God became man? Do we really believe that Jesus Christ is that man? When we bow during the Creed at the words, "was incarnate of the Virgin Mary and became man," do we know and believe why we mark these words?

According to surveys (I rely on those a lot), there is now a majority of people who attend Mass for social reasons rather than to worship God. The implication is, even a majority of Mass-attending Catholics no longer believe in God. Sad! I don't want to believe it, but there seems to be plenty of evidence in support of this.

God is real, and it can be *proven*. No, not with empirical evidence. Empirical evidence is just that: evidence. Empirical evidence can be used in *support* of a truth, but it's not *proof* in and of itself. It takes a preponderance of evidence to establish proof, and empirical evidence isn't preponderance. It's just one type of evidence. There are also things like logic and right reason, things several generations haven't been taught. (Just visit any college campus for proof of that.)

We mostly live as if God doesn't exist... and I suppose it's because we don't really believe in Him. People tell me all the time that you have to accept that God exists on faith, as if faith has no substance. But faith *does* have substance. Faith isn't some sort of ideal, but rather it's a real thing. You can't hold it in your hand anymore than you can hold air, but air is real. Unlike air, though, you can hold God in your hand. During the Mass when a priest celebrates the sacrifice, he holds God in his hand every single day.

The Church and the world are in a turmoil unlike any other time in known history. At a time when we need God more than ever, we're turning away from Him more than ever. It's time for us to renew ourselves in a commitment to God. If we don't renew our commitment, we may as well give ourselves over to despair and, like Job's friends advised him, curse God and die. *Nothing* is more important in life than God—not family, nor friends, nor jobs, nor possessions—nothing. Of course, that only matters if we can constantly remind ourselves that Jesus is watching us. Visit JoeSixpackAnswers.com to get a free email course (*very* popular) and webinar invitations.