

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

Letters to The Editor

What Does the Bible Say on Race?

Dear Editor,

The word race is only found four times in the Authorized King James Version of the Bible. All of those times it refers to running a foot race. I happen to be white because my parents were white. I had nothing to do with it. When I told my little grandson that God chooses exactly how He wants everyone to look, he said "That's a lot of picking out to do!" Sometimes I wish I could ask many black people, "Do you truly feel inferior to me?" It is a sad fact that most aborted babies are black. All of these babies go straight to Heaven! I pray in thy wrath remember mercy.

As a little girl in Sunday school, we sang "Red and yellow, black and white, they are precious in His sight." Our churches have sent hundreds of missionaries all over the world to tell them about Jesus! My son served in Kenya for two years. My husband took two construction mission trips to Ghana and our congregation paid for an entire church building to be constructed in Uganda.

No one in my family nor my husband's family owned slaves. As in this and all issues, I go to the Word of God. God made the various languages at the tower of Babel. I believe that because the first institution God made was the family, when He confounded the languages, He made sure that each family spoke the same one. It is also interesting to note that He made the boundaries of the nations! I have often wondered why the United Nations doesn't simply go to the Bible to see the boundaries of the land He promised to the children of Israel. They will have it all some day soon! Next to Israel, no nation has been blessed by God more than the United States of America. We have been a friend to Israel.

God also promised that He will take care of His own creation until He purges it with fire! See Genesis 8:22. In these difficult days, we must remember that we have read the end of the Book! Revelation 4:11 Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things and for thy glory they are and were created. 5:9 And they sang a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.

The Gospel message runs from Genesis 3:15 to Revelation 22:17. Whosoever will, let him come!

Respectfully submitted,
Kathy Norton

Joe Biden's History of Plagiarism

Dear Editor,

In the recent Vice Presidential debate, in case you missed it, VP Mike Pence alluded to Biden's plagiarism with respect to his strategy to counteract the Covid-19 pandemic, which is almost identical to President Trump's. Pence said "it looks a lot like plagiarism, which is something Joe Biden knows a little bit about."

Now what exactly was VP Pence referring to? Well Sleepy Joe has quite a history when it comes to plagiarism. And it is well documented. As a student at Syracuse Law School in 1965, Biden plagiarized 5-pages from a law review journal "without quotation or attribution." During his failed 1988 presidential campaign, Biden plagiarized from speeches by British politician Neil Kinnock, Robert Kennedy, and President John F. Kennedy. In his 2020 Presidential campaign Biden is at it again - lifting ideas, slogans, and writings to pass off as his own. Biden's campaign has used "word-for-word" language from other groups as part of his climate and education policy papers. The newly released recommendations from the "Biden-Sanders Unity Task Force" takes whole sections straight from Bernie Sanders' campaign platform and Biden's "Build Back Better" slogan is a phrase coined by Bill Clinton in 2006. And, you guessed it, Biden's economic plan seems eerily similar to President Donald Trump's "America First" message. Joe Biden has plagiarized from speeches, essays, and policy positions throughout his entire life. The only conclusion one can make about Joe Biden he's nothing more than a 47-year career politician and empty suit, willing to say and do anything to fulfill his personal political ambitions. I wouldn't be surprised if you looked the word "plagiarize" up in the dictionary and found Biden's picture there.

Tim Groza

Draft Dodger Don

Dear Editor,

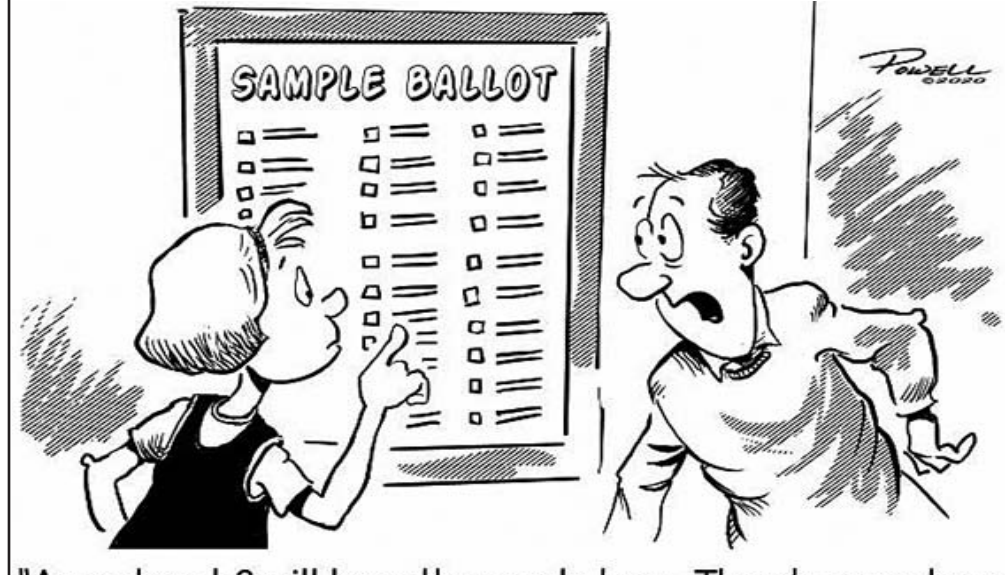
"America's enemies must never know our plans or believe they can wait us out." Donald Trump 2017 in a speech critiquing President Obama for "telegraphing" when the United States might withdraw troops. "We should have the small remaining number of our BRAVE Men and Women serving in Afghanistan home by Christmas." Donald Trump 2020 in an announcement Thursday which earned praise from the Taliban. Once again we see Draft-Dodger Don playing politics with our national security, showing he has no core values or beliefs when it comes to protecting America from its enemies. We probably should expect this of a rich kid who played dress-up soldier at a preppy academy and now believes he is smarter than the generals who actually served. Consider how he used and then demeaned our military leaders: Generals Mattis ("overrated general"), Kelly ("he was way over his head"), McChrystal ("big, dumb mouth"), and many others. I understand that Americans are free to criticize their military leaders. My father-in-law hated "Dougout" Doug. But he earned the right to do that by putting on a Marine uniform and serving on Guadalcanal. President Bone Spurs never earned the right.

Trump repeatedly demonstrates he is not fit to lead. A commander accepts responsibility for those he sends into battle. The President Truman kept a sign on his desk reminding him "The Buck Stops Here." Trump believes his job is to pass the buck. When Navy SEAL Ryan Owens died during a mission personally authorized by Trump, Trump said this: "[the Generals] lost Ryan." Where is the shame in this person who refuses to take responsibility for the life of one who followed his orders, calls our service men and women suckers and losers, stands at the grave of our war dead and questions their sacrifice, seeks to hide those who bear the scars of combat, and praises a dictator who put a bounty on our soldiers' heads?

No Trump - not his draft-dodging grandfather, his stay-at-home dad, Donald, nor his adult sons - served a day in the military. We have a name for such people. Military service, of course, is not a prerequisite to being President, unless as President you are pretending to be a military genius even as you contradict your own strategy and insult those who actually served and sacrificed to defend our nation.

David Plunkett

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"Amendment 2 will keep the courts busy. There's never been a law yet that somebody doesn't think is unconstitutional."

Enemy Thine

Enemy Mine is a 1985 science fiction classic starring Dennis Quaid and Louis Gossett Jr. The plot revolves about two enemy combatants: a human played by Quaid and an alien played by Gossett, who are forced to work together to survive. They become friends over time, and their friendship ultimately helps to end a brutal war.

When I bother to scan social media and the mainstream headlines these days, and this happens much less frequently than in years past, the prevalent theme seems to be "enemy thine." Everywhere I turn there is someone willing to tell me who I should hate and why. This is not an unusual condition in the context of the volatile record of human history. It's certainly not unknown to American history. But it does not bode well for a society which has prided itself on its egalitarian values and melting pot abilities.

We've wrestled with this issue here over the last several years. We've lamented the stubbornly self-limiting paradigm of that persistent false dichotomy of left versus right, but now there are enemies everywhere: Young versus old, urban versus rural, black versus white and white versus everyone else.

You know what I'm talking about. If you consume media at all, it's almost impossible to avoid. We've always been a contentious species and our nation was born out of confrontation, but in my lifetime I have not seen this level of hatred for a people against its own members.

First, I want to have a word with those of you on the "right." Shame on you. You claim that Christianity informs your values. Excellent. Lets run with that. The Bible says to love your enemies, pray for them and treat them with kindness. I'm not seeing that in your Facebook posts, your tweets and your opinion pages. Only God can judge the hearts, minds and characters of the people you seem intent on herding together and labeling as "liberals," "leftists," and "socialists."

"Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen." Does that sound familiar? It's written in the same Book you're using to condemn your neighbors, but if you pick and choose the instructions you decide to follow, don't you think that cheapens your brand? Dilutes your message?

On the left, there seems to be some difficulty with definitions and a blind eye to hypocrisy. Shame on you. Let's start with "prejudice." The definition most often bandied about is one from Webster, which defines the word as "an irrational attitude of hostility directed against an individual, a group, a race, or their supposed characteristics." You pride yourself on your egalitarian values and claim to desire equality, but you have no problem with statements like "All white people are by definition, racist." How often have you used the word, "redneck" this year? Do you think all republicans carry assault rifles? Are all black people who need your help to overcome everyone else's prejudice?

"I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character." Does that sound familiar? It was spoken by Martin Luther King Jr., whose words and vision have informed the advancement of equality for two generations.

Back and forth like a seesaw on a playground, the insults have flown from election to election. The "left" was incensed by the disrespect shown to President Obama by the "right" during his administration. Now the right complains about the venom directed at President Trump. But he started it. No, she did.

We are not children on a playground, despite our willingness to act like them, but words can wound us just as deeply, and our toys and our abilities are much more dangerous to each other than what can be found on a playground. Neither are we engaged in a conflict with alien life forms. Our hatred is directed at human beings who are genetically almost identical to us.

It's unfortunate that history tells so many stories of people brought together by a common enemy. Perhaps we have not advanced past such a need to resolve our own conflicts. In truth, we do have common enemies. We are suspended together on a tiny blue dot on the outer rim of a galaxy which is also a tiny dot in the vastness of space. We have crowded and consumed and poisoned our little home to the limits of its ability to provide a safe haven for us. We have our faith, our ideas and our hopes. These are powerful, but invisible. Ephemeral. All we have that we can touch and hold, and the only thing standing between us and the vastness of space, the loneliness of eternal time, is this earth, and each other.

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Stink Bugs

We are in that time of year when stinkbugs start to move indoors. They can be a real annoyance. Let's talk about where these bugs came from and what you can do to keep them from becoming a big pest in your house.

The stinkbugs that are trying to get inside your house are most likely brown marmorated stinkbugs (BMSB), Halyomorpha halys. We have some other species of stinkbugs, like green stinkbugs, but these other species are not normally a pest inside the house. BMSB are brown as their name implies, but to really be able to tell them from other brown stinkbugs you have to look at their antennae. BMSB will have dark antennae with light bands on them. Part of the reason why these BMSB are such a pest is that they are an invasive species. They originally are from Asia, and first arrived to the US in Pennsylvania sometime before 1998.

One of the things that makes BMSB such a bad pest is that they aren't only a pest in the home, but during the growing season they're a pest to a lot of fruit and vegetable crops too. Stinkbugs feeding on the fruit of plants causes that fruit to not develop properly. Apples and peaches will have 'cat facing' or sunken spots on them. Beans and okra will have deformed pods, and tomatoes will get spongy areas. Stink bug damage doesn't always mean that the produce is inedible, but it does make it more difficult for the farmer to sell, because it doesn't look as nice.

BMSB mate in the spring, so there is not a concern that they are reproducing in your house, even though it may seem like they're multiplying. They don't feed inside your home either. Their mouth is like a needle that sucks up juices, so they can't eat building materials.

The first step to keeping them from becoming a pest inside your home is exclusion. Seal up cracks around windows, doors, pipes, and any other spots with a good caulk to block their entry. Insecticides around the exterior of the house will help temporarily, but may not be effective beyond a few days or a week.

Vacuuming BMSB is an efficient method, but it can cause your vacuum to stink temporarily. An alternative is to put some pantyhose over the vacuum tube secured with a rubber band. Stuff the pantyhose down the vacuum tube to keep the bugs from entering the vacuum bag. Once you've vacuumed up some BMSB drop them into some soapy water and they'll drown.

Using an aerosol fogger may kill BMSB, but it won't keep more from entering the house and emerging. Always use care when using pesticides. Make sure you follow the label entirely. Pesticides will only provide brief respite and can lead to more carpet beetles that feed on the dead stinkbugs and then feed on woolens or stored dry goods.

Some homemade traps are quite effective at trapping stinkbugs. One of them uses a foil roasting pan, filled with soapy water. Simply point a desk lamp at the pan, and stinkbugs will find their way in there and not be able to get out.

If you have questions about stinkbugs contact your County Extension Office or send me an email at Jacob.Williams@uga.edu.

UGA extension
Watching and Working
Jacob Williams



One of God's Lambs

Part II - More than likely, Jim's positive attitude and work ethics as a child and teenager, prepared him for his USAF career and being assigned to the US Army VNAF unit as an advisor. Thus assigned to living and working with the hard working and humble South Vietnamese farmers was a natural fit. He also served in Guam, before retiring out of Okinawa.

Jim had learned a lot growing up in South Florida with little to his name in the way of material wealth. He and other younger ones had earned their money by taking their bicycles down to coastal areas, catching and selling fish. As such Jim made friends with a charter boat captain and was promoted to 3rd mate, then 2nd mate at age 13-14! He was actually running the charter boat afterwards. Then with training from the charter boat captain and officially with the USCG classes under his belt he earned his Captain's License at age 16! Jim really understands a lot about our USCG and efforts in Vietnam to keep our forces supplied with materials, food and supplies in those lowland areas. Thanks to another Veteran who KNOWS who we really are and what we do! Often a rarity.

Leaving the USAF in 1981, Jim never lost his roots. He went to work at Homestead and worked at one of the largest tomato farm and packaging industries in America. Maintaining packaging equipment and supplies thereof lasted for four years. Then on to Sarasota! He became a supervisor for the golf course at Long Boat Key.

With family in North GA, Jim and his wonderful outgoing wife, Margaret soon found Hiawassee and love it here. Unfortunately for us, due to inevitable age related issues, Jim and Margaret have had to sell their summer home here, and establish their final home back in Sarasota, reducing their time here to a month or so in the summer.

Upon inquiring as to what military service awards and ribbons Jim was most proud of he quickly told me that it was his civilian award presented by the Governor of Florida's board called "Florida Veteran's Hall of Fame". Only for those Veterans who have gone above and beyond to serve their community after military life. Jim works year 'round on the Sarasota County Toys for Tots campaign which is a part of his perpetual life's mission, "Giving Back".

Jim enthusiastically left me with this message, "We NEED to get back to our old standards of love and respect for America, our military and our Flag!" Plus he wisely advised that there's not a single one of us rich or poor who didn't have at least some one in our lives that helped us along the way. So "GIVE BACK!"

He also gave America some fine kids, three sons, one retired from USAF, working on heads-up displays for AF pilots; one who is a Sheriff's Deputy; and one who is a successful Computer "geek".

Jim is a Life Member of the VFW and a twenty year plus member of our American Legion and we will always enjoy his company during his summer visits. - *Semper Paratus*

The Veterans' Corner
Scott Drummond
USCG Veteran



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