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“Good Luck Getting into Heaven”

Sunday, December 28, 2014

At first I only heard the first two words. I had been running and I thought that the man I encountered during my cool down was encouraging me to keep going.

“Excuse me,” I asked and he repeated all 5 words.

You see, I was wearing a T-Shirt with our church’s logo on it.

My tradition is different than his and his response was to condemn a perfect stranger.

How sad! To any outside observer we both looked like we have the same background. Our traditions are NOT all that different. It made me wonder if there was any hope for world peace.

I won’t include the rest of our conversation, but when he repeated his 5 words, I responded with 5 of my own.

“Yes, I’m counting on it!”

Perhaps world peace depends on all “people of good will” from all traditions and backgrounds making their voices heard. Can we drown out the hate?

Note: I had intended to keep this incident to myself, but after reading another wonderful blog by OneKidsMom (Dec 26th) I just decided to put it out there.

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**1STBUCKETITEM**

Good answer!
2355 days ago

**GUBBINAL**

I am so sorry that happened to you. The whole thing is upsetting and you handled it beautifully. I would have fumed and fretted. Stick with your convictions! You behaved with grace.
2355 days ago

**SMALL_WORLD**

I'm always taken aback when perfect strangers feel the need to comment about anything personal, it's very confusing to me.

I'm sorry you had to deal with that, especially during a time when you should have been riding those exercise-endorphins!
2355 days ago

**CD13376265**

While I grew up with religion, I now consider myself a spiritual atheist but I do have respect for others' beliefs. I still adhere to keeping religion and politics out of most conversation, especially with strangers. Too bad we don't have a jerk repelling force field around us. It would have come in handy. His reaction to your t-shirt says a lot about him. What a narrow, frightening way to view the world.



2355 days ago

Comment edited on: 12/31/2014 3:49:50 PM

**LINDAKAY228**

Unfortunately there are always going to be those that feel they have to say something negative. No matter how much God wants to help them or how much we want world peace, some people just won't let it be for them. Glad you were able to keep your cool. Thanks for sharing.
2356 days ago

**PHEBESS**

Wow. Just, wow.

I never know what to say to people like that. I'm always so taken aback that someone would speak to a stranger about something so personal, that someone would be so judgmental, and the sheer ignorance behind the statement in the first place.

Your response was reasonable. I'm not sure I'd have done the same. I don't think he'd have done the same, had someone said that to him.

And it makes me sad that somehow so many people think their way is the ONLY way. Religious fanaticism doesn't work, you'd think people could figure that out.
2357 days ago

**MARYJEANSL**

Very sad that he would treat you that way. Unfortunately, there are a lot of people who feel that way...probably not so many who would speak up to a stranger about it. I probably would have been rude to him, and then been mad at myself for acting as unchristian as he did.
2357 days ago

**WALLAHALLA**

I probably would have told him my faith didn't rely on luck, and I was sorry that his did. Sounds like you handled the situation very gracefully.
2357 days ago

**PHOENIX1949**

I like your style. Well done.
2357 days ago

**SUBMOM2**

Good for you for thinking up a civilized response! Sadly, this guy was out looking for a fight. Too bad for him.



2357 days ago

**DR1939**

I'm not quite so nice as you. My response would have/has been "I'll pray for you" often followed by a specific instance. And I have stopped and prayed aloud for such people. I learned this from my greatgrandmother who was an itinerant Pentacostal preacher at a time when women were not allowed to preach.
2357 days ago

**SYLPHINPROGRESS**

There was a rancor in his tone? Not whimsy? Then that man has to go through life being



himself.
2357 days ago



GINIEMIE

I know when I moved to the South I met several people condemning me for my faith. They were "Christians". We do need to get past that, listen to each other and find the common ground.

Love the "Are you saved?" question. To which I respond, Yes, I'm living my Faith.



2357 days ago



WATERMELLEN

Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me. Sing it, Gladys Knight -- my fave version! You gave the "soft answer" which "turneth away wrath" absolutely . . . but without backing down.

As a reverent agnostic (and from a culture which generally views all types of formal religion quite differently than do our neighbours to the south), I can say a whole-hearted Amen to this one!

2357 days ago



WILSONWR

What a terrible experience! I would have been so shocked that I don't know how I would have responded. Why he felt it necessary to say anything at all is beyond me. The world can be such a happier place if we all just show respect and kindness for one another.

2357 days ago



HOLLYM48

Good heavens is all I can say. Why would a perfect stranger who doesn't know you from Adam say such a stupid thing. It takes all kinds I guess. I am glad you came up with 5 great words as a come back.

2357 days ago



TRAVELGRRL

I HATE all the vitriol on Facebook this time of year between the "Merry CHRISTmas" people and the "Happy Holidays" people.

I think the best response to ANY holiday greeting, whether it's Kwanzaa, Christmas, Hanukkah, non religious, etc, should be

THANK YOU!

That's IT!

What a jerk you encountered.

2357 days ago



BBEAGAN

Ack, yuck! makes one want to keep the earphones in and just nod and smile at strangers, eh?

2357 days ago



CD4114015

Glad you did! I agree with you there are MANY people that just want to JUDGE! SO sorry you had to run into this unfortunate man. I feel sorry for him and will pray for him! Thanks for sharing!

2357 days ago



2BDYNAMIC

Rather frightening this stranger was so aggressive and totally inappropriate! I have some apprehension about walking or running alone for this and more reasons. There are too many strange strangers out there any more Be sAfe!

2357 days ago



MISCHAKEO

I like that people of good will. That man was a jerk and did not respect your beliefs. You gave him a great answer. Insecure controlling people feel the need to put others down. I am sorry you ran into him. Hugs.

2357 days ago



ALICIA363

What a classless jerk! (So much for not judging.)

My mother waged peace, and taught us to, as well. Peace begins with manners and civility, including but not limited to, "If you don't have anything nice to say, don't say anything at all."

That being said, I think back to an incident where a student's father and I smiled and nodded at each other for an unusually long time before speaking. I think we were both being mannerly. We were aware of each other's culture, so I was allowing him (the male) to speak first, and he was allowing me (the American female) to speak first. Although our rules for manners differed, it was a peace-promoting interaction!
2357 days ago



ONEKIDSMOM

I started reading this and saw a kindred spirit in your words... Peace on Earth begins one



person at a time!

Oh, and my favorite "heaven" story is from my own family's history. We have a very religiously eclectic family, ranging from a Catholic nun (grandma's sister the sister) on one side, to a Christian Science practitioner (grandma on one side) to relatively newly converted Jews... you get the idea. Well, my fundamentalist uncle was dying of cancer... and at that stage where he was seeing the departed... right at the curtain wall. He joyfully greeted people who'd gone on before... from ALL the religious traditions!



Makes a body have hope, no? God is indeed no respecter of persons...!

2357 days ago

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