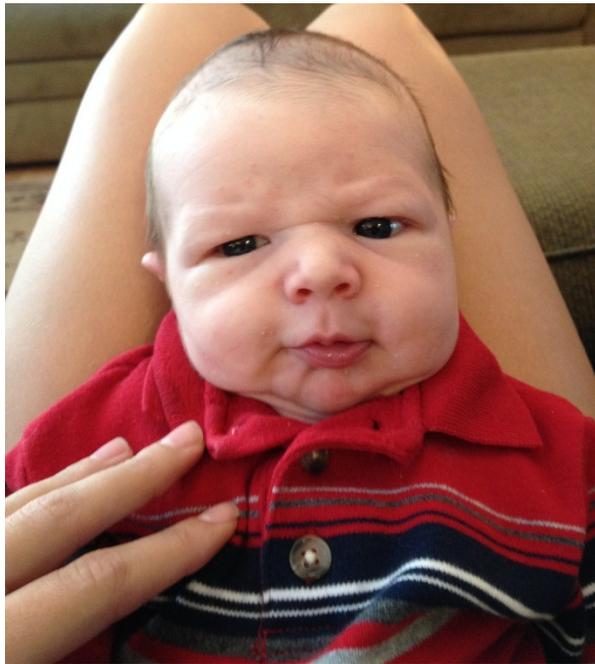


This past Sunday was the beginning of Daylight Savings Time in Brazil, that means we leapt forward in time and I lost a corresponding hour of sleep. Not a big deal, it happens to (almost) all of us, the positive side is we all get to sleep in an extra hour come the fall. The problem is I was in the US earlier this year when Daylight Savings Time started in the US, this means I have gone through two consecutive periods where I lost an hour (remember, Brazil is in the southern hemisphere so their seasons are swapped). It gets worse! I will be back in the US in the spring to lose yet another hour next year! This means that by March of next year I will effectively be 3 hours ahead of everyone else. I think I may have finally figured



**Clearly Jack was not pleased with the outcome of the Oklahoma - Texas game a couple of weeks ago.**

out this whole time traveling thing.

In other news, I discovered this week that I may be in the wrong line of work. During the morning meeting with my crew, we discussed how a protestor in Argentina recently retired from his job receiving full benefits and a pension (or at least a type of it). This man worked a 9-5 job for 25 years receiving lunch breaks, coffee breaks, paid holidays, and paid vacation the whole time. What did he do for a living, you might ask. He was a professional picketer. That's right, he made a living by protesting... and apparently it was a pretty good living. What's even more hilarious is that apparently this is not an uncommon career in Argentina.

This week presented me with an interesting situation that I am still processing my feelings about. I posted a comment on a FB post at an attempt to be humorous, but which was, in retrospect, a touch insensitive. One of my readers, in a very loving and graceful manner, confronted me about the comment. While I acknowledge that I was wrong it got me thinking about how I write. A lot of my humor can probably be described as sarcastic wit or self-deprecating, and while there is nothing wrong with the latter sometimes people can be hurt by the former. I try very hard to avoid sarcastic wit where it is directed towards someone (that's called making fun of them), rather I try to reserve my comments for myself or my situation, which some might be considered self-deprecating, but there is a subtle difference. While I do try, I'm not always successful and that's what I'm really wrestling with; where's the line?

Scripture gives us a little bit of guidance in the form of Proverbs 26:18-19 and Ephesians 4:29. Proverbs says that "Like a madman who throws firebrands, arrows, and death is the man who deceives his neighbor and says, 'I am only joking!'" The last phrase of this verse is more enlightening than anything else; it would seem that Proverbs is fairly clear about humor where you have to step back and say "Just kidding!" To put it in perspective, this type of humor is like giving an untrained crazy person an M16 and sending him out to battle; he's not only dangerous to his enemies, he's a danger to his friends as well. Ok, fine, but what about situations where the humor is implied and should be obvious? Stepping back

into my previous analogy, is the crazy guy any less dangerous if his friends assume he's in the military? No, in this case, his friends' assumptions are wrong and it would probably make him all the more dangerous because their assumptions have caused them to be a little more relaxed around this guy than they would a complete stranger.

Ephesians provides further enlightenment on the matter. "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." I've spent a significant amount of time studying this verse in previous years and it is still incredible to me how much is said in so few words... unlike myself who has mastered the art of saying in a thousand words what could have been said in ten. I could spend a number of pages going over how this applies to our everyday speech, but I think the part that is really pertinent to what we are discussing is "but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs." Building others... that speaks to a constructive act; as much as I enjoy sarcastic wit, it is often a destructive act, relying on others' weaknesses or faults to make a joke.

So what does this mean for me? Honestly, it does not represent a significant change, though it does give me a slightly different view on writing satire and sarcasm. I do not view either one as a bad thing, merely things that one has to take great care with when writing. There is a great responsibility that is placed on the writer so that a single careless thought or idea is not transposed into something hurtful or damaging to others. So SR, thank you for approaching me with grace, I appreciate the correction and the corresponding study of Scripture that it led me to.

sat·ire  
/səˈtɪr/

*noun*

noun: **satire**

1. the use of humor, irony, exaggeration, or ridicule to expose and criticize people's stupidity or vices, particularly in the context of contemporary politics and other topical issues.