

HAPPY FATHER'S DAY

Or Lucky Me!

My earliest memory of my father is of playing hide n seek when I was 3 or 4, and he hid me on the high shelf in the coat closet, piling coats on top of me. Did they ever find me? I presume so, since I'm not there anymore. Duh! At that time, we lived in Lafayette in the Bay Area where Gommel (my dad) had worked during and after completing his schooling at Cal Berkeley (eww).

Since my father's young adulthood was spent climbing in business (steel pipe fabricating), we moved all over the place. After Lafayette, we lived in Whittier and then Fullerton, where he and my mother built their "dream house", which we lived in only a few months, because we had to move again.

The next stop was in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada so that he (Gommel) could design, build, and run a brand new pipe mill, which he did for 3 years. He had all the trappings of success: a company car, a good income, a hobby farm of 360 acres, a nice house, and travel across Canada and to Europe, hobnobbing with politicians, business leaders, and the Germans who were half owners of the pipe mill. The Germans were delighted



guts and courage!

So Gommel struggled for months with what to do about his newfound relationship with God and decided to go to seminary in Indianapolis, Indiana. That experience, plus 5 years as a minister in churches, convinced him that church was not for him. After one more year of trying organized religion with Campus Crusade for Christ in San Bernardino, CA., he knew God wanted him free to obey and follow Him without the constraints of institutional religion (churchianity).

He continued to lead a group of believers who shared that conviction, but since he felt led to earn his way and carry his weight financially, he (and we, by that time) decided that God wanted him (us) to run a little store, The Hitchin Post, in Reche Canyon, Colton, and then later, Lucerne Valley Market, in – well, guess!

Over the 45 years in which he ran the two stores, he utilized his construction background gained from my grandfather who was a contractor in Orange; his engineering and leadership skills learned in the steel business; and his pastoral training from seminary. Talk about a whole bunch of knowledge,

expertise, wisdom, experience all in one man! (And I'm not biased, I promise, but I feel so LUCKY [blessed] to have had such a dad!)

For a long time I have been collecting what I call "Gommelisms", things he would say that typified his convictions and his desire to teach others right spirit and God's Spirit. Some are self explanatory. Others may require my oh-so-expert interpretation.

Gommel-isms.

1. **It's the spirit, it's the spirit, it's the spirit!** The example Gommel would give: tell a dog how bad he is in soft, affectionate tones, and

he'll wag his tail in appreciation. Tell him how good he is in an angry tone, and he'll slink off into the corner. Even a dog can read the spirit in your voice.

2. **When the spirit is right, everything is right. When the spirit isn't right, nothing is right.**

You can make mistakes, but if you are humble and really want to do right, it comes out ok. If, on the other hand, you grind your teeth and do what is asked to the letter of the law, but protesting inside every step of the way, then you get nowhere. Sounds kinda like a teenager, doesn't it?

3. **The more words, the less truth.** Lots of times we try to hide our deceptions or games behind a flurry of words, hoping the words cover our real motives. The less sure we are of our position, the more words we put out there for more cover.

4. **Speak in telegrams.** Quit wasting everyone's time beating around the bush! Just say it!!!!

5. **Say what you mean and mean what you say.** See #3 and #4 above. Think clearly so that you speak clearly, and then follow through and give your words integrity by your actions.

6. **Do something, even if it's wrong!** Sometimes the only thing you can do, after much consideration and fussing (if you're like me), is something, anything, just so long as you take action. And lots of times, when you thought it was wrong, it turns out right. #6a is related: **S - - or get off the pot!**

7. **Sin boldly.** Almost the same as #6, quoted from Martin Luther. What you are about to do may seem like a sin, but do it with all your might. Step out. Take a chance. It could be great.

8. **Let's not meet to "talk about" XYZ, let's DECIDE.** As you may have noticed, Gommel was allergic to needless talk and always favored action.

9. **Wake up and die right!** Pay attention! Be mindful of what you're doing. Be considerate.

10. **Following God is something else!** Gommel came to know that following God was something completely other than conventional religious involvements. Following God means committing your whole

life, your will, your future, everything, to God with total abandon, going where He leads, no matter what that is or what it means. He felt freed when he realized this, freed from the shackles of religion.

I'm out of space and Kathryn will kill me if I make this too long, but there's one more, the most classic Gommelism of all: **"Peachy Keen!"** And it so often was followed by **"Are YOU peachy keen?"** because he really cared to know how the other person was doing.

So Happy Father's Day from one who was blessed with the best father in the world, who himself pointed the way to our eternal Father, the One Who is truly BEST and invites us to spend eternity with Him.

Linda Gommel

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE

From the Web.

After a preacher died and went to heaven, he noticed that a New York cab driver had been awarded a higher place than he.

"I don't understand," he complained to God. "I devoted my entire life to my congregation."

"Our policy here in heaven is to reward results," God explained. "Now, was your congregation well attuned to you whenever you gave a sermon?"

"Well," the minister had to admit, "some in the congregation fell asleep from time to time."

"Exactly," said God, "and when people rode in this man's taxi, they not only stayed awake, they even prayed."

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SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Household Hazardous Waste & E-Waste Collection

SATURDAY, June 24, 9A to Noon. Free disposal of household hazardous waste (Antifreeze, Batteries, Motor Oil & Oil Filters, latex paint only, medical needles, fluorescents, and all electronic wastes.) Behind LV Fire Station, 33269 Old Woman Springs Road. For info call 1-800-OILY CAT.

IMPORTANT PUBLIC

SCOPING MEETING Tues., June 13, 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. at Lucerne Valley Community Center. To solicit public comments on the scope and content of the [Environmental Impact Report] on the massive installation (450+ acres) planned by NextEra on the side of Ord Mountain. This project may open up the possibly of the Calcite Substation again.

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when my folks brought them out to the farm and barbecued thick, juicy T-bone steaks for them. They had not done that before.

Then suddenly it changed. American friends in Edmonton nagged my dad to come to their church and so he finally did. There the minister patiently listened and answered the struggling questions posed by Gommel, and then he read the book of Luke in the New Testament of the Bible. He met a Jesus much different than the one he'd been taught about all his life and thought, I can follow this Jesus! He was a man's man, with