

Analogy

**Jesus, the master communicator, often used analogies to drive points home.
Below are modern examples of analogies.**

Blind leading the blind
Built upon the sand
Cold water bucket brigade

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Battery Life and Shining Lights

by Sarah Stirman

My new MP3 player goes with me everywhere: work, the gym, a walk in the neighborhood, and frequently the grocery store. I will pause the player while I talk to someone and have been known to then take it off and forget that it's even turned on. Fortunately, I invested in an MP3 player that has an automatic shut-off feature. However, I think I have come to realize that the automatic shut-off feature works like this: when the battery is completely dead, the player will shut itself off.



Now I just carry a stash of batteries in my purse and gym bag.

I was changing out the battery yet again and laughing at the not-very-handly automatic shut-off feature when I realized that humans have basically the same feature: we know it's time to take a break, go on "pause," only when we are forced to slow down due to illness, injury, or complete emotional exhaustion.

I am nursing a sprained ankle. I gave my ankle precisely 72 hours of tip-top care and rest and then said, "That's enough! It's time to get back to work!" That didn't work very well, so I set off as fast as my crutches could carry me -- back to the break-neck speed of life in my home. Then my 8 year-old came down with the flu. Neither he nor I have done a very good job of staying home and resting. Even when we are forced to slow down, we don't do it very well.

In a recent Bible class, we discussed the following question: "What activities keep you from drawing near to God?" We settled on this answer: all of them put together! Involved in this discussion were people active in church and our community. We spend our days and evenings in meeting after meeting, interspersed with other wonderful activities and

ministries. In the middle of it all, we can scarcely remember why we do it. I confessed that the hectic schedule and running through life is a tug and temptation to keep up with the world that is stronger for me than many other temptations.

It certainly isn't how Jesus conducted his ministry. John 6 gives us a snapshot in time when Jesus was at the top of his game: people were flocking to him to be healed and hear what he had to say. Thousands were gathered when he fed them all from a little boy's sack lunch. The divine leftovers were enough to fill a basket for each disciple to hold and feel the weight of his abundant blessings. People noticed and declared: "He must truly be the Prophet that is coming into the world."

John 6:14 ERV) What Jesus did next completely baffles me: "Jesus knew that the people wanted him to become king. The people planned to come get Jesus and make him their king. So Jesus left and went into the hills alone." (John 6:15)

There were thousands of people around him. Dozens, if not hundreds of them, needed a physical ailment healed. All needed to hear his words.

But Jesus knew his task on this earth, and he knew who had sent him. He knew he would be useless to all without time with his Father.

Jesus told us, "Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven." (Matthew 5:16 NASB) What if I'm not plugged into my power source, or have so little power I look like a flashlight on its last drop of battery power? I MUST fiercely protect my time to recharge and spend time with my God so that I may be His light so that others may see Him in me.

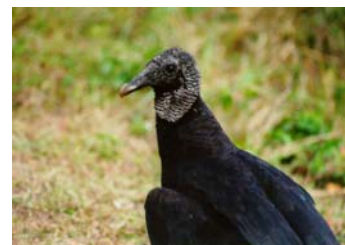
In order to do that, I will have to look a lot different from the people around me -- even the people at my church. My children may not play every sport available. I will have to sacrifice my pride of being sure that no one else will organize the fellowship meal as well as I would. I may have to humbly admit that fewer activities -- even the activities that I suggested and/or planned -- at my church and more real time with the Lord is what will allow me to be His light. I will finally have to realize that truly knowing Him, not continually DOING, will lead me to be His light.

Maybe then I will "withdraw to a mountain by myself" before I completely run out of power!

Buzzard, Bat, Bumblebee, and People

BUZZARD

If you put a buzzard in a pen that is 6 feet by 8 feet and is entirely open at the top, the bird, in spite of its ability to fly, will be an absolute prisoner. The reason is that a buzzard always begins a flight from the ground with a run of 10 to 12 feet. Without space to run, as is its habit, it will not even attempt to fly, but will remain a prisoner for life in a small jail with no top.



BAT

The ordinary bat that flies around at night, a remarkably nimble creature in the air, cannot take off from a level place. If it is placed on the floor or flat ground, all it can do is shuffle about helplessly and, no doubt, painfully, until it reaches some slight elevation from which it can throw itself into the air. Then, at once, it takes off like a flash.

BUMBLEBEE

A bumblebee, if dropped into an open tumbler, will be there until it dies, unless it is taken out. It never sees the means of escape at the top, but persists in trying to find some way out through the sides near the bottom. It will seek a way where none exists, until it completely destroys itself.

PEOPLE

In many ways, we are like the buzzard, the bat, and the bumblebee. We struggle about with all our problems and frustrations, never realizing that all we have to do is look up.

It Is Like

It's like a broken down ambulance

It's like a farmer

It's like a fishing hook

It's like a fishing hook without any bait

It's like a reoccurring nightmare.

It's like a series of waves.

It's like a soldier

It's like a steel trap.

It's like an athlete

It's like an empty firetruck

It's like an unbreakable wall

It's like an unsinkable ship

It's like being in a movie.

It's like competing in the Olympics.

It's like eggnog, but healthy.

It's like fishing with a net.

It's like going to the dentist.

It's like harnessing a racehorse to a plough.

It's like herding cats.

It's like in Narnia.

It's like living in enemy-occupied territory

It's like ploughing through concrete.

It's like riding a wave.

It's like running a race.

It's like spiritual amnesia

It's like spiritual cancer.

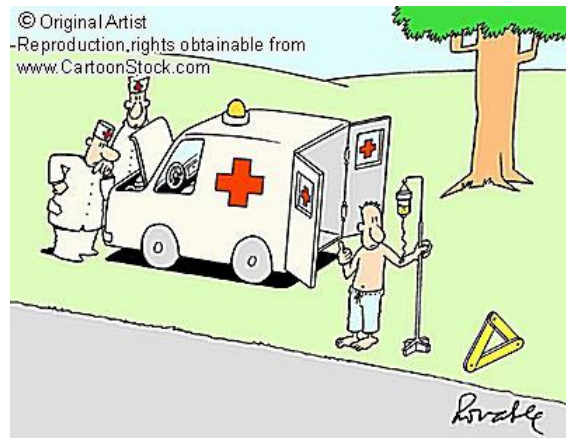
It's like spiritual armour.

It's like the storm troopers of secularism.

It's like the weakest link.

It's like trying to function as a "five and dime" store in an E-Bay world.

It's like winning the World Series.



So It Is in Life

Only one wrong turn can land you miles from your intended destination. So it is in life, one seemingly unimportant wrong decision can wreck havoc.

When there is enough pain we go to the dentist. So it is that the pain in life brings us to God.

When you have car problems you take your car to the repair shop where they plug it into a computer: it's remove and replace. So it is that God wants to remove the habits of the old nature and replace them with the new nature.

Christian living requires a 3-D commitment: the single-mindedness of a soldier, the discipline of an athlete, and the hard-worker of a farmer (2 Tim. 2:1-7).

Christian living is like the single-minded soldier, the highly disciplined athlete, and the hard-working farmer.

Cold water bucket brigade