

Forty summers in the Word

This article is from the “Edifying the Body” section of the Church of God Big Sandy’s Web site, churchofgodbig sandy.com. It was posted for the weekend of Aug. 21–22, 2010.

By Lenny Cacchio

LEE’S SUMMIT, Mo.—In the summer of 1969 I embarked on a special journey. That 16th summer of my life in Niagara Falls, N.Y., I discovered a book on the family bookshelf that I had not read, so I began to read it.

Now I’m a half continent from my hometown and still reading that Book—and still finding it full of surprises.

During my 40th summer in the Word (in 2008) I compiled a list of 40 lessons I had learned since that teenage summer. That was one of the most trying periods in our nation’s history. Here is one lesson for each year of my journey to be shared during another trying time in history.

1. If there is a God, I want to know what He has to say.
2. If there is no God, then nothing anyone says or does will matter.
3. What the Bible says and what people say it says are two different things. Read it for yourself and learn the difference.
4. Jesus is Lord of all. Because He is Lord of all, His teachings should be at the center of all I think, say and do.
5. The Bible has all the basic principles of a successful life.
6. Everybody needs a day off at least once every week.
7. We are all free moral agents. Therefore I cannot impose my religion on others.
8. The Bible is the foundation of all knowledge, but it is not all knowledge. Read widely. Learn from those smarter than you.
9. Life is too short to spend reading bad books.
10. When it comes to money, give some, save some and spend some.
11. Your god is what you think about most of the time.
12. God knew what He was doing when he initiated a flat tax of 10 percent.
13. When I stand before the judgment seat no one—not even a minister—will be standing next to me. Only the Lord Jesus will be next to me. Do not follow a man if you are looking for a savior or advocate.
14. The corn grows tallest in the middle of the cornfield.
15. A threefold cord is not quickly broken. Hang with people of like minds and values.

16. Money is a tool, not a goal.
17. The borrower is servant to the lender. Stay out of debt.
18. We have two major political parties in this country: the Pharisees and the Sadducees.
19. Don't sell your birthright for a bowl of soup.
20. Good times are more fun than bad times, but bad times are necessary for the soul.
21. We all have our own section of the wall to mend.
22. If you ask God for patience, He'll give you the opportunity to be patient.
23. It's what you learn after you know it all that really counts.
24. Before getting to the Promised Land, we must pass through the wilderness.
25. Don't despise the day of small things. The smallest match can light a mighty fire.
26. Accept wisdom even if it comes from an unexpected source. God once spoke through Balaam's ass.
27. If you find the perfect church, don't join it because then it won't be perfect anymore.
28. Moses argued with God and God changed His mind. What does that tell us about God?
29. The national anthem ends in a question mark. May the answer always be "yes."
30. Every day is a divine appointment with God.
31. Good men respect strong women.
32. Give things time. The difference between a bad haircut and a good haircut is seven days.
33. God won't give up on you. Don't give up on yourself.
34. I don't accept it all on faith. Science and reason prove a lot of it.
35. Mercy triumphs over judgment.
36. Don't confuse Christianity with Christians.
37. It's okay to help your brother remove the speck from his eye, but only if you first take the beam out of your own.
38. The lesson of the Good Samaritan is not "who is my neighbor." It's "am I a good neighbor."
39. Jesus got angry when people were being hurt and abused.
40. When the facts change, I change. I would rather be right than consistent.