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35% of the bulletins included my own writing, more than doubling my productivity.

In the third church I worked with from August 2007 to January 2023, I published 803 issues of the bulletin *“Sound Doctrine”* and wrote 635 pieces for publication, meaning, on average, 79% of the bulletins included my own writing, again more than doubling my productivity.

In this fourth church I have been working with since January 2023, I have, so far, published 154 issues of the bulletin and contributed 155 writings for publication, meaning, on average, 100% of the bulletins have included my own writing. Some weeks I write nothing and some weeks I write 2 or 3 articles, but 100% is the average.

I don't bring this up to emphasize what a hard worker I am, but to notice what it took to become this productive. What I do now, as a preacher with 25+ years of experience, with a solid marriage of over 23 years, and 6 children – the youngest of whom is a teenager, I could not possibly have accomplished in 2000 when I was a 19-year-old bachelor just starting out. Nor could I have been this prolific when I was a newlywed or a young father with both arms full of babies

Thankfully, the first church I worked with was very nurturing and allowed me to develop my ability. Among other ways they showed patience, they let me learn how to publish a weekly bulletin using the articles of more mature and capable brethren, and they encouraged me when I tried my own hand at writing.

I also had to be patient with myself as I grew into the work, not overpromising and under-delivering, but being realistic about what I could accomplish. Now, I can preach a pulpit sermon and a radio sermon, teach one to three classes per week, and write articles for the bulletin I publish, but it took practice to achieve this level of efficiency. Churches need to be patient with less experienced evangelists as they learn the skills it takes to effectively edify and admonish.

My wife deserves enormous credit for all she does managing our house and being patient while I spend my time on this work. It is in this regard where I most recognize the need for improvement because she puts up with my late office hours while I get work done.

Is your work in the Lord abounding? Has attendance improved? Are you bringing more people in? Are you more involved in the work of the church? Are you reading and studying Scripture more thoroughly and in greater depth? Are you sharing knowledge with those who need it? If you have improved, is there room for refinement?

MY LORD HAS GARMENTS

Bryan Matthew Dockens

Singing “Ivory Palaces”, including the lyrics “My Lord has garments so wondrous fine”, prompts thoughts of what Jesus wore and wears.

He was naked from the womb. As Job put it, *“Naked I came from my mother's womb”* (Job 1:21). Jesus began life on earth as all do. His conception was miraculous, but His birth was normal.

He was swaddled at the manger. Mary *“brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths”* (Luke 2:7). His mother loved Him and took care of Him.

The hem of His garment transmitted healing. *“Wherever He entered, into villages, cities, or the country, they laid the sick in the marketplaces, and begged Him that they might just touch the hem of His garment. And as many as touched Him were made well”* (Mark 6:56). If such little contact could benefit so much, more sustained interaction, not with His hem but with Himself, would bring so much good.

His raiment shone. When He was transfigured, *“His clothes became shining, exceedingly white, like snow, such as no launderer on earth can whiten them”* (Mark 9:3). Jesus was honored in His radiance, *“For He received from God the Father honor and glory when such a voice came to Him from the Excellent Glory: ‘This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased’”* (2nd Peter 1:17).

He was mockingly arrayed in purple. Scorning His claim to be King, *“soldiers twisted a crown of thorns and put it on His head, and they put on Him a purple robe. Then they said, ‘Hail, King of the Jews!’ And they struck Him with their hands”* (John 19:2-3).

Soldiers divvied His clothes by lottery. *“The soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took His garments and made four parts, to each soldier a part, and also the tunic. Now the tunic was without seam, woven from the top in one piece. They said therefore among themselves, ‘Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be,’ that the Scripture might be fulfilled which says: ‘They divided My garments among them, and for My clothing they cast lots.’ Therefore the soldiers did these things”* (John 19:23-24). On earth, Jesus never possessed much, but even what He had was taken away. *“As he came from his mother's womb, naked shall he return”* (Ecclesiastes 5:15).

He carefully shed a burial shroud. Joseph of Arimathea *“bought fine*
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"WHAT MUST I DO TO BE SAVED?"

ACTS 16:30

LEARN THE GOSPEL

John 6:45; Romans 10:17

BELIEVE IN CHRIST

Hebrews 11:6; John 3:16

CONFESS CHRIST

Matthew 10:32-33; Romans 10:9-10

REPENT OF SIN

Acts 3:19; 17:30

BE BAPTIZED INTO CHRIST

Mark 16:16; Romans 6:3-6

REMAIN STEADFAST

1st Corinthians 15:58; Revelation 2:10

"THE ASSEMBLING OF OURSELVES TOGETHER"

HEBREWS 10:24-25

SUNDAY

Worship @ 10:00 a.m.

Studies @ 11:45 a.m.

WEDNESDAY

Studies & Worship @ 7:00 p.m.

75 Sherrod Boulevard
Belén, New Mexico

Seekers Welcome.
Members Expected.

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linen, took Him down, and wrapped Him in the linen. And he laid Him in a tomb which had been hewn out of the rock" (Mark 15:46). The One who died unwrapped Himself three days later. Peter *"went into the tomb; and he saw the linen cloths lying there, and the handkerchief that had been around His head, not lying with the linen cloths, but folded together in a place by itself"* (John 20:6-7). Not only did Jesus walk out of His tomb alive, but, unlike Lazarus who emerged from the grave at Jesus' command still wrapped in graveclothes and needed help unbinding himself (John 11:44), Jesus unwound the wrappings and neatly folded the facecloth. He knew what He was doing and was in full control of the situation.

In heaven, He wears a regal robe without the contempt. *"He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS"* (Revelation 19:16). The royal apparel He has now was not forced on Him in mockery and cannot be removed by anybody.

GIVE ME THE BIBLE

KDNF 840AM

Sunday @ 9:00 a.m.

"WHOLE COUNSEL"

ACTS 20:27

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"ABOUNDING IN THE WORK"

Bryan Matthew Dockens

"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord" (1st Corinthians 15:58). Every disciple must assess his or her own productivity for Christ, considering whether they are as busy as they ought to be in kingdom work, whether their output has increased or decreased, and what factors might be involved.

Us preachers need to be especially thorough in these assessments. Toward that end, I was recently considering how prolific I am in writing articles. Without considering any numbers, I know that I do a lot more writing now than I ever have before. After some simple calculations, though, the progress is eye-opening.

Since I began full-time preaching over 25 years ago, I have published a weekly bulletin for each of the 4 churches I have been a member of.

In the first church I worked with from July 2000 through October 2004, I published 224 issues of the bulletin *A Spiritual Perspective* and wrote only 37 articles for publication, meaning, on average, 16% of the bulletins included my own writing.

In the second church I worked with from November 2004 to August 2007, I published 140 issues of the bulletin *"Words of Truth and Reason"* and wrote 49 articles for publication, meaning, on average,

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