

# Etoonin' Incorporated - All for the Lord

2023.02.12

The Starschmucks Issue

XXIV/169

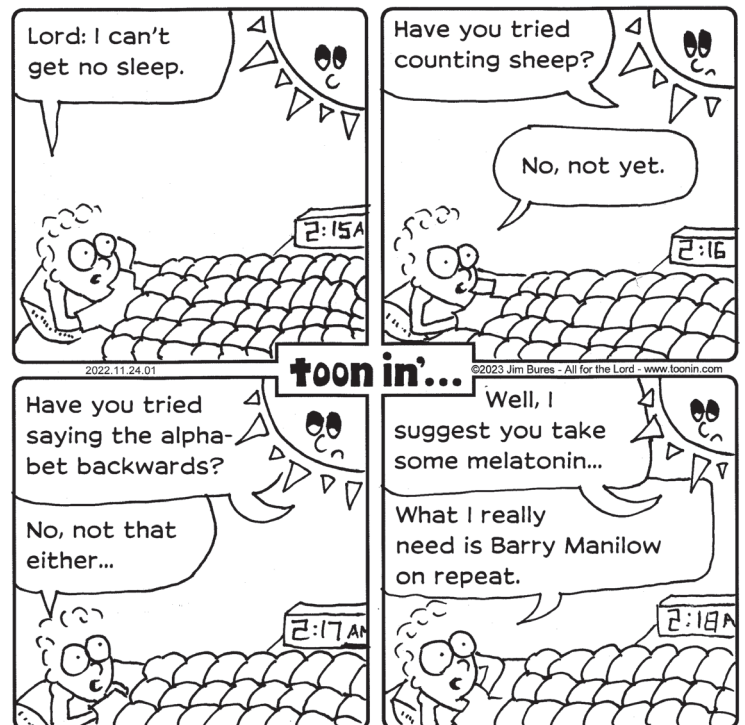
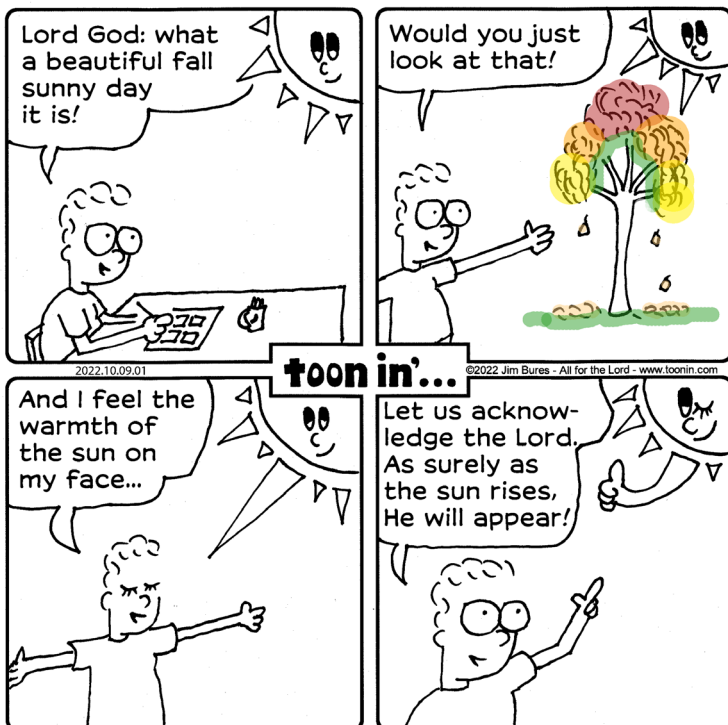
It has been about a year and a half since I published my last Etoonin', and even longer since I published a cartoon. A lot has happened since then. One of the main things is that I developed a new, square frame format to facilitate posting my cartoons online. This also allows me to print my frames on an 8.5" x 11" piece of paper instead of having to go to Paperclips and print them on 11" x 17" sheets, and, when they are done, return to Paperclips to scan them in. I am still adjusting to this new format, and these cartoons are not my best: I apologize for that.

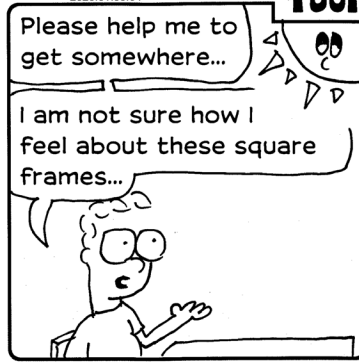
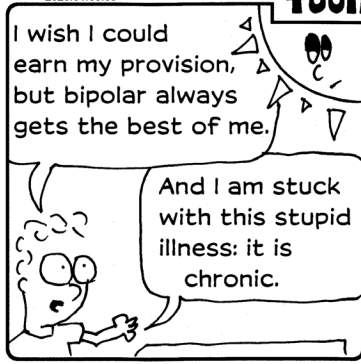
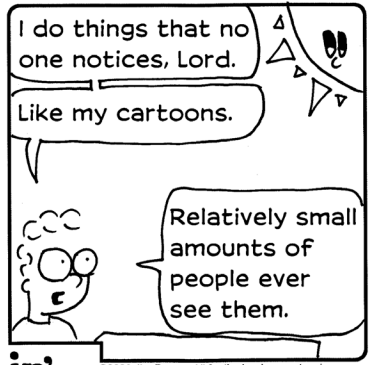
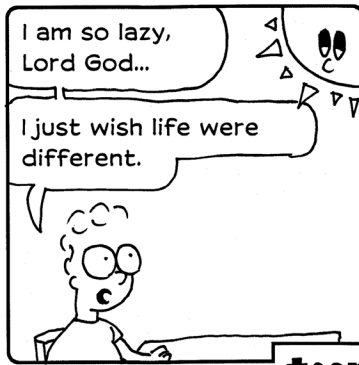
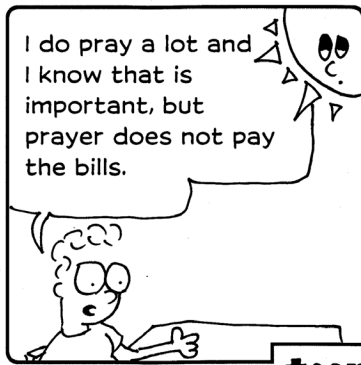
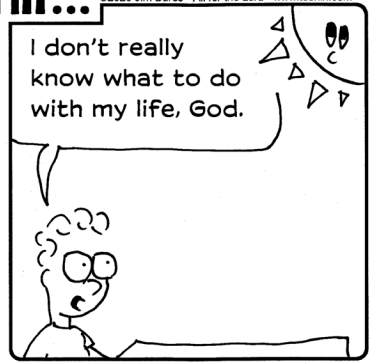
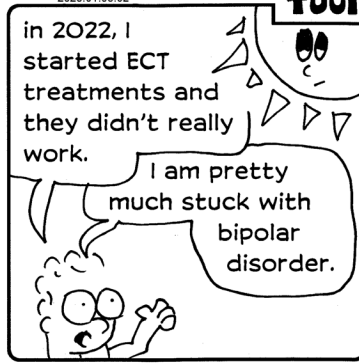
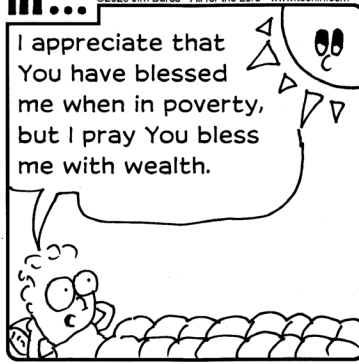
Since July 2021, I have moved. My housemate and friend, Roger, left for warmer weather in Virginia. I was unable to locate a new housemate, so I moved in with a woman from Church (no romantic interest). It took some adjusting to living with a woman, but I'm mostly at home now. I am kind of just another fixture in a house that is all decorated her way. This situation is really helping me prepare for marriage as I learn how to interact with a female housemate. She is very hospitable and does most of the cleaning and cooks for me often. It seems the main thing I can do for her is listen when she wants to talk. She seems to really appreciate my listening ear, because when I feel like I do very little, she says I do a lot. It has been a mild winter in New England with very little snow. But one day, when it did snow, I shoveled three times in two days and that really made her happy! I was glad to do it, with God's help of course. She made me three different dinners to thank me. I don't think my housemate can stop herself from cooking and baking and acting to bless others!

I also lost my job at Raytoonin'. I still suffer from bipolar disorder and, after 24 months of medical leave, Raytoonin' ended my employment. In the spring of 2022, I tried ECT (Electro-Convulsive Therapy) for three months. ECT is just a fancy name for electro-shock therapy. While it helped somewhat, the side effects were too difficult to deal with (memory loss and general anesthesia sickness), so I stopped. I was going to try TMS (Trans-cranial Magnetic Stimulation), but at the last moment McLean's warned me it could cause mania (insanity).

On June 19, 2022, I drove to New York City to see my favorite musician, BT. He actually gave me a free ticket. I danced up front to his set, which was from 10 - 11 PM. After he finished, I walked downstairs to use the bathroom. While waiting in line, I heard someone behind me say, "Hey Jim!" When I turned around, it was BT! He told me he followed me off stage just so he could give me a hug! It was most amazing and remains one of my top memories that reminds me that God does love me.

I moved in August 2022. I drove down to Virginia / North Carolina to visit Roger and other friends in October 2022 on a Southern Circuit Tour. For the first time since living at FHOP in Framingham, I had a Christmas tree! My housemate wanted to get one. I helped set it up and decorate it. I loved our Christmas tree, but Christmas passed too fast. I served Christmas dinner to my housemate and another friend on Christmas Day. I lost 28.2 lbs. since July 2022. I started exercising at Planet Fitness.





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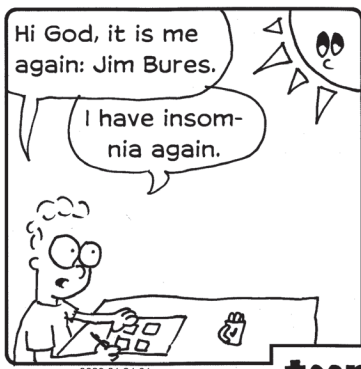
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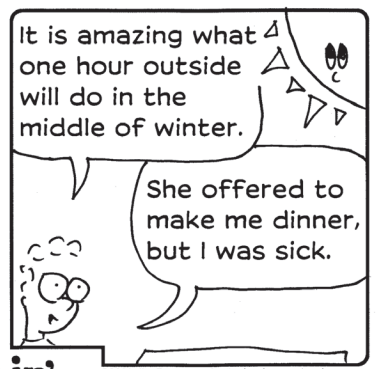
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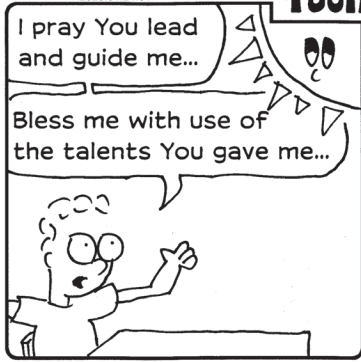
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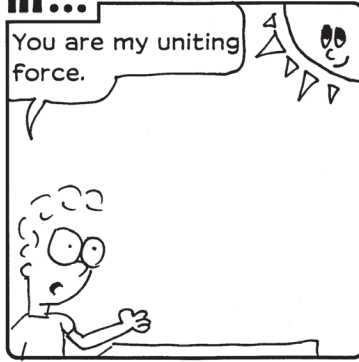
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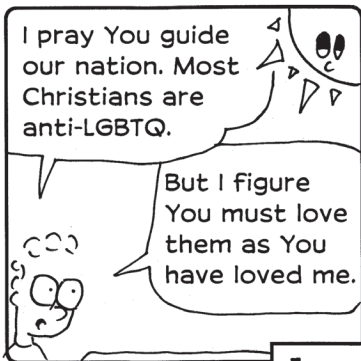
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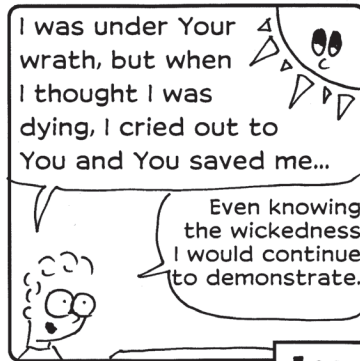
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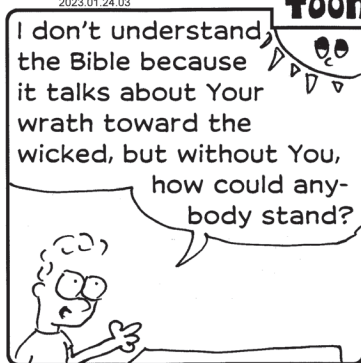
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# Mount Wachusett Community College





I am sitting here in the Mount Wachusett Community College Library. I want to express to you the deep sorrow I know in my life. I am turning 50 soon, and I guess I am sick of all the change. I came to Mt. Wachusett when feeling depressed the other day to think of how God blessed me when I got my Graphic Design degree here. It was a period of my life I really enjoyed looking back, even though it was hard. Now, I am just sick of all the change. I am not really doing anything. I can't wait for Heaven where, even though things may change, I won't mind. I really long for something permanent. I have lived so many places and done so many different things. I want to express to you my sorrow at the hands of life. We were all born under the curse (original sin) and many do not even find Jesus in their lifetime. The Bible says that broad is the way that leads to destruction, and many be there that find it. It just makes me sad. Everything keeps rolling along. I realize I am just this speck on planet Earth. Most people are not even thinking about me. I wish my suffering could lead others to Christ, but I don't know if I really have anything good to say. I just keep feeling my pain and time goes on. One day, I will die and then I will be safe and transformed into who I was meant to be. I will see Jesus and I will worship Him in a way that I just can't down here. It will be the home I really long for.

I still suffer from bipolar disorder, and I am realizing I just can't change that. There is nothing I can do about it. I am disabled. It is hard to cope with. It keeps me from working, though I have, in the past, been able to work a good job. I am trying a new medication called Saphris. It seems promising, but it, too, does not eliminate depression. It just reduces the duration of it.

I was thinking about my goals out of life, not that I can accomplish them, but one goal I want is to produce one very professional electronic song. As I thought about it, I realized more about the song I want to make. I want the song to express my sorrow in life as well as the sorrow Jesus must feel about dying on the cross

for everyone and then people still do not choose Him. That has got to be so sad for Him. I want to produce a song that will not only sound very good and be very touching, but that will also appeal to secular people and yet still mention Jesus by Name. Many musicians write songs about Him, but they are either already sold out for Him or they don't really mention the core of the Gospel nor mention Him by Name in their music. The Gospel is that if you place your faith in Jesus, if you really believe in Him, you will go to Heaven no matter what you have done nor what you will do. It is quite powerful, but Satan has blinded the minds of people in this world so they won't reach up to Him. I am only saved because I cried out to God when I thought I was dying and He saved me. I call bipolar my souvenir from meeting God because that is what I am left with: that is when it really started, back in 1997. I know God controls all things, but it is really sad. I get depressed and think about how futile life is.

Anyway, I want to compose a song that really expresses the core of my being. My life's work in cartoons has really touched so few people. At most, 20 people per issue read my cartoons. I get discouraged. But with my song, I just want to know the satisfaction of making a really good song even if it never gets popular. I know that Jesus is not really popular in this world, even though the world was made through Him and for Him. I know that, with the skills I'll learn here on Earth, I will worship Him properly in Heaven. I also want to put my own voice in the song. I want to completely compose the song myself. I want to really learn what makes an electronic song good and then compose the whole thing myself. I want it to truly come from me.

Much of my life, I am alone. I have so many good friends, but I still feel lonely. I feel the impermanence of life. I just keep coasting. I want to take a music class, but I just cannot afford it right now. I think of Joseph, who waited a long time for things. I am just in a period of waiting right now. Life has a good end.





# Membership has its privileges!

Life is full of sorrows for me, but that doesn't mean I am sorrowful all the time. I tend to prefer sorrow over happiness, but nice things happen to me every day. Mount Wachusett has a lovely open area community center for students with lots of free activities. One of them was to get a laser etched wooden key chain, which you see above! It totally cheered me up today. I love seeing all the students hanging out there: talking to each other; playing pool; playing guitar and other things. I love thinking about how God blesses us, even though most of us don't recognize Him. Here at Mount Wachusett, they have gone out of their way to provide a nice space to enjoy. I think of how God blesses us, even the non-believers. He gives us nice things, whether we appreciate them as from Him or not. He creates a nice environment for us. He just cannot stop Himself! He is love. I get sad when I think that some people are destined for destruction, but it gives me joy to see all those students enjoying their time in the community center.

I struggle because I know that God blesses me. Sitting here right now, I feel He gives me all the time in the world to do whatever I want, within reason and my finances. But it is hard to know He exists, as He doesn't come right out and talk to us. When I start to doubt, I think of some major things God has done for me as a believer. In 2010, I spent two weeks in Alaska the same year I went bankrupt. In 2021, I embarked on a 28-day Midwest 7 State Tour. In 2022, BT followed me off stage just to give me a hug! These things really point me to Him. But even before I was a Christian, God sent me to England in 1994 for Study Abroad. That changed the whole trajectory of my life as I searched for a relaxed pace of life in a high speed culture. I just think about how God did that for me, even though I was in rebellion against Him. I didn't even know I was in rebellion against Him! I didn't even know I was lost, but I was. It is hard to think about how I could

have perished and gone to hell and I wasn't even aware of it. I had no idea God existed and I did such stupid things, smoking pot and inventing the raisin god, whose vibrations were felt across the whole universe of pink Yop yogurt. Now I am 50 and I missed the boat of marriage and children because I treated women so poorly. I should have cherished them! I wish I'd come to know Christ as a child: it would have saved a lot of headache. It is hard living with regret. I know Heaven will fix all that, but it is hard to wait. And I don't really know what I am doing down here.

I wrote about the LGBTQ workers at Starschmucks because I really feel for them. God is really specific about the sexual immoral: they shall not inherit the Kingdom of God (1 Corinthians 6:9). Most Christians adamantly condemn homosexuals, but I believe they just need love. Maybe I am thinking of the way I came to God, as a sinner and deep in the dark. God saved me knowing that I would continue to sin. If He was really bothered by that, He could have let me die in sin when I attempted suicide. I love Starschmucks because they give a place to work for the outcasts. Most Christians I know condemn homosexuality, but continue to sin themselves with lust and masturbation. Even Christians I know that are married! This is just as sexually immoral as homosexuality. I don't think people recognize what they are doing is wrong, but God's correction in this area is really gentle and grace-filled. People respond to love and not condemnation. I know, in my life, God had patience with me. I wish He would have changed me instantly, but instead He gradually beckoned me out of the dark. Most of the employees at Starschmucks are very nice people. I love the way they serve me and I love asking how they are doing and what is going on with them. I even saw one transgender employee attending a Christian musical. Please, let them in. Division is not good! Love.





I am convinced that Mount Wachusett Community College is a great school. I just ate in the cafeteria, and I heard a black man of faith talking to students, encouraging them to get to know their neighbor in the middle instead of suffer from the political divide caused by mainstream media! It was so, so refreshing. There was also free pizza! I love how this school is blessing their students: they do so much for them! They provide all the arts & crafts in the community center and now I see they preach love and tolerance. I am so glad to be here right now, and I am so thankful I got my Graphic Design degree from this school in 2011.

I know that other community colleges also bless their students. I am thinking of Quinsigamond Community College, where I also took classes. Community Colleges seem very well funded to care for their students and meet them right where they are at.

Yesterday, I took part in the Mt. Calvary Lutheran Church Worship Team practice. I will be singing in front of the congregation this Sunday. I was both overwhelmed but confident at the same time. I don't know many of the songs I'll be singing, but I was encouraged to just do my best. It was a great experience.

I am so grateful. I have turned the corner on the depression I was facing earlier (as mentioned in this issue). I am on a new medication, and it is helping me feel a little better (not all the way) and sleep less. Yesterday, I really felt that God is real and that He loves me! He is so good. I know it is hard to believe in God because He doesn't communicate with us directly, but it felt great to truly believe He is real and that He loves me. I also felt impressed that I don't need to do anything. I feel like His love allows me to just go through life and do what I feel like. He guides even that. God says in the Bible not to worry many times.

May God bless you, my friend. May God bless your day and may God bless your life. I pray that good things keep happening to you and that you can see what God is doing in your life. I just love being here at the Mount because I can see how a good school just does all kinds of good things to bless their students and make them feel comfortable, no matter what they do. I feel like God is the same way: He creates a safe space for the believer and the unbeliever combined. He doesn't discriminate based on your faith background. He displays His love over all. I love that His purposes cannot be thwarted. May God bless you. Love, Jim.



