

Etoonin' Incorporated - All for the Lord

2025.08.24

The "Girls, What Are They Good For" Issue

XXVI/174

This issue is dedicated to my future wife, who is going to need a lot of therapy after she marries me...

... the sticker shock is going to be unimaginable!

Seriously, there are some good things in this issue, things I am only starting to think about and grapple with. Things that, hopefully, prove both funny and fascinating, helpful but humorous, enigmatic yet entertaining. That is the life of Etoonin'.

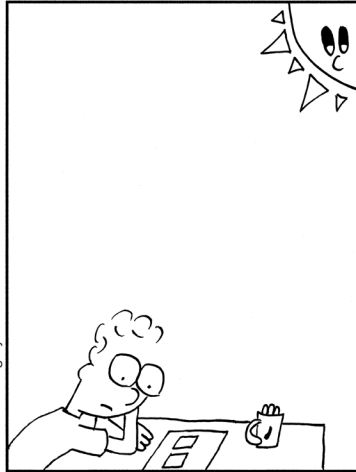
toon in'...

An Ode to Nowhere...

June 9th, 2024



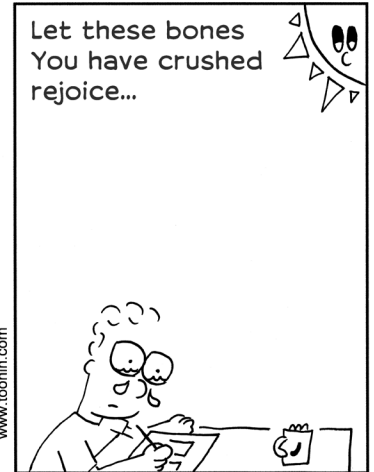
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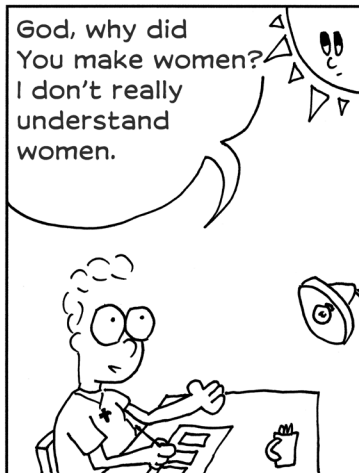
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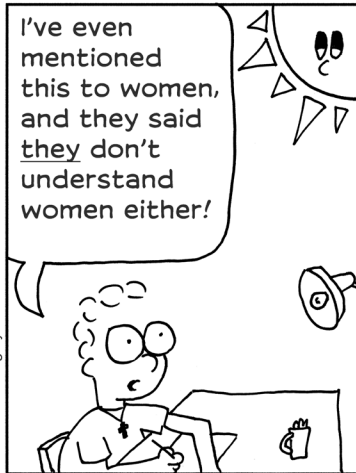
toon in'...

Zen & the Art of Women...

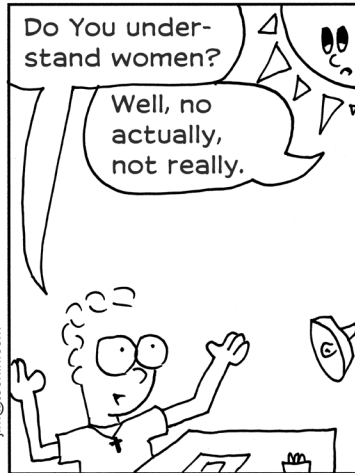
Aug. 26th, 2025



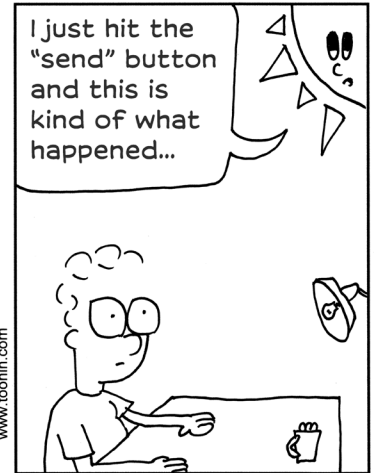
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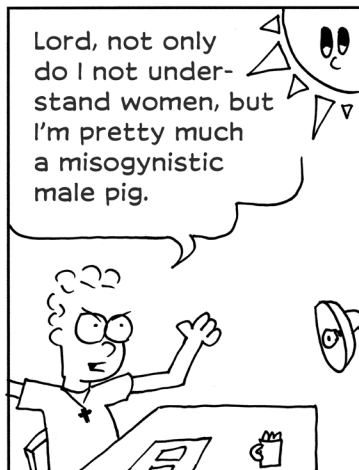
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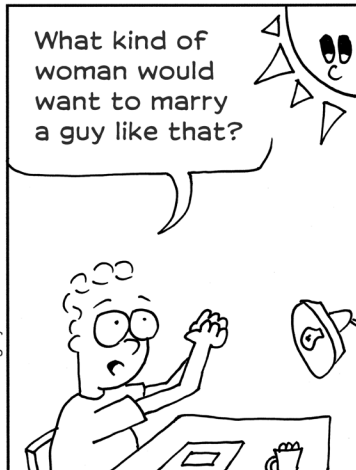
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Zen & the Art of Marriage...

Aug. 26^{1/2}, 2025



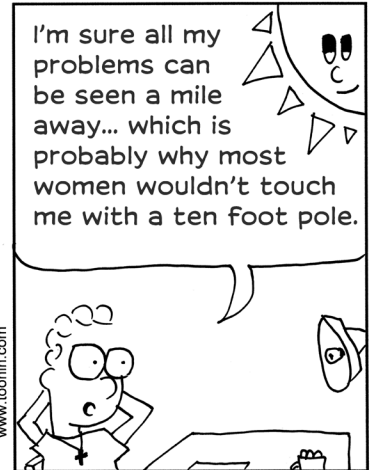
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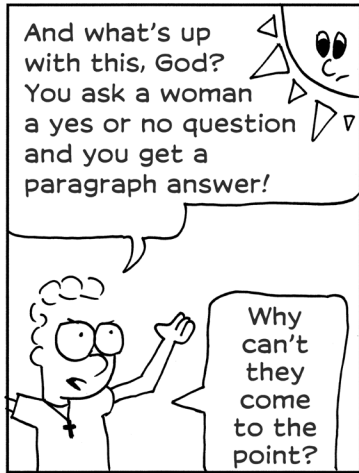


*Yes, I know character, compatibility, and faith should come 1st.

toon in'...

The Truth about Zen pickles...

Aug. 26^{2/3}, 2025



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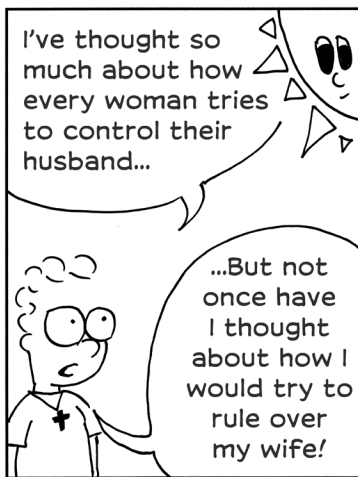
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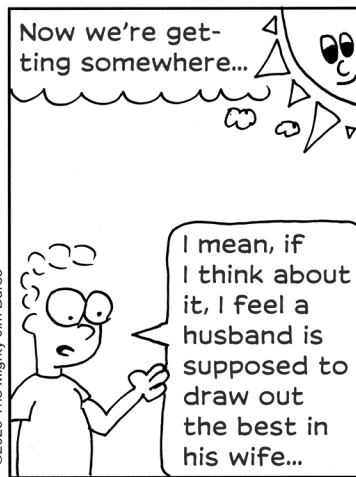
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Down at the Ole Shoe Factory...

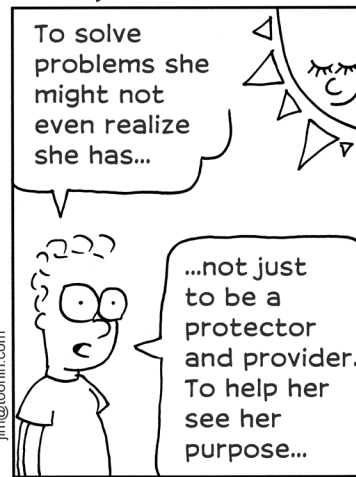
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It is NOT about the Nail...

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The Musings of a Manic Mister Bures

The truth is: we don't really need to think about things, we can just do them. That is the beauty, and the glory, of resting in God.

Think about those sparrows... they neither reap nor sow, yet our Heavenly Father feeds them. And how much more important are we than sparrows? Or consider the lily: it neither labors nor spins. But not even Solomon, in all his splendor, was clothed like one of them. This is our God: He will take care of us!

If I could offer just one piece of advice, it would be to wear sunscreen. The long-term benefits of sunscreen have been proven by scientists, whereas the rest of my advice has no basis more reliable than my own meandering experience.

It is funny: everyone knows I don't like advice, but here I am giving it! Actually, I am not giving advice, but just rambling on. I love to write. Sometimes people give me unsolicited advice and I have to admit: it stings. Most people do not understand what a manic man's life is like. Sometimes, people tell me to work. But from what I have discovered, two of the main things we **should** do in life are: 1) read our Bible and 2) pray. I would argue that we should also 3) worship God. It is, after all, what we are made to do. I am not including it though because I rarely do it. But I do read the Bible and I do pray.

Did you know that donkeys have spoken in the past? Did you know that the sun once stood still in the sky for several hours? Many people are reluctant to believe the creation story of Adam and Eve in the Bible, because they buy into the science that says the universe is 13,800,000,000 years old. However, I am a literalist. I think that, if God created the universe that long ago, He would have mentioned this in the Bible. Okay fine, but if you throw out the story of creation, how can you actually keep the story of that talking donkey? How can you keep the story of the sun stopping in its tracks? The truth is, you probably can't. The Bible says a lot of crazy things: you'd have to throw all that out too, because it doesn't really jive with science. People who commensurate with the scientific explanations make a mistake.

I'm not saying science can't tell us things, and I'm not saying the universe is NOT 13,800,000,000 years old, but I've read the Bible and I see how accurate it is in predicting my sin patterns, my course of life, general wisdom principles, and many other things. I have studied my life (because I maintain a healthy sense of self-interest) and I have studied the Bible. And though I do not understand everything in the Bible, I do understand how it explains the dilemma I am in: that of someone who makes a thousand mistakes a day, yet is still *incredibly* blessed by God. I do not understand how He can, or even would, do it. I am corrupt. Maybe I align too closely with Protestantism, but I am.

Some people tell me to work. And I am not saying I shouldn't work, but I've heard people tell me that work will cure me of mental illness. I've heard people say that work is kind of a salvation to a man. That's baloney. I've had 55 jobs so far, and if work was going to save me, it would have done so by now!

I think that only Jesus will save me.

It really hurts to be on the outside. I go to a rather successful person's Church and many of the men will ask me, when they first meet me, what I do for work. Boy do I hate that question! People do not understand my struggle with work. People, in general, do not understand bipolar disorder. People, in reality, don't really understand each other's problems. People rarely talk about their problems, even in Church.

Anyway, if people knew that I once told a doctor I was going to rape my Mom with her standing right there, well, maybe they would stop telling me that I have to work. If people knew that, when I came to believe in God, I thought I was god, maybe they'd take a step back and think about it. I don't know. Maybe they wouldn't. But these experiences happened to me and they are things you cannot really talk about in polite conversation. I've been in mental wards four times. This illness is not going away.

Most of the time, though, I am pretty sane. Bipolar Disorder is a mental illness, but it is also a mood disorder. It is actually more of a mood disorder than a mental illness, because I've only gone insane twice in my life. The second time I walked from my Mom's house to my Dad's house (they are divorced and live a mile apart) and promptly handed my iPhone to my Dad, explaining that it was a device that could help him understand Mom. On the way over, I was thinking to myself how these two people were the oldest people on the planet, and if I could just get them back together, everything would be in harmony again. I really thought that! Nevertheless, they just took me to the hospital.

People have given me a lot of free advice over the years and one piece of advice I've heard a lot is to get on a schedule. I know people mean well on this one, but in reality: I have absolutely no schedule! My circadian rhythm is just not there. I don't know where it is, but it got up and went a long time ago. Nowadays, sometimes I go to bed at 6:00 PM, and sometimes I got to bed at 6:00 AM. Sometimes, I don't even go to bed at all. Remember how I mentioned this is a mood disorder? My mood can go from hypomanic to depressed in one week, and then go back. My mood is really all over the place. I've learned to live with that. Actually, as I tell most people, ever since February 2024, my mood has been *mostly* hypomanic. But I would say I still get depressed once a month for about 3 days. It used to be seven!

The Meaning of Money (Luke 16:1-13)

I'm not saying I really understand much, because I don't. But from the way I have seen money work, I think the best thing to do with it is give it away. I'd say that for every \$10 I give away, I get at least \$100 back. I have generous friends and Church and stuff, so maybe this is not set in stone. This is an anecdotal story, I can't corroborate this in any way. I know some people think about retirement and they plan ahead. I am not saying to not do that. But what I am saying is that I don't see the word retirement in the Bible. What I do see is Caleb, at age 80, saying to the Lord: "Let me go fight on that mountain!" (I stole that line from a YouTube video I like.) By the way, and this is apropos of nothing, but I could listen to the same song on repeat for HOURS. I think I just did that. Testify, by Avalon (New Birth Mix) is the sound track to pretty much this whole issue, even the cartoons! I'm very pleased with the cartoons, by the way. God rocks.

Back to the work issue... I decided, just today, to stop looking for work in human services. You are probably saying to yourself, "I didn't even know you were looking for work in human services!" Well, I was. But the conclusion I have come to is that, although the pay is very low, it is still very competitive. I think it is because most people want rewarding careers helping others. I had the same problem when I applied to Graphic Design jobs back from 2012 - 2015. Even though I graduated with the highest GPA in my major, I was harshly competing for \$12/hour jobs. It is just not worth my time to compete for human service jobs that are only paying \$15/hour. In fact, most of these employers have ghosted me in some way. I am not down with that! I am sick of the lack of respect nowadays. I could really get into complaining about that, but you can read LinkedIn too.

However, I am not saying I am not going to work. No decision here is final. Like I said, I just like to write. I am still driving for Uber. It is Uberrific. But some days I get depressed. I have been trying to work anyway, because now that I have declared bankruptcy (for the second time) I have to actually earn money before I spend it. That is such a drag. But I'll try. With God, all things are possible. I highly suspect my work ethic is why I am not married. But You already read all my cartoons about that.

I do find that trying to earn money is better than begging, but there is marginal difference. I've been asking for money for a long time now, so I've gotten good at it. Like I said, I have generous friends. Actually, now that I think about it, the same people who irritate me when they ask me what I do for work at Church are the same ones that give me money whenever I ask! I never thought about that before... something to noodle on.

I should probably not send out this Etoonin'. It covers all my secrets. The thing is, the world's not set up to employ bipolars.

The world, or at least the world in Massachusetts, U.S.A. only employs the top notch people, or the people that are very good at self-marketing. Also, little known fact, everything in Mass is pretty much free, so why bother working? Concerts are free (check the NEC website), medical care is free, housing is free, income is free. Well, you do have to fill out a lot of paperwork, but if you're willing to do that... insta-lifestyle! Again, it doesn't attract the top notch righteous babes, but it beats working.

I'm going to stop talking about money right here. Next topic? Hmm... I'm going to tell you about the wisest person I know that is currently most available to me, Paul. Well, it helps that he is kind of retired, but it also helps that he is a Church leader. From what I have noticed, Church leaders (like Pastors and such) pretty much have to be friends with me. Church is all about relationships, so these suckers are required to take care of me. They always invite the person who has nowhere to go to Thanksgiving dinner. It's part of the job. Anyway, Paul is the wisest person currently most available to me. I won't tell you how old he is, but he's old enough to know better. But he's still friends with me anyway. In fact, even though he is older, he listens! From what I have generally noticed about older people, in America anyway, is that they want to share their wisdom (i.e. they want to talk a lot). Actually, a lot of older people are lonely too. I have also discovered that lonely people also want to talk a lot (can you see why I am so verbose in my Etoonin's?).

Paul has taught me a lot about humility. He will act like many things I say are just the wisest things in the world! I have learned a lot about humility from him. Humility is very important. Remember how I told you God answered 4 out of my 5 prayers for weather? God wouldn't do that if I became a weatherman and tried to prophet off that skill. No, God gives grace to the humble. I cannot make humility a god either, only God is God. But Paul has taught me so much about humility. Paul is also very gentle. This isn't his first rodeo, so he must have realized he has to wear the kid gloves around me. He is so sweet when he gives advice, because he always says, "Not that I am trying to tell you what to do, but if I were in your situation, I would consider this (x, y, z)." It really makes the advice so much easier to swallow. He also reacts to me like I've said the most interesting thing when I could be just explaining how I put my socks on! Anyway, Paul is great. He also knows Biblical concepts very, very well. That is wise right there. He owns a family business, but yet his identity is not really tied up in it, like other men's are. Instead, he is the sage, shepherding younger people and leading his Church. I really admire Paul, so I wanted to tell you about him. Anyway, humility is very important, even to The Mighty Jim Bures. So, I'm going to follow Paul's lead and humble myself under the mighty power of God so He can raise me up at just the right time.

The Conclusion of the Matter...

It is better to take refuge in the LORD than to trust in man. (Psalm 118:8 ESV) Let me tell you a story about Psalm 118:8. According to folklore I've heard, it is the exact center of the Bible. The Psalm before 118 is the shortest chapter in the Bible, and the Psalm after 118 is the longest in the Bible. Google it!

Okay, I'm going to end my babbling here, on this page. I hope you have enjoyed my writing, because I am just talking out of the side of my mouth, really. I know so little. Really, I am so small. I hope that God will rescue me. He certainly is not obligated. I think of how my brother reacted to me when I talked about my illness (my family does not let me talk about my illness). He always commented about how people like a comeback story. But my point is that sometimes, little girls are raped for long periods of their lives and just killed. Not everyone has a comeback story. That is the illusion created by American individualistic ideals. Some people never overcome their problems. Some people just suffer and die. This, too, is meaningless, says the teacher. Okay, I don't know if he really said that. Thankfully, I do have a comeback story, but that really has so little to do with me and so much to do with God's mercy. I am just thankful I feel better.

The other few things I wanted to mention is that I have come to realize I suffer, in some ways, from paranoia. This is very common with mental illness. I only realized this because Paul, the same Paul from the last page, often tells me how no one from the Home Group has ever said anything bad about me. I mention this because I always suspect them of thinking toward me as I think toward them. Anyway, Paul has said this a number of times and, only last week, I realized: I don't believe him when he says that, and that is paranoia. There is no solution I know of.

The paranoia makes me think, when I am alone, that nobody cares about me, nobody desires me as a friend, people are mad at me, people don't like me, etc., etc. But just in the time of writing this Etoonin', one person invited me to a Labor Day party, another donated \$20 to my Cartoonist Table drive (thanks, Ken!), and my Mom invited me to a C.S. Lewis event. My Mom. As far as I know, she is still on sabbatical from the Church.

Anyway, that's about all I got. My babbling has babbled on. Shoot, there is still a lot of white space, and I have already shared the photo of my \$5 coffee maker twice. For whatever reason, I cannot share my Etoonin's with my family. I do not understand family any more than I understand women. Anyway, the coffee maker will save me \$600 this year! The fabulous Jill Holt encouraged me to go to West Main Thrift and I'm saving big.

Okay, one thing I am really grateful for is that I am friends with the powerhouses of Mt. Calvary (my Church). I know all these successful, sixties aged men who are willing to put up with my shenanigans. That makes me feel really special. I mean, they pretty much run the Church, I think. I don't know. I'm not schur.

Did I tell you that I want to be president? I think it is pretty much a crazy idea I inherited from my Father, who also wanted to be president. It makes no sense. Actually, as I read through Chronicles and Kings, I take note of how those kings acted to see what makes a good President (No Kings!). Tops on the list is being close to God, which is actually, from my perspective, a pretty hard task to manage. Most kings do fine for a while, but then they are really successful, forget God, and go off the rails! But what I also noticed is that some of these kings, in particular David, spent a lot of his time writing worship tunes (the Psalms). That is right up my alley! Can you imagine if a cartoonist became president? Probably not gonna happen, stupid bipolar. Oh, and Joseph became a leader after YEARS and YEARS of suffering. That could help me. I ran for president in 2012, I think, but only got 4 votes on a write in ballot space.

Paul has been reminding me of what a blessing I was to the Home Group. I told him it was because I am authentic. People wonder how I got up here so fast, and the word authentic comes to mind. But here's the thing: you need to get the lawyers to pay for the campaign without alienating the blue collar voters. You gotta scuff up your shoes a little bit so you can keep the blue collar votes. Did you know we paid a consultant in Tenaflly \$4,000 to determine that this (points to my shoes) is the perfect amount of scuffing on your dress shoes? (The Adjustment Bureau.)

Anyway, I also wanted to be a prophet, but that was before I knew that most of them, in the Old Testament, got killed. Whoops! Not the profession for me. See, the Bible is such a great Book if you would just read it. (Alistair Begg) I don't even come up with my own material. I just regurgitate random things I've heard throughout my life. THAT is what makes a cartoonist good. All my other jobs and experiences just funnel into the toons.

Well, as I mentioned, I am simultaneously working on another Etoonin'. It is mainly geared to my family, but I'll probably share it with you, my lovely audience, once I finish it. It's fire and brimstone, which I don't think they are going to like, but hopefully my writing will temper the cartoons. Please subscribe to my Substack and my Patreon, because these will enable me to make money at some point (I hope). God bless you! TMJB.

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