

# This And That From Under The Hat

by Robert Waters



La 3:40 - Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the LORD.  
Ec 1:13 - And I gave my heart to seek and search out by wisdom concerning all things that are done under heaven: this sore travail hath God given to the sons of man to be exercised therewith. Ec 7:25 - I applied mine heart to know, and to search, and to seek out wisdom, and the reason of things, and to know the wickedness of folly, even of foolishness and madness:

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[This is a new and light hearted publication designed primarily to stimulate thinking among disciples of Christ and to encourage change when truth demands it. Nevertheless, the content (as the name suggests) will consist of a variety of materials: selected articles from the past, devotionals, subject studies, sermons, poems, short debates, guest editorials, general observations, funny stories etc. We shall endeavor to have something in each issue that will brighten your day and/or that will teach and/or admonish.]

**Important List:**

- The most destructive habit.....Worry
- The greatest Joy.....Giving
- The greatest loss.....Loss of self-respect
- The most satisfying work.....Helping others
- The ugliest personality trait.....Selfishness
- The most endangered species.....Dedicated leaders
- Our greatest natural resource.....Our youth
- The greatest "shot in the arm".....Encouragement
- The greatest problem to overcome.....Fear
- The most effective sleeping pill.....Peace of mind
- The most crippling failure disease.....Excuses
- The most powerful force in life.....Love
- The most dangerous pariah.....A gossip
- The world's most incredible computer.....The brain
- The worst thing to be without..... Hope
- The deadliest weapon.....The tongue
- The two most power-filled words....."I Can"
- The greatest asset.....Faith
- The most worthless emotion.....Self-pity
- The most beautiful attire.....SMILE!
- The most prized possession.....Integrity
- The most powerful channel of communication.....Prayer
- The most contagious spirit.....Enthusiasm
- The most important thing in life.....GOD

## The Stranger

by Mike Holliway

A few months after I was born, my dad met a stranger who was new to our small town. From the beginning, Dad was fascinated with this enchanting newcomer, and soon invited him to live with our family. The stranger was quickly accepted and was welcomed quite easily around town.

As I grew up I never questioned his place in our family. Mum taught me to love the Word of God, and Dad taught me to obey it. But the stranger was our storyteller. He could weave the most fascinating tales. Adventures, mysteries, and comedies were daily conversations. He could hold our whole family spellbound for hours each evening. He was like a friend to the whole family.

He took Dad, Bill, and me to our first major league baseball game and he was always encouraging us to see movies and even made arrangements to introduce us to several movie stars.

The stranger was an incessant talker! Dad didn't seem to mind, but sometimes Mum would quietly get up (while the rest of us were enthralled with one of his stories of faraway places) leave the room, and go to her bedroom; read her Bible, and pray. I wonder now if she ever prayed that the stranger would leave.

You see, my dad ruled our household with certain moral convictions, but this stranger never felt an obligation to honor them. Profanity, for example, was not allowed in our house -- not from us, from our friends, or adults. But our longtime visitor used occasional four letter words that burned my ears and made Dad squirm. To my knowledge the stranger was never confronted.

My Dad was a teetotaler who didn't permit alcohol in his home -- not even for cooking, but the stranger felt like we needed exposure, and enlightened us to other ways of life. He offered us beer and other alcoholic beverages often. He made cigarettes look tasty, cigars manly, and pipes distinguished. He talked freely (too freely) about sex. His comments were sometimes blatant, sometimes suggestive, and always pretty embarrassing. I know now that my early concepts of the man/woman relationship were wrongly influenced by the stranger.

As I look back, I believe it was the grace of God that the stranger did not influence us more. I really think mother was praying for us, as time after

time he opposed the values of my parents, yet was seldom rebuked and never asked to leave.

More than thirty years have passed since the stranger moved in with our family on Morningside Drive . But if I were to walk into my parents' living room today, you would still see him sitting over in a corner, waiting for someone to listen to him talk and watch him draw his pictures.

His name?

We always just called him TV.

-- Via The Bulletin of the Church of Christ at New Georgia , March 21, 2004

### **"Honesty, Error and Truth"**

Eugene Britnell

There are many good people in the world who are honestly mistaken, but when a man who is honestly mistaken hears the truth, one of two things must happen: He will cease to be mistaken or, he will cease to be honest. If he does not obey it, he will no longer be honest. If he does obey it, he will no longer be mistaken. Honesty and error must separate when truth comes along. No man can be honestly mistaken if he has heard the truth.