



“...a net...cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind.” Matthew 13:47

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**THE BITTER END**—“Bitter” has been an adjective meaning acrid or sour tasting since the year 725 AD at least. The word was in common use in the Middle Ages and Shakespeare uses it numerous times in his plays and poems, as do many other dramatists. The phrase “the bitter end” would seem, fairly obviously, to come directly from that meaning. But not so fast. Enter stage left, Captain Smith. Here’s what he has to say, in his publication, *Seaman’s Grammar*, 1627, which is the earliest citation of the phrase in print. “A Bitter is but the turne of a Cable about the Bits, and veare it out by little and little. And the Bitters end is that part of the Cable doth stay within board.”

As you might have deduced, a bitt is a post fastened in the deck of a ship, for fastening cables and ropes. When a rope is played out to the bitter end, it means there is no more rope to be used. But again, no so fast. Folk-etymologists are those who say something is true with no more justification than that they would like it to be true. They are thickest on the ground in the area of military and especially naval attributions. People seem to love a sailor’s yarn, and anything with a whiff of the sea is seized on with enthusiasm.

Let’s apply it as I have heard it as it refers to death. Recently I had a special friend walk through death’s door. I do miss him. He held on to the “bitter end”. The strange thing about it was that it did not turn out to be bitter. Do you know why? It was because he was a born-again Christian. Yes, he did have pain and some very dark days, but it ended in sweetness---not bitter. Many times I received a text saying he could hardly wait to make his crossing, and he did. He loved the song “Amazing Grace”, and the verse that says, “Amazing grace, how SWEET the sound that saved a wretch like me.” He got to the bitter end and found it sweet. But not so with those who are unprepared to enter that door. Revelation 20:15, “*And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.*” To close my eyes in death, then to open them in the flames of hell sure would be a BITTER end! The Saviour’s bitter end (Calvary) provided for my end to be sweet. Matthew 26:42, “*He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done.*” Jesus suffered the wrath of God for us poor sinners. Thank God He died for my sins (1 Corinthians 15:3), to make my bitter end (death) a time of SWEETNESS!

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**WHAT ABOUT DEATH?**—“If a man die,” Job asked, “shall he live again?” There is no IF here---sooner or later *death* will come to all. So does the old legend of a merchant in Baghdad. One day he sent his servant to the market. Before very long the servant came

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back, white and trembling, and in great agitation said to his master, “Down in the market place I was jostled by a man in the crowd, and when I turned around I saw it was Death that jostled me. He looked at me and made a threatening gesture. Oh, Master, lend me your horse, for I must hasten away to avoid my fate! I will ride to Samarra and there I will hide and Death will not find me.”

The merchant lent him his horse and the servant galloped away in great haste. Later the merchant went down to the market place and saw Death standing in the crowd. He went over to him and asked, “Why did you frighten my servant this morning? Why did you make a threatening gesture?” “That was not a threatening gesture,” Death said. “It was only a start of surprise. **I was astonished to see him in Baghdad, for I have an appointment with him tonight in Samarra.**” --H. Guy Moore

“*And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment*” (Hebrews 9:27).

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**AN OLD SAYING**—Did you know the saying, “God willing and the Creek don’t rise” was in reference to the Creek Indians and not a body of water? It was written by Benjamin Hawkins in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. He was a politician and Indian diplomat. While in the South, Hawkins was requested to return to Washington. In his response, he was said to write, “God willing and the Creek don’t rise.” Because he capitalized the word “Creek”, he was referring to the Creek Indian tribe and not a body of water.

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Life is just like a sea. We are moving without end. Nothing stays with us. What remains is just the memories of some people who touched us as waves.

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**BREAKING THE LAW**—From time to time fishermen brag about breaking the law, even the laws of God. Actually you cannot break the laws of God. If you jump from the Empire State building you do not break the law of gravitation—you just break your neck! The Bible, God’s law book, stands today, unchanged and unchangeable. When we violate it, we suffer. We sow; we reap. When we crash into the pillars of God’s eternal principles, we are smashed but the pillars remain standing! Remember next time when you break the law that it may be breaking you!

Numbers 15:31, “*Because he hath despised the word of the LORD, and hath broken his commandment, that soul shall utterly be cut off; his iniquity shall be upon him.*”

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Since 1974 Israel has trained teachers with guns. There have only been two school shootings in 44 years, and both shooters were killed by teachers. Is there a lesson here?

### GOOD THOUGHTS

- What do we learn from cows, buffalo and elephants? It is impossible to reduce weight by eating green grass (salads) and walking.
- Don't lie, cheat, steal, sell drugs. The government hates competition.
- Never let your draft exceed your depth.
- Call the Captain more often than necessary.
- If everybody is thinking alike, then somebody is not thinking.
- Many people are itching for things they do not want to scratch for.
- Promises made in the storm are usually forgotten in the calm.
- Isn't it weird that in America our flag and culture offend so many people, but our benefits do not?

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**YOUR ENGLISH LESSON**—For all of you who wonder why folk from other countries have a bit of trouble with the English language, this is a clever piece put together by an English teacher.

Homographs are words of like spelling but with more than one meaning. A homograph that is also pronounced differently is a heteronym. For example:

- The bandage was “wound” around the “wound”.
- The farm was used to “produce produce”.
- The dump was so full that it had to “refuse” more “refuse”.
- We must “polish” the “Polish” furniture.
- He could “lead” if he would get the “lead” out.
- When shot at, the “dove dove” into the bushes.
- I did not “object” to the “object”.
- The insurance was “invalid” for the “invalid”.
- They were too “close” to the door to “close” it.
- The “wind” was too strong to “wind” the sail.
- There was a “row” among the oarsmen about how to “row”.

Let's face it, English is a difficult language. There is no egg in eggplant, nor ham in hamburger; neither apple nor pine in a pineapple. Quicksand can work slowly and boxing rings are square. How can a slim chance and a fat chance be the same and a wise man and a wise guy opposites? You have to marvel at the unique lunacy of a language in which your house can burn up as it burns down, or you fill in a form by filling it out, and in which an alarm goes off by going on.

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Nine teens die every day from texting while driving. Do we ban cell phones? Maybe raise the age you can get a smartphone to 21?

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You can never disarm evil!

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**NO SCALES, NO FINNS, NO GOOD**—Leviticus 11:9,10, *“These shall ye eat of all that are in the waters: whatsoever hath fins and scales in the waters, in the seas, and in the rivers, them shall ye eat. And all that have not fins and scales in the seas, and in the rivers of all that move in the waters, and of any living thing which is in the waters, they shall be an abomination unto you”*. Just why are fins and scales the characteristics that distinguish kosher fish? Is there something there that God knows would be harmful?

Scientific research has moved more and more doctors and nutritionists to recommend adding fish and fish oils to our diet. Studies indicate that eating fish once or twice each week may also help reduce blood cholesterol levels, a leading cause of atherosclerosis (hardening of the arteries), a major factor in the development of coronary heart disease.

Interestingly kosher dietary laws prohibit the eating of fish without both scales and fins. That eliminates a number of delicious sea foods, including shellfish, shrimp, catfish, lobster, mussels, eels, sharks, sturgeons, and swordfish, just to name a few. Clearly the law-giver knew something that has taken scientists years to discover. Now we know that fish with scales AND fins are equipped with a digestive system that prevents the absorption of poisons and toxins into their flesh from the waters they call home. Flounder, grouper, haddock, halibut, herring, mackerel, mahi mahi, orange roughy, perch, bass, pike, pollock, salmon, sardines, snapper, sole, tilapia, trout, are a few examples of fish with scales and fins.

While we are no longer under Old Testament dietary laws, the only way I've found to eat healthy is not to abstain from (depending on who you research), but to get God's hand of blessing on it—a lesson Peter had to learn (Acts 11:5-9; 1 Timothy 4:4,5).

Be sure you always pray before you eat!

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### NAUTICAL LANGUAGE WITH BIBLE VERSE

--Cup of Joe—From American Navy lore. Josephus Daniels (1862-1948) was appointed Secretary of the Navy by President Woodrow Wilson in 1913. During his time as Secretary of the Navy, “Joe” Daniels abolished the officers' wine, after which the strongest drink aboard Navy ships was coffee. A cup of coffee became known as “a cup of Joe”. Proverbs 20:1, *“Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.”*

--Davy Jones' Locker—Seamen's slang for the bottom of the sea. This expression is believed to be from the story that Davy Jones was the owner of a sixteenth-century London pub where unwary sailors were drugged and put in lockers and then awoke aboard ship to find they had been 'recruited' into the Navy. Jonah 2:6, *“I went down to the bottoms of the mountains; the earth with her bars was about me for ever: yet hast thou brought up my life from corruption, O LORD my God.”*

--Devil to Pay, Devil and the Deep Blue Sea—In traditional wooden ships, the sailors had to caulk or pay the seams with hot tar between the planks of the deck to prevent leakage into the bilge, The devil seam was topmost on the hull next to the scuppers at the edge of the deck and the longest and most difficult seam to caulk. Hence, if there was the “devil to pay”, then this was the most difficult and dangerous job since the sailor might be knocked down by a large wave and find himself between “the devil and the deep blue sea”. Exodus 14:3, *“For Pharaoh will say of the children of Israel, They are entangled in the land, the wilderness hath shut them in.”*

The Bible is filled with Nautical Notes! Read it!!

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**FISHY QUESTION**—Last edition's question asked for the article that had been printed previously in 1985. That was “The Rudder or the Rock”. For this edition, when would it not be proper to eat shellfish? (The answer is in one of the articles.)