

"Odd" name stuck with fellow, even after he was dead and buried



America's Heartland
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his children strict orders that, when he died, they wouldn't put that awful name on his tombstone. "In fact, just don't put any name on my tombstone," he told them. "Just leave it blank."

Years later, a fellow was walking through that graveyard and came across the stone with nothing written on it. He bent down for a closer look and said, "Isn't that odd?"

The Lord has always put great importance on names, and, at times, he changed people's names. For example, Jacob was renamed Israel. Saul was renamed Paul. Simon was renamed Cephas, which, when translated, is Peter. In each of those men's cases, the Lord changed far more than their names. He gave them total

make-overs.

Jacob was a deceiver, but Israel was devout. Saul was a persecutor of Christians, but Paul was the great apostle who, after meeting the Lord, spent the rest of his life urging people to become Christians. And Peter, the fisherman, became a fisher of men, rock solid in his faith, after failing miserably a few times.

You remember that followers of Christ weren't always called Christians. The Bible tells us "it was in Antioch that the disciples were first called Christians" (Acts 11:26). That name stuck because they were indeed Christ-like.

I recently moved to a new state into a neighborhood where no one who lives near me had ever laid eyes on me

before. I hope it doesn't take long before those new neighbors are referring to me as that "Christian" who lives down the block.

They will see me walking to the vehicle with a Bible as I go to church on Sunday mornings. That will be a clue. They will be greeted warmly with a friendly smile and a kind word when we meet on the sidewalk. That will be a clue. They won't hear loud, vulgar song lyrics emanating from my home. That will be a clue. They won't see me parading around in the yard half naked. That will be a clue too. But I've found the only sure-fire way people will know we're Christians is to tell them about Jesus, to let them see we love Him, and that we have given our lives to serving

Him, not in an obnoxious way but with kindness and humility.

The Apostle Peter described Christians as a "peculiar people" who have been called out of darkness into Christ's marvelous light.

In this day and age, living for Jesus indeed makes people peculiar, but in a good way. In fact, if you're sold out for Jesus, you might be like the fellow whose mother named him "Odd."

People might see how different you are from non-Christians, take a closer look at you, and say, Isn't that odd? Hopefully, they'll go on to say, "I'd like to be odd, too."

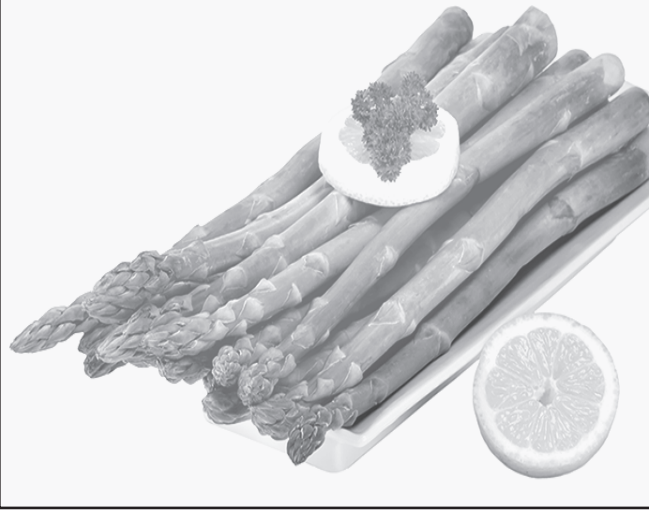
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Kitchen Diva by Angela Shelf Medearis

Asparagus is perfect for spring recipes

Nothing says spring like a beautiful bunch of crisp asparagus. While asparagus is available year-round, it's much better when purchased locally. Asparagus is easy to select and prepare and comes in a variety of vibrant colors, including green, violet, purple and white. It also grows wild and is commercially available fresh, frozen and canned. The stalks range in size from colossal to small. Various types and colors of asparagus can be used without any noticeable difference in the taste, so mix and match colors and sizes for visual interest.

Asparagus should be crisp and firm, not limp or wrinkled, with tightly closed tips. Dull colors and



ridges in the stems are an indication of a lack of freshness. The stalks should not be limp or dry at the cut and of uniform thickness.

If you're planning to use the asparagus on the same day, rinse it under cool water and pat the stalks dry with a paper towel. Smaller stalks can be broken or cut at the point where the stem naturally snaps. Peeling the end of thicker stalks with a paring knife or a vegetable peeler removes any woody stems and can be done up to 2 hours before cooking. Place the prepared asparagus in a plastic bag in the refrigerator to stay crisp until ready to cook.

Fresh asparagus should never be washed or soaked before storing. If the asparagus is bound with a rubber band, remove it, as it will pinch and bruise the stalks. Asparagus can be stored for up to two days if the stalks are trimmed and placed upright in a jar with about an inch of water in the bottom. Cover the asparagus with a plastic bag and store the spears

in the refrigerator. Asparagus cooks in minutes and can be prepared steamed or boiled in the microwave or oven. It tastes delicious hot or cold, and it also freezes well if blanched first in hot water.

Asparagus is a nutritional powerhouse. One-half cup of cooked asparagus contains significant amounts of folic acid, vitamin C, potassium and beta-carotene. It's also a heart-healthy food, and a natural diuretic.

This versatile vegetable works well as a room-temperature appetizer, blended into a soup, as a flavorful side dish, the main ingredient in a colorful salad or as part of a main course like my recipe for Lemon Chicken with Asparagus. Preparing asparagus is a delicious and nutritious way to celebrate spring.

LEMON CHICKEN WITH ASPARAGUS

- 4 chicken breasts, about 3 pounds, washed and fat trimmed and removed
- 1 1/2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon pepper
- 1 1/2 teaspoons poultry seasoning
- 4 garlic cloves, chopped
- 1 red bell pepper, chopped
- 1/2 pound asparagus, stalks trimmed and cut into 1 inch pieces
- 1 teaspoon lemon zest
- 1/2 cup chicken stock
- 3 cups cooked rice

In a large non-stick skillet, heat the oil over medium high heat. Season the chicken pieces with the salt, pepper and poultry seasoning. Place the chicken, skin-side down, and cook for 5 to 7 minutes. Turn the pieces skin-side up, and cook until golden brown and done, about 5 minutes. Stir in the garlic and red bell pepper. Add the asparagus and cook for 1 minute. Stir in the lemon zest and the chicken stock and bring to a simmer. Cover and cook for 3 minutes. Serve immediately over hot rice.

 Angela Shelf Medearis is an award-winning children's author, culinary historian and the author of seven cookbooks. Her new cookbook is "The Kitchen Diva's Diabetic Cookbook." Her website is www.divapro.com. To see how-to videos, recipes and much, much more, Like Angela Shelf Medearis, The Kitchen Diva! on Facebook. Recipes may not be reprinted without permission from Angela Shelf Medearis.
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If you want to walk on water, You've got to get out of the boat

Wednesday, May 19th, 2021 Message
 Bro. Warren Rogers, Retired Baptist Minister
 Based on Matthew 14:22-33

God gets our attention in various ways: In Exodus 33:13-13, Moses wanted to see God's glory. He took Moses to cleft in a rock, hid him there and then when he passed by, he covered the entrance with his hand, allowing Moses to only see his back. In 1 Kings 19:11, God had Elijah stand on a mount and then passed by him in several different forms, such a storm, etc. He got Elijah's attention. There are several stories in the Bible when God got someone's attention. He would pass by in some form or another. Every time, they said "yes," because they felt the power of God in their lives. What about Paul on the road to Damascus, when God struck him blind and an angel spoke to him, he gladly said yes to God's command.

There is more to life than sitting in a boat or a church pew, where you feel safe, secure and comfortable.

What is your boat? A vocation? -- Spending all your time working, no time for God. In a relationship? Your home, children, grandchildren with no time left for God?

What is your greatest fear? Secret past, afraid of failure, someone making fun of you?

A lot of people are afraid to step up to the plate. The greatest hitters in baseball strike out 2 out of 3 times. Babe Ruth had 60 home runs in one season but struck out 89 times that same season. He was in the top 10 strike outs, 4 times in his career.

There were 11 disciples in the boat who didn't mind watching but didn't want to do anything. We have some in our churches just like them - they don't mind watching someone else teach the class, drive the bus, mow the yard; but, don't ask them to do anything. The disciples were boat potatoes, a lot of church members are pew potatoes.

Someone asked Winston Churchill what prepared him to speak out against Germany and then lead Great Britain against Germany in World War II. He said, "I had to repeat a grade in elementary school." They replied, "you mean you failed a grade in school?" Churchill said, "I never failed anything in my life. I was given a second chance to get it right." Was Churchill a failure?

Was Peter a failure? His faith may have wavered a little, but the biggest failures were the 11 disciples that didn't try to walk on water. And the saddest Christians are the ones that don't step up to the plate, afraid to try or strike out.

"But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me." Matthew 14:30 Peter might have faltered but he knew where to get help. "And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" Matthew 14:30 As soon as Peter asked for help, Jesus was there, reaching out his hand to help. Jesus can help you too. You just have to realize your condition and call out to the Lord.

My friends, it is important to God's work that we are not afraid to walk on water or step up when He asks us too. Won't you listen to him today?

Until next week, if you need to talk to me, if I can help you in any way, just call 606-481-0444 .

If your church needs a fill-in preacher, I have a few dates open. I can come preach, or sing and preach, or just sing.

Warren Rogers
 Retired Baptist preacher

THEY'LL DO IT EVERY TIME



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BY AL SCADUTO

