

I used to believe in Leprechauns

Written by Rev. James L. Snyder
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I must make a confession. It has taken me a long time to get to the place where I am willing and comfortable to make such an admission. I think some of my friends will be shocked at what I have to say. I think it is time I come clean and confess. Sort of, clean the air, so to speak. Simply put, I used to believe in leprechauns. I know that comes as a shock to all of my friends. At a distance, I look like a very reasonable, well-adjusted person. And the further away the better I look. The same thing goes with my distant relatives. The more distant they are the more I like them. Nobody would suspect that I had such a problem. You cannot tell what burdens people are carrying just by looking at them. It all came to me by way of reading books. When I was a young person, I read many books that had to do with leprechauns, rainbows and pots full of gold at the end of those rainbows. I was young and naïve at the time and believed everything I read.

Once, while my father was sleeping on the couch, I asked him if he believed in leprechauns and he grunted in such a way that I took it to mean that he also believed in them. If you cannot trust your father while he is sleeping, who in the world can you trust? Many a day I spent in the woods at the end of our property looking for leprechauns. I can testify that they are rather elusive creatures but several times, I almost caught one. They always were just a few seconds quicker than I was. I looked where I thought they were but they were nowhere to be found.

Do not get me wrong here. I was never frustrated in my fruitless search of leprechauns. There is no better way to spend a day in the woods than searching for the elusive leprechaun. I began to think what I would do if I actually caught one. Then what would I do in the woods? It is always better to seek and not find than to find something and have to quit the seeking. I think it is something like fishermen. Few fishermen really fish for fish. They fish so they can go home and brag about the one that got away. It is hard to brag about the fish you caught and then there is the messy job of cleaning those fish. No, it is better to have fished and not caught anything to have fished and caught something that you have to take home and clean.

Such was my thoughts concerning my leprechaun pursuit. Many an evening I entertained my parents with the exciting exploits of searching and almost catching a leprechaun today. I am sure they got tired of hearing, but I never tired of telling. Then the time came when I really had to face the facts. After almost a decade of diligently searching for leprechauns, I had to conclude that they were simply a figment of my imagination. And you know what happens to figs if you keep them around for a long time. I had to realize there were no such creatures as leprechauns. I must confess that it was a rather sad day for me. It was the beginning of many sad days like this. For instance, the day I realized Santa Claus was not real. Every year I diligently prepared my Christmas list starting out with, "Dear Ole Santa," and dictated my list of Christmas hopefuls. Often I would sit on his lap and carefully read my list to him. The last time I

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did this my wife made me get off his lap. Something about being too big or something like that.

To my recollection, he never made good on any of those requests. Jolly old soul? Phooey!

Then there was the Easter Bunny. This had me for quite a while. After all, I love the chocolate Easter bunnies he brought me along with the rest of the candy. Unlike Santa Claus, the Easter Bunny was very generous in dousing me with candy galore. I truly hated putting the Easter Bunny away. Probably the last one I will mention would be when a politician says, "I feel your pain." At first, I thought this was a genuine concern for my state of affairs. When I found out he was just playing me in his political theater I wanted him to feel some more of my pain.

Pondering this, I begin to realize that many things that I have believed in turned out to not be true. It is quite disconcerting when something you have believed in for a long time turns out to be phony. While I am confessing here, I must confess that only one thing has turned out not to be disappointing. That one thing has been the Bible. It has been the only thing that has not let me down in life. I take great comfort in Psalms 119:105, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."

Many things disappoint me and I have given them up. I start each day with the only thing that will never let me down, that is the Word of God. I believe the Bible.

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