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Only when it's too late do you realize the little things that could have changed everything. Upon reflection, it's my Christianity that I look back upon with a mixture of regret and confusion. I used to be a Bible-carrying believer who let Christ into every part of my life, etc. But obviously I missed something, because now it gone, though what took its place is another story entirely.

I know why it left. In retrospect I realize that if someone had just given me a more consistent vision of Christianity in my formative years, that is, pushing the "love your neighbor" envelope harder without digressing into the whole gay-bashing, sexist, condescending rhetoric, things might be different.

What would happen if ol' Jesus Christ popped up again? Not for Armageddon, just a quick stop off to remind us of a

few things.

So let's set up a little scenario: JC, known this time as Bob (since Jesus was a common name in his own time), pops out of a 14-year-old unwed mother in Seward. His mother would then move to Lincoln, escaping her abusive boyfriend. To keep her and her son alive, she would work two minimum-wage jobs (because nobody wants to cough up full-time benefits for unskilled workers).

Little Jesse-Bob Christ would hang around local clergy members for a while, then decide to study under some local firebrand most people considered a nut. Best candidate: Ernie Chambers.

After performing his first miracle (turning water into beer, thereby saving a local keg party from the horrors of sobriety), he'd immediately set out to see the people he cared the most about; the kind of people we'd rather forget about. In his time, it was the adulterers, the tax collectors and the poor. In our time, it would be the prostitutes, welfare recipients and drug users/dealers.

He'd go around healing AIDS patients and the like; I suspect that he wouldn't give a damn if they were homosexual, since he never said one thing on the subject his first time around.

He'd have no time for the good, middle and upper-middle class Christians who faithfully attend church every Sunday, send their children to moral, isolationist private schools and vote Republican.

He'd probably turn over a collection table or two at the local churches and run out every televangelist he could get his hands on.

He would denounce prayer in school, at political functions, before football games and after football victories and all the other hypocrites who pray in public to get attention.

He'd probably have a quiet word or two with the Pope and more than a word or two with the head of the Lincoln diocese.

He'd expose Pat Buchanan, Pat Robertson, Jesse Helms, Rush Limbaugh, and a whole slew of others for the hypocriti-

"Christ was a man trying to cut through the clutter of a needlessly complicated system of laws and self-righteousness ..."

cal Pharisees they are. They, on the other hand, would no doubt use him as a good example for why we need the death penalty.

Speaking of the death penalty, Jesse-Bob Christ would probably recommend we find somebody without flaw to throw the switch.

He'd tell people to stop whining about taxes and pay the government its due.

As a side note, I could imagine him getting ticked at a McDonalds restaurant that didn't serve him right and cause it to shrivel up. (If you don't get that one, look up the story of Jesus and the fig tree. As soon as you figure out that one, please let me know.)

Like his first time around, he'd probably keep a lot of close women followers around - as

well as men. He'd also hang around more blacks, Hispanics, and other minorities.

He would probably have to remind us again about loving others as we do ourselves, adding that there is no "except clause" for gays, Jews, Hindus, socialists, Bill Clinton, etc.

He might even add something to the effect of us all being sons and daughters of God, and to stop making such a big deal about him in particular.

And what would we do?

Probably pay as much attention to him as we did the last time around. That is, miss the point entirely.

Funny. I may not believe him to be the savior anymore, but I still wish more people would listen to what Christ actually said.



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There's nothing quite like living in the dorms.

Nor is there anything like two half-naked guys racing dorm vacuums up and down your floor screaming "This sucks, man! This sucks, man!"

... never quite realizing that they are in the female-only dorm.

For those of you entering your first year of the "dorm experience," have hope. Only those of you insane enough to be awake at 3 a.m. will be lucky enough to see the vacuum races, or even worse, the chemically imbalanced geniuses betting on them.

To help, I've put together this little dorm guide for you. Believe me, it all comes from experience. I've survived two roommates, three beds, one television lost to a rotting pumpkin and - most importantly - two years of dorm food. Sure, I might glow in the dark, but hey, I survived.

Moving in

OK. Maybe you've already moved in. Maybe you haven't. Or maybe you have a warehouse load of boxes in your room and are trying to decide which ones are "necessary" to open before winter.

In any case, there are a few really important things to remember:

1. *Whichever side of the room you pick will be the wrong side.*

This is a given. The bed will squeak, the medicine cabinet won't open or you'll find a body in the closet. Save yourself the aggravation - flip a coin to choose a side.

2. *You will be forced to hijack an elevator.*

I suggest the "partner" technique. Bring a friend, (OK, pay a friend) to help you move in. Wait until an empty elevator arrives and quickly get aboard. Before anyone else can act, pull out a semi-realistic-looking toy gun, put it to your friend's head

and scream, "Get back! Get back! Everyone off the elevator or Suzie bites it! I mean it!"

Then push all laughing or screaming passengers out of the elevator and continue the routine until the authorities arrive. Then ditch the "evidence" down the trash chute.

Getting situated

1. Meet your SA

This is important. This one individual enforces the rules and wields the almighty power of letting (or not letting) your wet, towel-wrapped body back into your room if you get locked out.

Upon introducing yourself to your SA, you should be worried if any of the following occur:

1) Your SA releases "the dogs" when you knock on his or her door.

2) Your SA's "on duty" time slot has the words "What? Are you kidding me?" written on it.

3) Your SA has picked "The Wonderful World of Stephen King" as the theme for your floor.

2. The Pizza Situation

No column on dorm life would be complete without mentioning pizza. So I'm mentioning it. When ordering pizza, you'll be told that the pizza delivery person will "call" shortly before arriving. But when the phone rings and he or she says, "I'll be in your lobby in five minutes," it's a test. He or she won't really be there. He or she is buying time and easing your mind. Don't give in! Tell him or her, "Oh yeah, well where are you right now?!!!" WARNING: This might result in a pizza being delivered to you with an obscene word written on it in pepperoni. It is still edible ...

Getting along with the roommate

1. *How well do you know him or her?*

This is a good question to ask right away. If your roommate is a close friend, it will become an even

more difficult question. Am I prepared to sacrifice our friendship to the presence of dirty He-Man underwear in my "space?" Or, am I prepared to handle phone calls from her mother when she's really in Mexico?

But if you're in a room with a total stranger, things get even more interesting. You must make it your mission to find out all you can about this person before unwanted facts arise.

Does he or she have multiple girlfriends/boyfriends? Will he or she share? OK, bad idea. Does he or she drink? Smoke? Do drugs? Will he or she smoke/drink/do drugs in the room with multiple boyfriends/girlfriends while you spend the night sleeping in the showers? These are good things to find out.

2. *You might be in trouble if ...*

Your roommate has decided to become a nudist.

Your roommate calls your significant other more than you do.

Your roommate has planted explosives in the room so you keep on "your side."

3. *Now, are you prepared to make the Ultimate Sacrifice?*

Let's say things with you and the roommate haven't gone all that well. Maybe things are flat-out terrible. Are you ready to make the ultimate sacrifice? Are you ready to kill your roommate? The only question is how to do it. I recommend death by country music. Sure, your roommate will scream a lot, but in the long run it's the best bet. It doesn't take too long, it's not messy and boy, is it painful.

Then comes the question of getting rid of the body. What are you going to do

with it?

The trash chute. Just make sure your SA isn't around. It would really suck to be stuffing Bob into the trash chute and have your SA walk by.

NOTE: Do not try to throw a living person down a trash chute. People have really been hurt this way.

Well, I've covered all the basics - moving in, getting situated and getting used to your roommate. All that's left is to live the dorm experience. You might even find it entertaining.

So good luck and I'll see you at the next vacuum cleaner race ...



AARONSTECKELBERG/DN

Vacuum up those tears

Dorm life can be bearable with this guide