**Evading the Situation**

**Why do you see the splinter which is in your brother’s eye,**

**and do not feel the beam which is in your own eye?**

***(St. Matthew 7:3)***

**Frank gets on the phone and says: “Hello, Amnesty International? Help! I need to be released from reality!” *(Bob Thaves, in Frank & Ernest comic strip)***

**Bad week for: More censorship, after a bank executive in upstate New York tried to buy all copies of a local newspaper in a failed attempt to conceal his drunk-driving arrest. Police said Joseph Talbot bought nearly 1,000 issues of the Times of Wayne County, at $1,25 each, to prevent the community from seeing his mug shot. (*The Week magazine, January 13, 2017)***

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**Humans blink about 17,000 times a day! *(Kids’ Pages)***

**When you were an infant, you blinked about once every two minutes, if typical. Now you blink a dozen times a minute. Why the change? Medical science is working on that one, too. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**Every day, your eyes are closed for a total of 30 minutes . . . blinking. (*Uncle John’s Bathroom Reader: Wise Up!, p. 185)***

**Researchers have learned that the rate and duration of our blinks vary according to the tasks we perform. People engaged in visual activities like drawing blink less frequently; fatigued individuals blink more often than when they are rested. We blink more if upset. *(John A. Stern, in Reader’s Digest)***

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**During the 2nd World War, in London, many mothers, concerned about the welfare of their children, sent them to countries where they would be safe from the falling bombs. Some mothers did not, believing their children would be safer at home. Later, studies showed that those children who stayed in the loving atmosphere of their own homes suffered less physically, as well as emotionally. *(Rev. Marion Parrish Hall)***

**The place you are born is simply the first place you flee. *(Daniel Alarcon, writer)***

**If you have a car, it probably comes with a light on the dash that will glow red when your engine overheats. Now, one thing you can do if that light comes on is hit it with a hammer you keep in the glove box for just this purpose. Then you keep right on driving. But soon the car will stop and you’ll get out, look under the hood, and kick yourself for attacking the wrong problem. This is how most of us go through life – hitting the warning signs with a hammer while ignoring the real problems. *(Rev. Charles B. Swindoll)***

**The florist shop where I work was in a state of frenzy the day before Mother’s Day. The workroom in the back bore evidence of our frantic, efforts – trash-littered floor, overflowing refuse cans, containers of newly arrived flowers. We noticed a five-year-old boy surveying the chaotic scene. One of the designers smiled at him and said, “Hi, you looking for a job? We need someone to put flowers away, sweep the floor and empty trash.” For a moment he just stood there, eyes big, taking in every detail. As he ran back to the showroom, we heard him call, “Hey, Mom, they need you in there!” *(Marie Womack, in Reader’s Digest)***

**They chose not to attend:**

* **J. Paul Getty – not at two sons’ funerals**
* **Martha Washington – not at George’s funeral**
* **Deng Xiaoping – not at dad’s funeral**
* **Forrest Mars – not at dad’s funeral**
* **Stalin – not at mom’s funeral. *(World Features Syndicate)***

**You can close your eyes to reality but not to memories. *(Stanislaw J. Lec, Polish author)***

**We condemn in others the wrong we don't want to face in ourselves. (*Frederick Buechner, writer-theologian)***

**Of course I’m dealing with the problem: by refusing to talk or think about it. *(Ashleigh Brilliant, in Pot-Shots)***

**The typical street dentist of 300 years ago sailed down the byway of Europe in the company of horn players and drum beaters. The musicians served two purposes: To alert all that the tooth-puller was at hand and to drown out their cries when he pulled the teeth. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**Something else psychologists say is that certain people with a deep-seated desire to hide tend to blink their eyes a lot. *(L. M. Boyd)***

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**When driving, you blink less on a city street than on a freeway, bear in mind. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**The driving instructor was giving lessons to an extremely nervous student who panicked whenever another car approached on a particular two-lane road. One day, however, they got to the same stretch of road, and she remained completely calm. “This time you’re doing fine!” exclaimed the instructor. “Yes,” the novice driver agreed. “Now when I see another car coming, I shut my eyes.” *(M. Herbrink, in Reader’s Digest)***

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**Sometimes we feel there is something pious in resigning ourselves to hard knocks. We could learn from pagan writers like the Stoics of ancient Greece about attempting calamity with resignation. Often it’s the easy way out, a sort of anesthesia where there should be action. *(Rev. Billy Graham, in Till Armageddon)***

**I recently had my problems on the run, but now they’ve re-grouped, and are making another attack. *(Ashleigh Brilliant, in Pot-Shots)***

**Holding your head in the sand isn’t the best way to hold your end up.  
*(Bits & Pieces)***

**Hippocrates urged doctors to conceal most matters from patients.  
*(L. M. Boyd)***

**One day a retired school teacher walked into a blacksmith shop and picked up a horseshoe, not realizing that it had just come from the forge. He immediately dropped it and jammed his hand into his pocket, trying to act as if nothing had happened. The blacksmith noticed and asked with a grin, “Kind of hot, wasn’t it?” “Nope,” answered the retiree through clenched teeth, “it just doesn’t take me long to look at a horseshoe.” *(The PassTime Paper)***

**Despite Hurricane Katrina’s devastation last year, coastal residents have not taken steps to protect themselves from the next big storm, a new survey found. Mason-Dixon Polling found that 60 percent of people living near the Atlantic and Gulf coasts have no disaster plan, while 83 percent have not fortified their homes. “For whatever reason,” said National Hurricane Center Director Max Mayfield, “people are reacting to the hurricane threat by sticking their heads in the sand.” *(The Week magazine, May 26, 2006)***

**Why Japan hasn’t faced its war past: Japan is trying to take back its apology for wartime atrocities, said Kim Jin. Imperial Japan invaded much of Asia in the 1930s and 1940s, massacring millions of Koreans, Chinese, Filipinos, and others. It “conducted horrific biological and chemical experiments” on living people and forced thousands of women to be sex slaves. “If not for Japan’s militaristic and chauvinistic ambition,” the Korean Peninsula would still be one country. In 1995, a Japanese prime minister apologized for the war aggression, yet the Japanese people have never truly accepted their nation’s guilt. Japanese textbooks gloss over the subject, and lawmakers pay annual tribute to dead war criminals. This is because Japan was never forced to own up to its crimes at the highest level: that of its deity-like emperor. Of the three Axis leaders, only Japanese Emperor Hirohito “managed to escape blame and punishment.” Gen. Douglas MacArthur thought Japan would be easier to pacify with Hirohito still nominally in charge, so he shielded him. But it’s because Hirohito was never forced to apologize for Japan’s monstrous crimes that Prime Minister Shinzo Abe today has the temerity to seek to tone down the 1995 apology. He “would not have dared to reverse the words of the emperor.” *(The Week magazine, May 10, 2013)***

**You meet your destiny on the road you take to avoid it. *(Carl Jung, psychiatrist)***

**Should you shield the canyons from the windstorms, you would not see the beauty of their carvings. *(Elizabeth Kubler-Ross, in The Wheel of Life)***

**People who drink to drown their sorrow should be told that sorrow knows how to swim. *(Ann Landers)***

**Literature is the most agreeable way of ignoring life. *(Fernando Pessoa, poet)***

**My wife's uncle, a Kansas farmer, drove an old pickup that had seen better days. Once, as he and my brother-in-law were rattling along, a loud noise suddenly came from the rear of the truck. “What was that?” my brother-in-law asked. Uncle just looked straight ahead and replied, “Don't know. Couldn't have been too bad -- we're still going.” *(Al Maneth, in Reader's Digest)***

**A person often meets his destiny on the road he took to avoid it. *(Jean de La Fontaine)***

**When your eyes are wide shut: If a scary movie soundtrack gives you the creeps, shutting your eyes will only make it worse, says New Scientist. Israeli researchers watched the brain scans of volunteers as they listened to the spooky scores from movies designed to frighten audiences. At times, the volunteers listened with their eyes open, and at other times with their eyes shut. When subjects listened to the eerie music with their eyes closed, their brain scans revealed much more activity in the amygdala and prefrontal cortex – regions of the brain that register and modulate emotion. Closing one’s eyes apparently changes how the brain perceives and processes all kinds of music, says University of Tel-Aviv neuroscientist Talma Hendler, amplifying its emotional impact. “I suspect if we had music that was positive, we would get a similar effect.” *(The Week magazine, August 14, 2009)***

**Children aren't happy with nothing to ignore / And that's what parents were created for. *(Ogden Nash)***

**Penn State University scandal: Let’s not get too sanctimonious, said David Brooks in The New York Times. It’s easy to tell ourselves that if we’d been in Joe Paterno’s shoes, or Mike McQueary’s, we would have turned our good friend Jerry Sandusky over to the cops. The uncomfortable truth, however, is that throughout the history of human evil, from the Holocaust to Abu Ghraib to Bernie Madoff’s Ponzi scheme, only a handful of people ever try to intervene, while the vast majority find ways to deceive themselves about what’s happening. *(The Week magazine, November 25, 2011)***

**Newlywed to friend: "He promised the sun, the moon and the stars, but he was evasive when it came to the dishwasher." (*Smiles)***

**A psychiatrist once said that I gambled in order to escape the reality of life. I told him that's why everybody does everything. (*Norm MacDonald comedian)***

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**Reality is staring me in the face – who will be the first to blink? *(Ashleigh Brilliant, in Pot-Shots)***

**You can avoid reality, but you cannot avoid the consequences of avoiding reality. *(Ayn Rand)***

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**Bertrand Russell said one reason Hitler lost WW II was that he could not bear to face the truth. Bearers of bad news were punished. Soon no one would tell him the facts. Thus his decisions were more and more based on misinformation and ignorance of the truth. *(Bits & Pieces)***

**Human beings have an extraordinary capacity to ignore risks that threaten their livelihood, as though this will make them go away. *(Nate Silver, journalist)***

**The ultimate result of shielding men from the effects of folly is to fill the world with fools. *(Herbert Spencer)***

**Somebody should do something about what only I can do anything about. *(Ashleigh Brilliant, in Pot-Shots)*   
As an itinerant minister I have wondered why some of us want to move so often from one appointment to another and I have concluded it is difficult to stay in one parish for long because your failures are there to stare you in the face. *(Phil Barnhart, in Seasonings for Sermons, p. 66)***

**Old steel-belted tires are hard to dispose of. You can’t cut them into pieces any too easily. They don’t burn up cleanly. If you bury them, they work their way back up to the surface. Environmentalists hate them. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**Bad week for: Trying to change the local culture, after New York City authorities began removing “Don’t Honk” street signs from across the city because they’re almost universally ignored. *(The Week magazine, February 8, 2013)***

**All human beings should try to learn before they die what they are running from, and to, and why. *(James Thurber)***

**Two tramps sat with their backs against an old oak tree. Before them was a rippling stream. Although the day was delightful, one of them was disconsolate. “You know, Jim,” he mused, “this business of tramping your way through life is not what it’s cracked up to be. Think it over -- nights on park benches or in a cold barn. Traveling on freight trains and always dodging the police. Being kicked from one town to another. Wondering where your next meal is coming from. Wandering, unwanted everywhere, sneered at by your fellow men…” His voice trailed off as he sighed heavily. His companion shifted his position slightly. “Well,” observed the second tramp, “if that’s the way you feel about it, why don’t you find yourself a job?” The first tramp sat up with a jerk, opening his mouth in amazement. “What?” he exclaimed. “And admit I’m a failure?” *(Highways of Happiness)***

**In 1915, Woodrow Wilson turned a blind eye to the Armenian genocide. In the 1940s, Franklin Roosevelt refused to bomb the rail lines leading to Auschwitz. In 1994, Bill Clinton turned away from the slaughter in Rwanda. And in 2005, President Bush is acquiescing in the first genocide of the 21st century, in Darfur. Bush is paralyzed for the same reason as his predecessors: There is no great public outcry, there are no neat solutions, we already have our hands full, and it all seems rather distant and hopeless. *(Nicholas Kristof, in The New York Times, as it appeared in the Rocky Mountain News, November 30, 2005)***

**You cannot find peace by avoiding life. *(Michael Cunningham, author)***

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