



“Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me.” I disagree. Words can be powerful weapons that do great damage to another person’s reputation and well-being. Words hurt.

On the other hand, Stephen (Acts 6:8 - 7:60) could bear witness that stonings hurt worse than words. Seldom, if ever, are words fatal. Words can incite violence, but the violent actions do far more damage than the words. The violent actions carry more responsibility than the vindictive words.

I understand words, even a foolish word, can be sin — thoughts can be sin. I understand that what one thinks today can be what he says tomorrow and does the next day. I understand this progression (or regression). Sin is sin, and in “justification,” any sin puts us in need of

grace. But in “sanctification,” different sins carry different consequences. To do something carries far greater consequences than to think it — though, still a sin. Well, to do something carries far greater consequences than to say something.

I’ve been taught “actions speak louder than words.” Francis of Assisi supposedly said, “Preach the gospel at all times, and when necessary, use words.” I understand words (whether read or heard) are necessary in order to share the gospel — or else we are playing “gospel charades.” But our actions validate and give credibility to our

verbal witness. Too often, our actions speak so loudly, the lost person cannot hear what we are saying.

Someone said, “Actions never lie.” I disagree. Hypocrisy does exist. But I believe actions have a higher batting average than words. We need politicians whose words during the campaign match up with their deeds in office. Remember, what they do becomes law — not what they said. How they vote on critical issues should affect your vote — both are actions, not words.

Many liberal progressives, and much of the news media today, act as if words are more important than deeds. They

are sadly confused. What an elected official, or public servant at any level, does, is far more important than what he says.

Jesus tells the story in Matthew 21:28-31 about a man with two sons. The first son said he would go work in the vineyard and did not “go.” The second “said” no, but “went.” Jesus said, “Whether of them twain did the will of the father?”

Ben Franklin said, “Well done is better than well said.” Our words are important, but our deeds are more important. What your neighbor sees outweighs what he hears — IN DEED.

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In Deed

Pastor pens long journey caring for his mother

BRENTWOOD, Tenn. (BP and local reports) — As a minister for more than 40 years, Mike Glenn walked through the valley of dementia and Alzheimer’s disease with many families through the years. He admits that until you face it personally, it is truly hard to understand what a family goes through.

“Caring for someone with dementia or Alzheimer’s disease is totally consuming,” said Glenn, pastor of Brentwood Church, Brentwood, Tn.

According to the Alzheimer’s Association, an estimated 5.8 million Americans are living with Alzheimer’s and more than 16 million Americans provide unpaid care for people with Alzheimer’s or other dementias.

Glenn recently penned a book, published by Southern Baptist’s B&H Publishing, entitled, *Coffee with Mom: Caring for a Parent with Dementia*. His hope is that the book will provide encouragement to families who are walking down a similar path and help them realize they’re not alone.

“Sometimes, the only thing you want to know is that you’re not alone in the world,” he said. “I hope by telling my mom’s story, you’ll understand there are lots of people who are walking the same road.”

He noted that every patient is different. “There is no ‘right way’ to deal with the disease,” Glenn said.

The book is based on a series of tweets Glenn posted following daily meetings with his mother Barbara Glenn over

coffee. He would stop on his way to church each morning and have coffee with his mother at the retirement and memory care center where she lived.

“Sometimes those visits were funny. Other times they were painful beyond belief,” he noted.

The tweets, he said, were a way “to deal with the funny but painful daily process of dealing with Mom and her illness. The tweets found a life of their own and the book followed from there,” he said.

The book was released nearly a year after his mother passed away in July of 2018.

Glenn said having coffee with his mother was “hilarious, humiliating, warm, freezing cold, angry, touching, loving, and brutal,” but a year after her death, “I would give anything to have another cup of coffee with her this morning.”

One of the things he learned from his experience was the importance of having conversations about the subject before it becomes an issue.

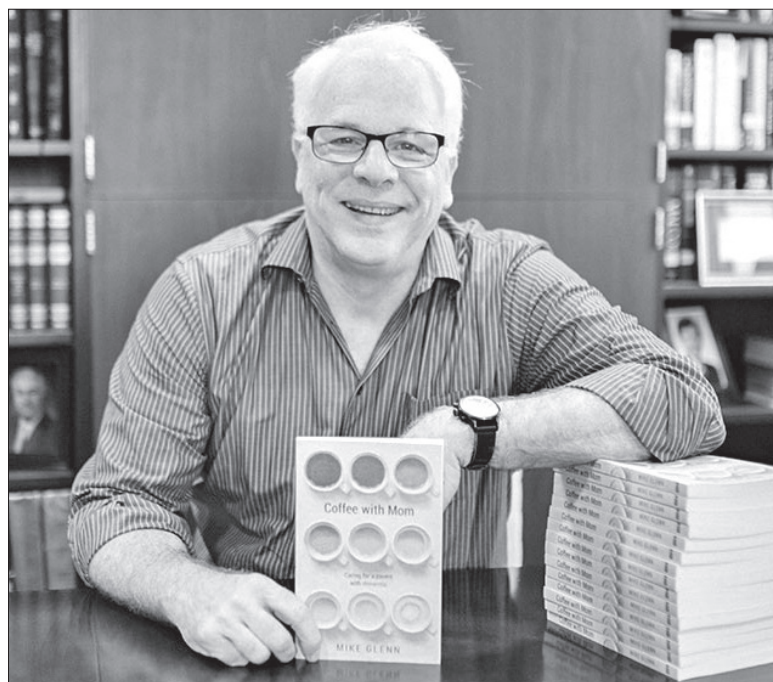
“I had the gift of my dad telling me how he wanted things done,” should he die before his wife, Glenn said.

Glenn noted that in dealing with patients with dementia, rapid-fire decisions have to be made.

“I had the peace of knowing I was doing what dad wanted,” he said.

Glenn encourages older adults to tell children what they want while they are able to make those decisions.

“Tell your children what



Glenn

you want done (for specific situations),” he said. “If they know what mom or dad wanted, it will give them peace in difficult situations.”

In the book Glenn acknowledged, “One of the hardest things about dealing with a parent who has Alzheimer’s is there’s never a clear-cut answer on what to do next. Even if you know ‘what’ to do, knowing ‘when’ to do it is just as baffling.

“As a care-giver, you’re constantly dealing with ‘on one hand,’ and ‘then, on the other hand.’”

Glenn experienced this when he knew he had to take

away his mother’s car keys and that she could no longer drive. That was going to be “a suicide mission,” he wrote in the book.

After it was over and his mother was no longer on the highway, Glenn reflected, “It might have been hard. It might have been uncomfortable, but everyone was safe and I could live with that. Sometimes life gives you hard choices, and other times life doesn’t give you any choice at all.

“Either way, you still have to choose and carry the consequences of that choice for good or bad.”

Glenn observed the greatest lesson he learned while

dealing with his mom was the power of love.

“When I was little, I counted on mom to take care of me,” he said. “There was no meeting, no clarification of expectations. I just knew that whatever decision she made would be in my best interest.

“Now, she couldn’t make her own decisions, and she was now counting on me to do what was best for her,” he said. “This is what love does. Love always seeks the best of the beloved. Even when it’s hard — especially when it’s hard. Love makes the hard choices.”

In his book, Glenn reminds readers that when caring for a parent with Alzheimer’s or dementia, “in the end, you have to live with yourself. If you can remember, in all of the craziness of the disease, the only thing that really matters is knowing you did the best you could, you’ll be fine.

“Less than that is hard to live with.”

Glenn said his desire for the book is that everyone who reads it “would understand the great privilege it is to care for your parents. I was very honored to be able to care for my mom.

“I hope the book will spark some conversations in the family to start talking about the hard choices that life may require of each of us. I would want people to understand God is good and God is faithful — even in the toughest of times.”

For more information on Glenn’s book, visit tinyurl.com/mikeglenn2.