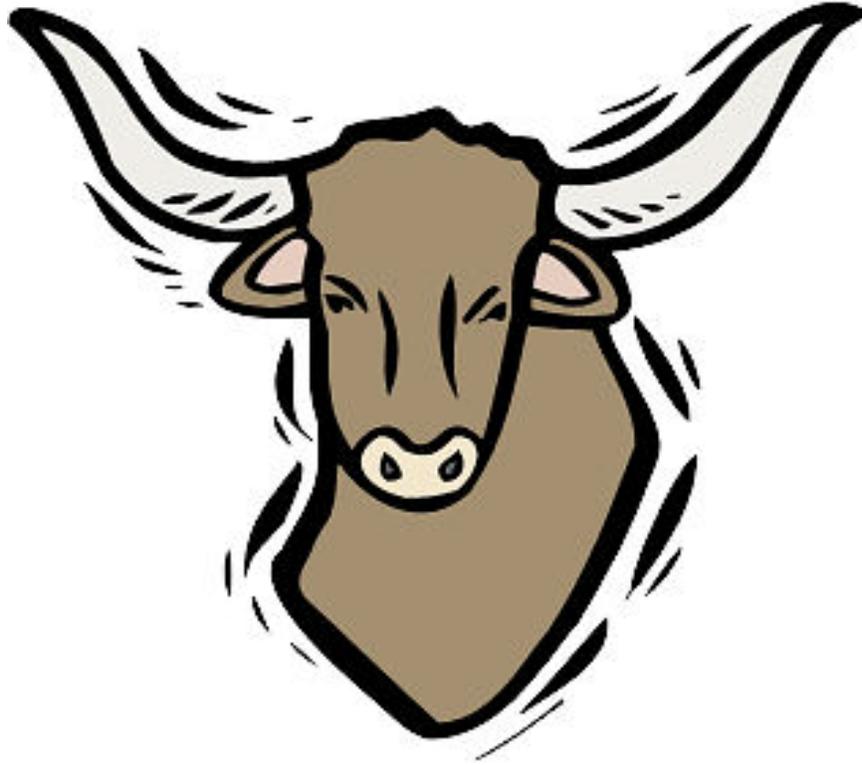


Wrangler Ranger Camp/VBS 2013



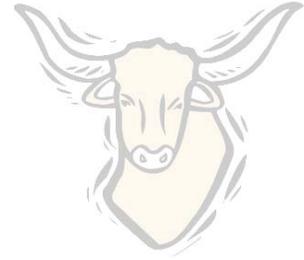
*Arena/Chapel Message #2 or
Suitable as Stand-Alone Brief Message*

But I'm Trying REAL Hard

Wrangler Church Ministries©2013

Ron Singleterry

www.wranglerchurch.com



But I'm Trying REAL Hard

Suggested Illustration:

- † In Arena Setting have an adult character “helper” that plays the part of a sort of “dufus” individual. There is an ENGLISH saddle on a horse, a rope, and the helper/rider. The speaker/you open with a conversation with this character and they banter back and forth about his predicament. Have a western saddle nearby or on another horse.
- † In Chapel Setting either have the character “helper” carry in the English saddle or just have one there yourself along with a western saddle to explain the illustration.

Reference: *Matthew 23:24 Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel.*

Notes:

Arena and Chapel Messages naturally are handled differently. We have incorporated Sunday Morning Arena messages into our Wrangler Churches for many years and find they are extremely well received by the children and the adults they also attract.

If you are able to do this in an Arena Setting or you must use an inside setup, either way this is a Cowboy Illustration and the culture is conducive to the understanding of the boys and girls we deal with in this culture. If you are not from this culture and have access to someone that is then he/she will be greatly beneficial in explaining the point of this illustration.

Outline:

Have conversation with the Character who is having “issues” over at his saddle. He is messing around with a rope and his saddle and so forth. Some points to discuss in a conversation along these lines:

Speaker: So looks like you are having some problems there with your rope?

Character: Yeah, I'm going to be a Team Roper.

Speaker: A team roper? Well, I see your first problem right off!

Character: How's that?

Speaker: You have an English saddle.

Character: NO it's not, I bought it in TEXAS.

Speaker: You don't understand it won't work for roping.

Character: NO? Well, I'm TRYING REALLLL HARD and if I TRY REALLLL HARD I think it'll work. *[All this said while he is still trying to put the rope somewhere.]*

Speaker: No, you don't understand. It won't work, there's no place to dally.

Character: But if I try REAL hard, I can make it work! [Tries and fails again].

Speaker: Here let me show you something. *[Brings over the western saddle then dallies the rope.]*
There you go.

Character: Well, how about that? Yours works. *[Character leaves area still messing with rope.]*

Read *Matthew 23:24 Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel.*

Jesus, Himself, is speaking in Matthew 23:24. The people He was speaking to were "trying real hard" to be religious and to be good enough. They wanted to keep the rules and regulations that had been written ABOUT the Law more than keeping the Law itself.

Moses back in the Old Testament about 1500 BC had led the Children of Israel [their ancestors] out of Egypt to the Promised Land. On that journey God had given them the 10 commandments and more so they could live a peaceable life but more so in order that they might see that they were not perfect and incapable of keeping the whole Law.

Instead as time went by from generation to generation, the Israelites began to add regulations and rules to the Laws of God. They began more and more to concentrate on keeping these regulations and rules, than to see the big picture of what the Law was all about.

Jesus told us that He was the ONLY one that could ever keep the whole law. He was the PERFECT Lamb of God. He had to be in order to die on the cross for our sins. Without Him, there would be no hope of redemption.

Jesus said they strained at a gnat that was bothering them [a small rule or regulation] but missed that Jesus was the Redeemer and so they swallowed a lie that any other way to Heaven would work.

Conclusion

Have you ever tried really hard at something? Sometimes it helps and it works! And sometimes it fails.

Thing is, we only have ONE WAY that works to redeem us from our sinful nature; and that is through the blood of Jesus. When you accept Jesus as your Savior, then you are accepting His Blood sacrifice as a covering for your sins.

Jesus tells us through scripture in *Revelation 1:5b ... Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood...*

Are you TRYING REAL HARD to make something work that won't? Are you trying to be good enough to go to Heaven? Jesus says: Won't work!

Jesus says: *John 14:6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.*

STOP TRYING and Come to Jesus.