

Never Ever Dis Your Priest

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Life is a journey. In fact it is a long journey. For most of us this journey will last for about 75 years, though some of us may even push this journey into 80s, 90s, and 100s. I consider this journey to be like driving on a highway, which starts at your birth and ends at your death. It has no U-turns, no stop signs, and no exits. It, however, has bunch of bumps, humps, dips, and curves. The key to the success in this journey is to negotiate all these obstructions without bumping into others. Considering that the journey is long, running into others is almost inevitable. There is, however, a group of people you should never ever dis. Here is my top-five Never-Ever-Dis list.

Number 5 on my Never-Ever-Dis list are the barbers. We are living in an era where packaging is the key to marketing. It was the genius of packaging that in the 70's, a person was able to make millions by selling pet rocks. The key to our prosperity is how we package ourselves. Barbers play a big role in the way we package ourselves. If they mess up the way we look, we may be doomed for a few weeks. It does not look long, but if your hair is messed up, it is a long time. A barber once told me that the difference between a good haircut and a bad haircut is one week. Imagine how many weeks it will be, if he has intentionally messed you up. When I go to my barber, I try to keep my mouth shut. Barbers, by profession, are very talkative people. It is in their interest to keep you awake. A dozing head is not fun to handle with scissors or razor in the hand. By keeping my mouth shut, I avoid the risk of offending them. It may affect how I look when I get out of the barber's chair. Just keep the conversation going with yeses, oo hoons, and aa hans. In my humble opinion, never ever enter into a discussion with your barber. If you make him upset, he may put a bump in your hair. You will then have to wear a cap for days. Let him do the talking and you do the listening. When it comes to barber, remember what they say in Texas: 'Never miss a good chance to shut up.'

Number 4 on my Never-Ever-Dis list are the cops. Never ever attract the attention of cops. Ignore them as much as you can, unless they are flashing their light behind you. As they say in Texas: 'Never kick a cow chip on a hot day.' Once you attract their attention, they are obligated to issue you a ticket. After all they have not stopped you for nothing. If for nothing else, they may give you a ticket for picking your nose. My advice to you is that if you see a cop approaching, slow down and let him or her pass you by. Never ever make any eye contact or stare at him. Never ever try to overtake him, even if he is cruising at a speed of ten miles per hour in fifty miles per hour zone. If you have to, pass gingerly with due respect. With all this diligence, you still run the risk of getting a ticket. Once my wife made a mistake of overtaking a cop in a twenty miles per hour school zone at fifteen miles per hour. The cop was driving around ten miles per hour. Lo and behold, my wife ended up getting a ticket for not wearing the seat belts properly. Not counting the time spend in the court, she had to dish out one hundred dollars for the ticket. If the cop stops you, keep your head down and mouth shut. Never argue or make excuses with them. This will only increase the number of citations you will receive. After all, now that you have been nagged, you are better off with one citation instead of many. As they say in Texas, 'If you find yourself in a hole, the first thing you do is stop digging'. During my school days, some friends of mine were visiting me from overseas. They had never seen an American cop. When I pointed to one, they all started staring at him. The

cop noticed the stare and immediately flashed us to stop. He kept on checking my record. Luckily he could not find anything. Finally he said: "Since you guys were staring at me, there must be something wrong, but I cannot find anything against you." We humbly explained. He was kind enough to let us go. We ended up losing half an hour of our precious time.

Number 3 on my Never-Ever-Dis list is my beloved wife. It is she who can make my home heaven or hell. Never ever argue with your wife, unless you want to sleep on the sofa. Never complain about her in her presence or her absence. Their antenna is much stronger than you can ever imagine. There is a saying in Texas: 'There are two theories to arguin' with (wives). Neither one works.' When she says jump, the only question you may dare ask her is "How High?" Don't ever think that you can make a case with her. Remember the Texas saying: 'If you get to thinkin' you're a person of some influence, try orderin' somebody's else's dog around.' If you ever mess with your wife, you will spend the rest of your life in the doghouse.

Number 2 on my Never-Ever-Dis list are the drivers of 18-wheelers. Never ever honk at them, even if they have cut into you. Never ever race with them or ignite their ire. If they want to overtake you, slow down and let them pass. So what if you are few minutes late. It is important for you to reach your destination on your own than not to reach at all. You do not want to be taken there. For some reason, and I do not know how important that reason could be, if you want to overtake them, do it gingerly, with due respect, and only if they let you do it.. Be aware of their blind spots, which is at least two to three times yours. Make sure that their mirrors are visible at all times. Seeing both mirrors is going to ensure that you are at a safe distance from them. If their mirrors are not visible it is likely you are in their blind spot. There is a saying in Texas: 'Never slap a man who's chewin' tobacco.' The same is true for the drivers of 18-wheelers. A slight curl by them will not only bring your journey to a dead halt, it may also terminate your journey on the highway of life.

The most important person on my Never-Ever-Dis list is my priest. Never ever dis your priest, does not matter how illogical he may sound. Who says religion has to be logical. It is all a matter of belief. Just believe in what your priest says. Let's face it. When you will end your journey on the highway of life, it is your priests who will deliver your eulogy. Your entry at the pearly gate will depend upon how good they eulogize you. They are your passport to Paradise. A bad eulogy will not only leave a lasting bad impression on the audience who will come to see you off to eternity, it will ruin your Hereafter. He will also be the one who will give you the answers to the quiz you will have in your grave (in Islamic tradition). You will be asked three questions: who is your God, what is your religion, and who is your Prophet. You entry to Paradise will depend upon answering all the three questions correctly. You think you will ace the test, since you have memorized the answers by heart. Believe me, the terror of dying will make you forget all the answers. It is your priest who will tell you the answers when you will be lying all alone in the grave. If you are extra nice to him, he may also leave the cheat sheet with you. You will need it if you get panicky and forget the answers when you will see the examining angels descending on you. Talk him into letting you keep your cell phone with you in your grave too. This will be the only hot line you will have, just in case. You may have to buy him quite a few steak dinners though. Never ever be on their bad side. As they say in Texas: "Good judgment comes from experience, and a lot of that comes from bad judgment." I made quite a few bad judgments when it comes to priests. I used to live in Texas. Now I don't.

If you dis your barber, you are only doomed for few weeks. If you dis a cop, it will only cost you a few hundred bucks and may be some time in penitentiary. If you dis your wife, you only have to spend your life in the dog house. If you dis the driver of an 18-wheeler, you will only lose your life. But if you dis your priest, you will spend eternity in a place where you will be longing for a dog house.

About the Writer:

The writer has authored "Secrets of Angels, Demons, Satan, and Jinns – Decoding their Nature through Quran and Science," "Atom to Adam – How, When and Where in the Light of Quran, Bible and Science (A Study of Human Origin)," and "Hunting to Cloning – Unearthing Civilizations through Quran" published by InstantPublisher.com (<http://instantpublisher.com/>) and "Lessons from the Qur'an," published by Ta-Ha Publishers (<http://www.taha.co.uk/>). These books are available from Amazon.com (<http://www.amazon.com/>) and Ta-Ha Publishers (<http://www.taha.co.uk/>), respectively. He has also published many essays on religious issues in the Charleston Gazette, West Virginia and has written quite a few Islamic satires and poems. He is a Chemical Engineer and possesses Bachelor and Master of Science degrees in Chemical Engineering and has Professional Engineers license from the State of Texas. His e-mail address is mnajawaid@yahoo.com. Many of his writings can be viewed at MahmoodJawaid.com.