

# Fresh Start

By Jerry Bader

## God, Mike and Me

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There are what I consider to be two important lessons in the story I'm about to share with you:

1. Sometimes what appears to be a small "God thing," is really a big one.
2. If God gives you the opportunity to make something right with someone you've wronged, take that opportunity immediately.

A while back, God prompted me to reach out to a former radio competitor, Appleton talk host Josh Dukelow. Until February 2018, Josh and I were on the air at the same time, in direct competition, so I did not have the chance to hear his show. Shortly after my radio career ended, someone informed me that former state Senate President Mike Ellis made a very newsworthy comment on Josh's show. In the process of listening to a podcast to catch the comment, I listened to a portion of Josh's show and realized it was very good. God prompted me to email Josh and let him know I really liked his program. The gesture took Josh by surprise and he invited me on his show. That turned into a weekly appearance and a friendship.

Mike Ellis was a regular Thursday guest on Josh's show and weeks later I was listening when Mike made a small factual error. I instantly messaged Josh with a correction which Josh made on-air and attributed to me. Years earlier I had been quite unfair to Mike on-air (I don't even remember what the issue was) and he took the opportunity of the mention of my name to take a very lighthearted and not at all mean-spirited swipe at me. I messaged Josh that "I deserved that, and more." Mike's response to that was "all is forgiven." He then told Josh he'd love to do the show with me sometime. That show will never happen. Mike Ellis passed away on July 20, 2018. I never got to speak with him after the exchange through Josh. Talk about God activity.

Because I followed God's prompting to tell Josh he does a great job on his show, I made a new friend and was given the opportunity to dabble in radio again. Lesson #1: *"Do to others as you would have them do to you."* Luke 6:31. I simply wanted to let Josh know he is doing a great job. Yet, God has returned plenty to me for following what seemed to be a small prompting.

Lesson #2: I had no idea that exchange with Mike via Josh would be my one and only opportunity to right a wrong. By reaching out to Josh, I was blessed with the opportunity to apologize to Mike. And Mike was blessed with the opportunity to express forgiveness to me.

*"Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you."* Luke 6:38

The verse above is often used to make the case for financial giving. In fact, Jesus is clearly talking about forgiveness. Let's look at Luke 6:36-37:

*"Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful. Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven."*

Mike Ellis had an open mic on a live radio show. I was at his mercy. And he was indeed merciful. We were both blessed by his response.

When you feel a lack of God activity in your life, it's often a sign to pay closer attention to the subtle prompts God is giving to you. Listening and saying yes to one small prompt can make a big difference in your life and the lives of others. And it just might be God giving you one last chance to make something right with someone else. Don't miss that chance!