

THAT
CHURCH

Familiarity

He had been on my trail for years and I never knew it. But I know it now. I have come to recognize his tactics and detect his presence, and I am doing my best to keep him out. His aim is deadly, his goal is nothing less than to take what is most precious to us and make it appear as most common.

To say that this agent of familiarity brings contempt is to let him off easy. Contempt is just one of his offspring, he also sires broken hearts, wasted hours and an insatiable desire for more.

He is an expert in robbing the sparkle and replacing it with dread. He invented the yawn, he put the hum in hum-drum and his strategy is deceptive.

He won't steal your salvation, he'll just make you forget what it is like to be lost. You'll grow accustomed to prayer, and thereby not pray. Worship will become commonplace and study will be optional. And through the passing of time he'll infiltrate your heart with boredom and cover the cross with salve, so that you'll be safely out of reach of pain.

Nor will he steal your home from you, he'll do something far worse. He'll paint it with a coat of plastic. He'll replace evening gowns with bathrobes, nights on the town with evenings in the recliner and romance with routine. He'll scatter the dust off of yesterday over the wedding pictures until they become a memory of another couple in another time.

He won't take your children, he'll just make you too busy to notice them. His whispers to procrastinate are seductive, there is always next summer to coach the team, next month to go to the lake and next week to teach Shawna how to pray. He'll make you forget that the faces around your table will soon be at tables of their own.

Hence, stories will go unread, games will go unplayed, hearts will go unnurtured and opportunities will go unnoticed. All because the poison of the ordinary has deaden your senses to the magic of the moment. Before you know it the little face that brought tears to your eyes in the delivery room has become, perish the thought, common.

*And unless something changes, unless someone wakes you up, the common kid in your home could become the common stranger.
All because of familiarity.*

Max Lucado

Familiarity stifles faith,
squashes gratitude,
extinguishes passion,
steals excitement, and
suffocates wonder.

The gravitational pull of the local church is towards familiarity.

We are the church.

We are the church.



We are this church.

We are the church.

We are this church.

You are this church.

Jesus left there and went to his **hometown**, accompanied by his disciples.

Mark 6:1 NIV

When the Sabbath came, he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were **amazed**.

Mark 6:2 NIV

“Where did this man get these things?” they asked. “What’s this wisdom that has been given him? What are these remarkable miracles he is performing?”

Mark 6:2 NIV

Isn't this the **carpenter**? Isn't this **Mary's son** and the **brother of** James, Joseph, Judas and Simon? Aren't his **sisters** here with us?" And they took offense at him.

Mark 6:3 NIV

Jesus said to them, “A prophet is not without honor **except** in his own town, among his relatives and in his own home.”

Mark 6:4 NIV

He could **not** do any miracles there, except lay his hands on a few sick people and heal them. He was **amazed at their lack of faith**. Then Jesus went around teaching from village to village.

Mark 6:5-6 NIV

Remember how the Lord your
God led you all the way in the
wilderness these forty years...

Deuteronomy 8:2 NIV

For the Lord your God is bringing you into a good land—a land with brooks, streams, and deep springs gushing out into the valleys and hills;

Deuteronomy 8:7 NIV

a land with wheat and barley,
vines and fig trees,
pomegranates, olive oil and
honey;

Deuteronomy 8:8 NIV

a land where bread will not be scarce and you will lack nothing; a land where the rocks are iron and you can dig copper out of the hills.

Deuteronomy 8:9 NIV

When you have eaten and are **satisfied**, praise the Lord your God for the good land he has given you.

Deuteronomy 8:10 NIV

Be **careful** that you do not **forget**
the Lord your God...

Deuteronomy 8:11 NIV

Familiarity makes us to be lethargic and nonchalant about matters of importance. It makes us to be careless with relationships and opportunities that would have added so much value to us.

Familiarity makes us to have low sense of value for matters and people of momentous significance. It does not allow us to place accurate value on opportunities, serious matters and events, thereby leading to untold devaluation, depreciation and losses.

1. Trivial Criticism

2. Greedy Consumerism

3. Loveless Legalism

4. Negative Cynicism

5. Cliquish Tribalism

Pray Big
&
Invite Boldly