

Short, Sweet, and To The Point  
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Our church just got a new message sign, and with it comes the challenge and excitement of communicating a message with limited characters. Our first message seemed a natural: "Looking for a sign to return to church? This is a new one!" The second was kind of cute: "Our Church is like fudge: Sweet with a few nuts! Join us!"

But where do we go from here? With the popularity and rise in real-time text-based communications such as Facebook, Twitter, and Text Messaging, short messages and abbreviations which look to some like a foreign language are becoming common place. Maybe I could take a cue from them, and place some of the following messages: "Friend Jesus Use Faith Book"; "God Sent the first text message...The Bible"; "Is Jesus your BFF ? (best friend forever); or "GRWG – Get Right With God".

Then, there are always the shared messages that friends have gleaned from other signs such as, "Adam blamed Eve, Eve blamed the snake, and the snake didn't have a leg to stand on." As you pass this little church, be sure to plan a visit, so when at last you're carried in, God won't ask, "Who is it?" I also like, "Happy Easter to our Christian friends. Happy Passover to our Jewish friends. To our atheist friends...Good Luck".

In our society today, sign message theology, much like the theology we share in our daily lives, seems to be best received when it is short, sweet, and to the point. Just as people appreciate the butcher who trims the fat off of the meat they buy, people appreciate the person who trims the fat to get to the meat of the message they want to share.

I agree. Give me thoughts that spark, not lines that drag. Give me words to think on, not paragraphs to wade through.

Karl Barth was one of the most brilliant and complex theologians of the twentieth century. He wrote volumes upon volumes on the meaning of life and faith. I studied some of them in seminary.

On Barth's one visit to America in 1962, he was asked to come up to the podium and summarize the essence of the millions of words he had published. He stood up, thought a moment, and responded, "Jesus loves me this I know, for the Bible tells me so." Then he sat back down. Now that's short, sweet, and to the point!