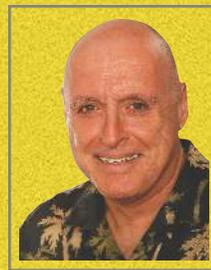


THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



868 Do Something to Improve the Pale Blue Dot

A view from afar is on the agenda today. Way afar. I'm Jerry Roberts, and that's next, on The Extra Point.

As we engage in all the activities we feel are important, fighting the daily turf battles that too often we allow to define us, once in a while it's good to take a step back and see things from a different perspective.

I caught something on the Internet last week that I want to share, because it does offer a unique perspective. A distant perspective. Seriously distant.

It was Valentine's Day, February 14, 1990, when the Voyager 1 spacecraft, more than 6 billion kilometers away from Earth and ready to bid farewell to the solar system, took a memorable and moving image of a tiny and pale blue dot hanging in an obscure part of the Milky Way galaxy, bathed in one of our sun's rays.

That dot, just a speck of sand on the beach compared to the giant stars that are our nearest neighbors in the universe, was us. The home to eight billion people, most just trying to survive, and virtually none thinking about their place, or their planet's place in the whole universal scheme of things.

The late Carl Sagan, American astronomer, planetary scientist, astrophysicist and more, wrote the following in response to seeing the image of that blue dot:

"Look at this point. It's here. This is our home. That's us. Above is everyone you love, everyone you know, everyone you've ever heard of, all human beings that have ever lived.

The sum of our joys and suffering. Thousands of religions, ideologies and economic doctrines filled with certainty. All hunters and gatherers,

all heroes and cowards, all creators and destructors of civilization. All kings and peasants, all young couples of lovers, all fathers, mothers, children filled with hope, inventors and explorers.

All the moralizers, all the corrupt politicians, all the "superstars", all the "supreme guides", all the saints and sinners of our kind's history lived here...on this grain of dust hanging in a radius of sunshine.

Earth is a tiny scene in the huge cosmic arena. Think of the rivers of blood spilled by all these generals and emperors so that they may become temporary masters of a fraction...of a point.

Think of the never-ending cruelties inflicted by those from one corner of this pixel on residents barely different from another corner. How they struggle to get along, how quick they are to kill each other, how fervent their hatred is.

Our postures, our so-called importance, the illusion that we have some privileged position in the universe, are put into perspective by this pale light point. Our planet is isolated dust, wrapped in the cosmic big night. In our darkness, in all this immensity, there is nothing to presume that aid will come from somewhere else, to save us from ourselves.

Earth is so far the only known world to shelter life. There is nowhere else, at least in the near future, to where our species could migrate. Visiting, yes. Setting up? Not yet. Whether you like it or not, for now, it's on Earth that we find ourselves.

Astronomy is said to incite humility and build character. There may not be a better demonstration of human vanity than this distant picture."

(Con't.)

Sagan finished with this: "For me, it highlights our responsibility to coexist more fraternally with each other, and to preserve and cherish the pale blue dot, the only home we've ever known."

The Pale Blue Dot, written by Carl Sagan, 1994.

As you head for work or other activities today, remember that you are but a speck of dust upon a sliver of dirt and rock, in a remote part of that minuscule pale blue dot, seemingly unimportant in the larger picture.

Yet, you possess the power to brighten a coworker's day with a word or gesture. You can make a customer thrilled that they chose to come into your place of business today. You can convince a child that he/she has worth and a bright future.

You can spend a few minutes with an older person, someone the world has largely forgotten and sees as a drain on society's resources, and reinforce their self-esteem, telling them they still have a role to play, and a contribution to make.

Therefore, your power is immense, and unlimited. If you're intentional, you can use it to make this pale blue dot just a little better than it was yesterday.

That's The Extra Point. Be responsible and make something good happen today. For 93.3 and the Ray Gibson Show, I'm Jerry Roberts. ###

For information on training and consulting services with Jerry Roberts, please click this link: guamtraining.com

