

**Subject: Sermon Ideas – A Pulpit Story**

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One day a farmer's donkey fell down into a well. The animal cried piteously for hours as the farmer; tried to figure out what to do. The farmer felt the most kind thing he could do was put the very old animal out of his misery. The well was needing to be covered up and seeing no way to retrieve the donkey, the farmer invited all his neighbors to come over and help him. They all grabbed a shovel and began to shovel dirt into the well.

At first, the donkey cried horribly as they seemingly added to his misery by heaping dirt onto his back. Then, to everyone's amazement, he quieted down. A few shovel loads later, the farmer finally looked down the well and was astonished at what he saw. With every shovel of dirt that hit the donkey's back, the donkey was doing an amazing thing. Instead of continuing to cry, he would shake off the dirt and take a step up.

As the farmer's neighbors continued to shovel dirt on top of the animal, he continued shaking it off and taking another step up.

Pretty soon, everyone was amazed as the donkey stepped up over the edge of the well and trotted off!

Life is going to shovel dirt on you all kinds of dirt.

The trick to getting out of the hole we experience ourselves being in, is to just shake off the experience and take a step up. One step at a time, moving always toward Spirit, makes for a continuously wonderful life. Each of our seeming troubles is but a stepping stone. We can get out of the deepest wells just by not stopping, never giving up! Don't ever give up. Just shake it off and take another step.

Remember these five simple rules to be happy:

1. Free your heart from hatred.
2. Free your mind from worries.
3. Live simply.
4. Give more.
5. Remember the truth: God loves you and is always there.

