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CONTRADICTIONARY WISDOM

Some words just seem to roll deliciously around the tongue while others, more guttural in sound and pronunciation, seem harsher in meaning and more deliberate in their elocution. Take, for example, the word "oxymoron". Although this is just my opinion it seems that the first syllable "oxy" feels softer, more pliable than the second syllable, "moron". To me that half of the word takes on the characteristics of stringency or sternness.

The word actually is from the Greek. "Oxy" means sharp while "moron" is defined as dull or stupid. No matter what example you use, the purpose of an oxymoron is to describe a condition where opposing views or circumstances come together. One dictionary puts it this way: an oxymoron is created where mutually contradictory terms are compressed into just two words. Those two words, however, pack a punch. A "loud silence" is one example.

The Encyclopedia Britannica also describes an oxymoron as a paradox compressed into two words. Other examples include a "lonely crowd" or "living death".

I heard a story this morning that, to me, is a perfect example of the oxymoron, "invisible light". Seems a mother had taken her preschool daughter to a major department store where she purchased a flashlight for the child. The child was delighted and proceeded to turn the gift on...and on...and on, all to no avail. Because the store was so well lit, the illumination from a small flashlight was basically undetectable. "I can't see the light," the child observed, "Let's go find some dark."

As followers of Jesus Christ we've often been too comfortable with tending our "invisible light".

"Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven." (Matthew 5:16 – NASB)

By protecting ourselves from darkness we miss His radiance.