

SOME DIFFERENT SORT OF COMMENTS... DOWN TO EARTH...MAYBE!

SOME THOUGHTS ABOUT BEING A PEACE OFFICER  
AND  
A CHRISTIAN...  
BY  
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*AND MY GOD SHALL SUPPLY ALL YOUR NEEDS ACCORDING TO HIS RICHES  
IN GLORY BY JESUS CHRIST Phil 4:19*

### **AN AXE: AN ACT**

When you read II Kings 6:1-7 you might wonder why the story is there? It's just there! A project is planned (Habitat for Humanity?), the group decide what to do; as they carryout their plans they ask Elisha to come along (better not leave the old feller out!). Some one drops an ax into the water. He gripes that it's someone else's ax. Tough! Plenty more down at the bazaar!

God always has a reason... so Elisha feels sorry for the man (Christian compassion?), carries out the 'floating of the ax' (Christian practicality?), tells the man to take out the ax (Christian building up?). Elisha seeks no praise or compensation (Christian humility?).

OK, already, so I am stretching the implications but, always remember we may have the opportunity to use compassion, practicality, building up and humility, even if we are old fellers! ... in Jesus' name.

But he said to me, My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness. Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. *2 Corinthians 12:9*

## **BLUFFING YOUR WAY**

Don't 'bob', 'bluff your way'... a foreign language to some but in my regiment (Grenadiers) it was a phrase to comfort you! Let me explain... you are about to 'get on parade', you glance down and you have left the bolt of your rifle (a Lee Enfield 303, yes, I am that old!) on your bed. You can't leave the parade; you are stuck... this is where 'bluffing your way' came into play.

In due time you would lined up with the rest of your company awaiting an inspection by an officer: He would walk the ranks looking for negative things, (occasionally positive things as well!) like dirty boots, unclean brasses etc. As he came to you, you called out your regimental number and your name, and he would inspect you. Now, the art of 'bluffing' came into play... It was thought that if you yelled out your name in a positive way it was assumed the officer would give you a brief glance and then move on, depending, of course, how the rest of your turnout was, 'missing' the missing bolt. Some 50 years later I have suddenly realized that if you bluffed your way it was most likely not how you called out your name and number but it was due to the officer giving you a break! Maybe!

So where am I going on this one... I suggest with respect, that many of us Christians are 'bluffing our way' with our faith... we say all the right things but if questioned we would have to 'bluff our way' by talking around the topic and unable to give a reason for our beliefs hoping that our great talking would do the trick. Are we educated so that bluffing is not necessary? Comments?

Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone. *Colossians 4:5-6*

## **BORN IN A STABLE EH? BIG DEAL...**

Millions, no billions of babies have been, will be born in far worse situations with even a bleaker future... at the least this baby's father had a job!

No, it's not what he came to, it's what he left... think on it... Lord of Lord, Kings of Kings... leaving his home to come and live among us! Us! Hallelujah!

Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall; but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint. *Isaiah 40:30-31*

## **BOY, AM I MAD AT GOD...**

We are told to be content no matter what state we're in (I once heard a preacher say that was good evidence (St.) Paul was not from Texas!). Think on it! But I digress!

In Ruth 1: 20-21 really lets her hair down and castigates God! Is that kosher? I attended a seminar once where the instructor said it was good to confront your boss and tell him what you really thought of him and the way he managed. I had a good boss and when I told him about this strategy he said it was just dandy... but it works both ways doesn't it! Hmmm!

So, it's ok to be mad at God... but he may discipline you! Think on it!

Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing. *1 Thessalonians 5:11*

## **COINCIDENCES...**

Those who do not believe in answered prayer will oft times tell those who have had prayers answered, that it was merely a coincidence...

Let me tell you of some of my coincidences...

Proof provided to me there is a God  
Meeting the women who has been my wife for almost 54 years  
A career change... no three!  
A 'retirement' career lasting 7 years...

All coincidentally the results of prayer... now that's some coincidence or is that coincidental...

*I am fearfully and wonderfully made Psalm 139:14*

## **DEM BONES, DEM BONES DRY BONES.**

This story in 2 Kings 13:21 is very unusual! Read On: Once while some Israelites were burying a man, suddenly they saw a band of raiders; so they threw the man's body into Elisha's tomb. When the body touched Elisha's bones, the man came to life and stood up on his feet.

While I know the chances of my bones causing a miracle (I'm favouring cremation at this point), as impossible, I can ensure my life can be a positive factor even in death.

My best friends would not call me 'bubbly' in fact I have a good enforcement face, i.e it has to be enticed to smile... but once that begins... But I believe people view me as open and honest, if a little 'crusty'. My kids (4 + spouses) and my grandchildren (11+2 spouses) like having me around (modesty is not my forte!). And my wife has 'survived' me for over 50 years.

I am working on improving... so, while I won't wake anyone up with my bones I might make them smile at my memory or better still they might see what Jesus had done with the old man!

Need to work on your epitaph?

[I want those already wise to become wiser and become leaders by exploring the depths of meaning in these \(Proverbs\) nuggets of the truth. \*Proverbs 1:5 & 6 TLB\*](#)

## **DO YOU HAVE A 'DONKEY' LIKE BALAAM?**

You will be familiar with the story found in Numbers 22:21 and following! But refresh your memory by reading it!

It would not be wise to admit we have a 'Donkey' in our 'stable' of loved ones and friends! I am sure they would be offended even if they know the story mentioned above. But in all honesty, most of us who are immodest enough to write or speak or lead or have any role where we can 'spout off', should have one!

Oops, sorry, I have judged you... however, based on my occasional 'foot in mouth disease' outbreaks I know I should listen to mine more often!

The donkey maybe a person who loves (I'm told there are three kinds... take your pick!) you so much they put this love on the line trying to make sure you don't make a fool of yourself.

Don't 'smash your foot against the wall', don't 'beat' the animal, do as Balaam should have done, sooner LISTEN!

"Don't criticize, and then you won't be criticized, For others will treat you as treat them" *Matt 7:1,2 TLB*

### **DO YOU HAVE A PROBLEM JUDGING OTHERS? !**

I try and try and try, and then I receive a set back... one of my volunteer jobs is looking after the church page of our local community newsletter. I interview the 'spiritual leaders' that are new and am trying to catch up on some of the longer serving ones... But I digress... I interviewed a new comer, the interview went well, I sent him a draft to check and approve. I addressed him as Brother, during the interview and in my correspondence. He approved the draft and added this footnote... 'I have spent 7 years studying to be addressed in a specific manner, please use that form of address'.

I confess it rocked me to the core. Particularly as the world-wide church is (supposedly) trying desperately to 'unite' in spite of some huge differences in style, and because I was in no way connected to his denomination!

I felt he had negated the progress I thought we had made in the interview. So I judged him... perhaps I should have challenged his request... but I judged him! The plank outweighing the splinter and it reality the issue was small... Wasn't it?

I spoke too hastily when I said, "The Lord had deserted me," for you listened to my plea and answered me... *Psalms 31:22 TLB*

### **DROUGHT...**

Drought is defined as a long dry period of weather. Surely it can be applied to spiritual times as we often talk about 'stream of living waters' in good times.

What to do in these times? Something I am wrestling with... and I shall continue to wrestle... I am no Jacob but I shall persist!

I must believe that God is faithful!

Anyone who says he is a Christian but doesn't control his \* *sharp* tongue is just fooling himself and his religion is not worth much... *James 1:26* \* the emphasis is mine!

## FOOT IN MOUTH DISEASE IS RAMPANT

A friend said, 'John, you suffer from 'foot in mouth' disease... but at least we always know where you are coming from!' This would suggest sometimes my mouth is engaged before my brain is in gear! Paul, in Ephesians 6: 19-20 says, 'Pray also for me, that whenever I open my mouth, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should'. There has to be some middle ground between my disease and Paul's hope!

Law Enforcement personnel share a camaraderie that separates them from the general public; as probably do doctors, but you can't read about it because the handwriting is not good, and lawyers, but that is also difficult because one of them always find a loophole, if you don't believe me; leave the service and then try to be 'one of the boys' when you meet up with a group of peace officers!

Having said that, Peace Officers must be careful that their 'Christianity' is expressed in the right terms... keeping their foot or feet (!) in the right place or places.

But if we confess our sins to him, he can be depended on to forgive us and to cleanse us from every wrong. [And it is perfectly proper for God to do thus for us because Christ died to wash away our sins] *John 1:9 TLB*

## FROM ABACUS TO AMPS ...

As I struggled to get a new webpage right, or more correctly, as I struggled with amendments to an old page I was updating... it struck me that unless I get it exactly right it ain't going to work! Life, too, can be unforgiving at times... some little thing we

said or did... with not the right results! We can correct those errors... because of the Babe in the manger!

Amen?

Because you are neither hot nor cold.... *Rev. 3:15*

**GO!**

God allows us some leeway in 'discussions' with him, but on at least two occasions he said quite emphatically, "Go", and it was implied, "be quiet, listen to me and do as you are told".

In Exodus 4:14-17 God gets a little ticked with Moses and all his dilly dallying... and in Acts 8:15 Ananias gets God a little peeved and he is told to "Go!", by God!

So, what you might say, what's that go to do with me? Well... are you the sort who, when asked to do a 5 minute task, spends 15 minutes explaining why you don't have enough time for the task?

Perhaps "Go!" might ring a bell!

Now we can look forward to the salvation God has promised us. There is no longer any doubt, and we can tell others that salvation is ours, for there is no question that he will do what he says. *Hebrews 11:23 TLB*

### **HE'S ALWAYS TALKING RELIGION**

Billy was from Ireland, a police officer there and in Canada. He was a devout Christian with a strong Pentecostal bent.

When talking of his faith he talked and talked and talked. A five minute testimony was not within Billy's capabilities. It got around that Billy was always talking and taking police time to do it!

Funny thing though... police stations are not noted as being hubs of Christianity.. the outcome was that it was found that Billy did not start the conversations... others



did, just to hear or at least to get him going on... on his favourite subject.

Outcome was Billy was not found to be at fault and he had, when asked, just as much right to talk as he did as those who wished to talk fishing, hunting or hockey or football or... if you did not want to hear what Billy had to say... don't start the conversation.

What's to be learned from this... if asked have your testimony 'in mind', succinct and to the point, and be wary, if on 'company' time, of who is paying your wages.

But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander. 1 Peter 3 15-16 NIV

The whole Bible was given to us by inspiration from God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives; it straightens us out and helps us to do what is right. It is God's way of making us well prepared at every point, fully equipped to do good to everyone. 2 Timothy 3: 16, 17 TLB

### IT'S IN THE BOOK...

*Collins COBUILD Idioms Dictionary* contains over a dozen references to 'book' or 'books'. Some will be very familiar to you. "By the book", "read some one like a book" and "cook the books". There is a monologue around somewhere out there called "It's in the book..."

The Bereans, (Act 17:11+) highly thought of people, checked the "Book" to see if Paul was on the right track.

Herod's advisors checked the book and said "It's in the Book"... but Herod ignored the information. The 'wise men' didn't have a book... but they responded correctly!

So, my point is (yes, I'm there!) Even though it's in The Book make sure you read it correctly and apply the correct standards to your reading... in context with surrounding verses/chapters and the historical background, of the reading... Read 'the Book' and enjoy!

Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men *Colossians 3:23*  
*KJV*

## **LENT... DOES IT MATTER?**

When I was young, very young, I became, through the confirmation process, a member of the Church of England. Later, I accepted Christ and became a member of the Baptist denomination. Do I miss my 'old' church? Yes... in some areas of worship... but that's another story! What is or has been missing in the Baptist denomination, at 'my' church anyway, is any connection with the 'church' calendar, apart from Easter, and Christmas.

This year an effort has been made to celebrate Lent... classes were held to explain the importance of the season and to encourage us to 'give up something' for Lent, and, to make use of the time gained to do something likely to bring us closer to God.

What did I give up? That's my secret! Is it working? Well, it has given me more time to read better books, do more study... and to be careful my halo does not slip and choke me!

If any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know :) *1 Corinthians 8:2 KJV*

## **LENT...WHAT DID I LEARN? (2011)**

I learned my will power is stronger than I thought it would be, but it was not perfect! I learned that what I gave up for the period was not as important as I thought it was! But, it still has hold on my free hours and that I need to control!

Did I become more spiritual, probably not... but I have increased my daily Bible readings... a bit!

Is my halo going to slip and choke me? I sincerely hope not!

As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men. *Galatians 6:10 KJV*

## **MATURITY VERSUS COMPLACENCY**

My modem is not working... I believe I have handled this occurrence with a great deal of maturity... it's not the end of the world, my contacts will understand... I can telephone those who I think need to hear from me. All in all I have done a great job handling this situation... I am mature after all these years!

Then the thought struck me... maybe I have grown complacent rather than matured... maybe age has dulled any sense of urgency that the modem matter and other things... crime, hunger, earthquakes, tsunamis, flooding, child slavery and the list could go on... are simple happenings... far removed from me... And the modem needs to be removed from the list!

I hope not, I think not... how about you?

Lies will get any man into trouble, but honesty is it own defense *Proverbs 12:13 TLB*

## **NEVER TELL A LIE...**

No one said it would be easy... and, of course, from the earliest age we are told never to tell a lie... so how we get around Rahab's tactics in Jos. 2:2-7. Was that a white lie or a fib or an outright untruth... or what!!

I have been told God does not have a plan B... so it must have been planned that Rahab would deceive the king's men (the outcome and history seem to justify the it) ... somehow, I don't think we can use that situation to encourage us to avoid the truth... or are there some situations that might make one think; I know of some but I would be interested in hearing your views write: [jtidridge@interbaun.com](mailto:jtidridge@interbaun.com)

Greater love hath no man that this, that a man lay down his life fro his friends  
*John 15:13 KJV*

## REMEMBRANCE DAY PARADE

So you don't drink, eh! Funny how it is assumed if one does not drink alcohol one does not drink! It would be OK if one were a camel. But I digress!

Many, many years ago I took part in a Remembrance Day Parade. The parade finished and we marched off and (coincidentally) finished up, still as a squad, outside of the local Canadian Legion Branch. We were not halted but merely marched into the Legion. Next stop, of course, was the bar for a free drink.

"What's yours", asked the waiter, "Coke", I bravely (?) replied... Off he toddled returning with my Coke, holding it with disdain at arm's length... We all got a laugh!

There is no outright prohibition in the New Testament on drinking, and it is a bone of contention among Christians. I have long come to the conclusion that a glass of wine is good for the stomach's sake (rationalization?). What is strange is that the secular world seems to equate drinking alcohol with manhood (personhood?). I am well aware not to cause my brother to stumble... Comments?

Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another -- *Hebrews 10:25 NIV*

## SHOULD A PEACE OFFICER ... JOIN A CHURCH?

Well, what kind of dumb questions is that... but wait a minute! Our lives are spent 'finding fault' and 'expecting people to meet deadlines'. Could that not make us policemen in our church?

More tuned to wanting people keeping the law (OT/NT) or bylaws (our church) than loving the offender... I speak from a position of weakness! I have been away from law enforcement since (I think) 2002... but the moment I walk into 'my' the church I am (well never mind!)

Dumb question... perhaps not!

Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. 9 Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with

you. *Phil 4:8 NIV*

## SO...

So, you were raised in a strong Christian, evangelical home. From an early age you wanted to be a in a profession that righted the wrongs of the world... So... you chose to be a peace officer.

You would be sure to meet like minded people; in fact you thought most would be that way inclined.

Hmmm! Have you been disappointed... have you found that to most officers this is a profession with good pay, vacations and other benefits... in fact you might find some of the moral behaviour, to say the least, distressing... So... what are you going to do!

Of course, you can fold up your tent and leave! Or... you can stay and be a witness (best silently for the most part), and uphold those ambitions you have, and to stick with your Christian faith... after all no one said it would be easy!

Finally, all of you, live in harmony with one another; be sympathetic, love as brothers, be compassionate and humble. Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult, but with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing. *1 Pet 3:8 NIV*

## SO... DO YOU KNOW?

I have just read '*Deadline*' a book by Randy Alcorn. It's an OK read... One of the characters in the book is a hard-nosed journalist, a liberal in every sense of the word. Through a series of event he becomes a Christian (believably so, incidentally).

As he began to change he realized that he had not really cared for anyone (he is divorced). He had used a diner for years and knew absolutely nothing about the owner... even though the owner served him as had his father before. He used people for stories without even thinking about the effect on that person... or others.

So... do you the name of your mailman, gas jockey, store clerk or are they just... Well, you get the drift.

Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross! *Phil 2:5-8 NIV*

## **SO... MISUNDERSTOOD AGAIN!!**

Personally, have I a great deal of trouble with the media reporting of non-criminal acts allegedly committed by Police Officers. Recently in Edmonton several officers were publicly keel hauled for doing what most of the public wanted them to do anyway... of course, they should not have done what they did... but that's another story.

Do you, have you, felt unappreciated? You're not alone! Several people in the Bible could claim that: Martha, the Inn Keeper and Joseph, Mary's husband...

Martha was scolded by Jesus for preparing supper (which everyone wanted), the Inn Keeper, for only giving the couple a stable, surely Joseph had relatives in his 'home' town... but Mary was obviously pregnant, and... Then Joseph himself, he looks after his pregnant betrothed, and must have taken a lot of flack for it... then he 'disappears almost' ignored by history!

So suck it up!!! You're in good company... seems to me there was Someone else who was ignored too!

## **SO, YOU ARE AT THE REGINA DEPOT. (The picture shows the author in Malta during the Suez Canal in 1957)**

Haven't been to Regina, much less the R.C.M.P. Training Depot. However, I have been to, and survived, the British Brigade of Guards (Grenadiers) Training Depot at Caterham, Surrey, UK.

New recruits at both depots would suffer the same anxiety passing through the gates. There are gates at Regina? These make you feel uncomfortable. They to impress upon you it is unknown territory you are entering!

'They', people at the Depot, constantly remind you you belong to them for the next several weeks. You are not even sure who (or what) 'they' are. Strange surroundings, not entirely sure the course of action you have taken is 100% correct. Like me, you are a volunteer.

It is immediately impressed upon you that you are not even a Guardsman or a Royal Canadian Mounted Policeman; you are a recruit, the lowest of all forms of life.

I'm thinking 1953 and things will have changed. Caterham Training Depot is now a housing complex... the Regina curriculum is now more modern and recruits are welcomed with open arms! Longer hair, gentler physical activities... Maybe!

On reflection I must credit my survival at Caterham to my Christian upbringing... My Christianity gave me much needed backbone... taught me there is a right and wrong way to do things: it strengthened me to stick to the right. It taught me to watch and control my language. (except for some very difficult circumstances like when I slipped on some steps and almost ruined the toe a highly polished boot! You know about that, right?) So if your faith gets battered at the Depot, don't give up or in! I'm sure Jesus will be watching out for you.

At Caterham we were subjected to all kinds of ridiculous things: folding blankets, lining up kit bags, polishing floors. 12 weeks ended & we did all these things right; almost believed in them, finished up one of the best squads to leave the Guards Depot.

As a Christian you will find your faith maybe battered it will also be strengthened. Trust me! And, if you are not a Christian, what do you have to lose?

[Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life". Jn 14:6 NIV](#)

## **SO, WHO IS YOUR QUARTERBACK?**

Football either Canadian or American is still a bit of a mystery to me, as is the new style of soccer where they seem to travel backwards more than forward and the theatrics are a little embarrassing to me an old time 'football' player!

Both the QB's in the game of November 28 did well... but they are only human... My quarterback calls all of the right plays, he may be rushed and manhandled and seemingly beaten down but he still there directing the plays of my life!

Do I drop passes? Fumble the ball? Go Off side? Oh yes, but he is still there

willing to hand me the ball of life... and, I am going to keep playing!!

"Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye". *Mt 7:3-5 NIV*

### **SO, WHY CAN'T THEY BE MORE LIKE ME? (with apologies to Prof. Henry Higgins**

Why can't Other Christians (OC) be more like me... ever asked that question? Of course you haven't... I have!

Why can't OC be on time; why are the same ones always coming in late causing the leader to have to start again and again?

Why can't OC meet their obligations? Why do they have to be reminded to show up for their scheduled duties?

Why can't OC understand the message that says they should be more Christ-like... you know, be pleasant, non-judgmental, loving?

Why can't all OC give 'enthusiastically', then we would be able to pay off the mortgage, help the poor, get new carpets for the church.

Why can't OC answer their mail?

So, as I struggle with the halo that is now around my neck and the plank in my eye, I need to get myself right and pay less attention to others who undoubtedly struggle as I do, to be 'acceptable in the eyes of others'!

The wise in heart is called discerning, and pleasant words promote instruction. *Proverbs 16:21 NIV*

**SO... YOU DO NOT RANK VERY HIGH IN THE ORGANIZATION?**



A young girl slave, servants of a high ranking officer, and a servant of a famous prophet, all three persons/group acted 'out of and above' their position: All three taking a chance.

Consider the slave girl, while her life style might not necessarily have been bad, she owed absolutely nothing to her mistress... she was property... liable to be used, abused, without recourse. She acted kindly toward her mistress and offered life-changing advice.

Consider the servants of the officer, officer's orderlies or... certainly not serving in a democratic time. And, their welfare again, depending on the generosity of the officer... they acted with wisdom and discretion, in this for them, dangerous circumstance. They were able to challenge the thinking of their officer.

Then there is the prophet's servant: he took advantage of his position and the situation at hand. Disgraced himself and would suffer for it.

All these characters appear in a single story found in 2 Kings 5 and you are now wondering (I hope) where I am going... with the first two maybe the message is that no matter where we are ranked it does not hurt to offer advice to those senior to us... as long as we use discretion and respect, and are not to be too concerned about ourselves... And the other instance: we should be careful not to take advantage of our position... ever!

But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us. 8 We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body. For we who are alive are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that his life may be revealed in our mortal body. 2 Cor: 4: 8-2

## **SO, YOU THINK YOU ARE HAVING A ROUGH DAY**

Flogged with 39 lashes 5 times, 3 times beaten with rods, shipwrecked 3 times and, on one occasion, spending a day and half in the water, stoned (with rocks) and Paul's list of bad days goes on (read 2 Cor 11: 23 and following) and on!

And, to continue in the 'boasting vein' one of the greatest compliments I received was from a supervisor who said no matter what we throw at Tidridge he always gets up and responds to the bell for the next round...

Bad days do end! We should take time to consider why we are having a bad day...

was it something about us that caused the tension? Have we offended, do we need to make amends?

It we, on careful consideration find we are not at fault, we have a couple of options... don't mope, suck it up, grin and bear it... talk about it to an earthly friend (you do belong to an accountability group, right?)...tell your heavenly Friend... he understands... after all, even Jesus had his bad days, but he triumphed over his last supposedly bad day! Amen!

*A man's life consisteth not in abundance of things which he possess Luke 12:15*

### THE RICH YOUNG RULER...

Top of his class, married the boss's daughter, fancy home, expensive holidays, all the toys... and the money to buy more if he wanted to and he did... want ...

Ok, so I have taken poetic licence... but anyway... this young man thought he would try Christianity... he knew he would have to change his outlook and he assumed it would mean he would have to give up everything...

But it doesn't does it? It does mean, though, a transfer of ownership rights and a different stewardship program... accepting a different management style... and, an end to that want.

*As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. Ephesians 4:1-3*

### TOO SOON SO SMART

He was outspoken, abrasive, aggressive with an unfortunate 'know it all attitude'. He was in fact a rookie police officer who early in his career was telling the veterans how to do it... and again unfortunately he made some rookie-like errors. Unfortunately he was an upfront, outspoken Christian. He did not enjoy a good reputation.

When I met him some 30 years later he had not changed. He spoke to my wife

and me for over 15 minutes non-stop about himself. We had to actually walk away from him! I am reminded of the words of Francis of Assisi: Preach the Gospel at all times and when necessary use words.

"Do not keep talking so proudly or let your mouth speak such arrogance, for the LORD is a God who knows, and by him deeds are weighed". *1 Sam 2:3*

## **WATCH YOUR LANGUAGE**

I was leaving the funeral of a classmate. He died young. I said to a colleague standing nearby, a fellow Christian, something like... "what a waste of time when he wasn't a believer". My colleague who out ranked me in both rank and service, both police and Christian, said kindly, but appropriately, "we never know what goes on in the mind of others". In other words, "Tidridge don't judge and watch what your say".

As police officers you work in an atmosphere where language is most important. For the most part, our colleagues, our supervisors and the people we deal with, are all subject to our language. The situations vary from a 'good morning' to 'I place you under arrest'.

In my home city much was made of the officers' need to swear while dealing with the public: A sort of 'get down to their level' perspective. It seemed strange that would be an issue! After all the police should be setting the example.

Are we, as Christians both serving and retired officers, caught up in the language/swearing dilemma? We are told in Colossians 4: 6 to let our conversation to always be full of grace. Have we drifted into using a 'softer' word that clearly means a 'harder word? Think on it! I have and am trying to adjust!

If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. *John 15:18-20*

## **WHY WOULD THE WORLD HATE US?**

If we have and exercise the gifts of the Spirit, love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, gentleness, and self-control, why would anyone hate us? Would we be too perfect for

non-believers? Would they then hate Jesus because we claim it's because of him we are like we are, and hate us because of our 'good deeds'?

If we really wanted to be hated (if that is to be considered a badge of honour) we could become a splinter "Christian" group and lambaste and condemn everyone who does not think as they do... where does love come into this?

We are encouraged to be a 'peculiar' people... I can live with that... I am half way there!

But I, by your great mercy, will come into your house; in reverence *Ps 5:7*

## **YOU... PUT UP YOUR HANDS!!!!**

In some circumstances it would be wise not to question such a command... However, let me start with a story.

Many years ago I attended a concert where the main speaker was Adrian Plasse; he was from England. He was excellent, as was his wife and cast and attending singers in a presentation of the Gospel.

He used humour... lots of it. At one point he asked large crowd, by raising their hands, to indicate to which denomination they belonged... he went through a list of the main/local churches getting good responses. Finally he asked if there were any Anglicans present... one single hand was raised... he asked, "And who is holding your hand up for you" ... with a laugh!! Adrian is Anglican (Church of England)

So, are you told to raise your hands at certain phrases or words of the pastor? Consider this (tongue in cheek)

Raise your hands to the Lord,  
Kneel before him in praise  
Prostrate yourself before him  
Dance with joy.

I digress... I have decided I would obey the instruction in the opening heading... with alacrity... but, to be led in any other circumstance by the Holy Spirit... OK, put 'em down!!

Care to comment?  
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