

TRUE COLORS

Every Sunday morning, Andy actively listened to and looked up to the man of God who was sharing the Word to the mission attendees. Bert respected and admired the mission director; he considered him to be a mentor and desired that the very word (God's Word) that the mission director spoke would be applied every day of the week, and not just on Sunday. Bert knew that the only way his spiritual life could be sustained is to feed on God's Word, commune with God, and fellowship with believers some too throughout his week.

Barney also sat under this same mission director, hearing the same messages Sunday after Sunday, just as Andy. Barney also looked up to the director, perceiving him a "good" man. The difference in Barney's life is that going to the local mission on Sunday morning was simply a "check in the box" activity he did on many Sunday mornings due to the fact that his Dad is a staff member there and his Mom sings in the choir. If one of his buddies called him on Saturday night to mention a Sunday ski trip to the lake or something he perceived more appealing than going to the mission, Barney was easily pulled away. Granted, he would hear about it later from his parents but hey, he was an adult and really could do what he wanted to. I do this "God thing on most Sunday mornings," he would snap back at his parents but reality is there was little to no resemblance of a righteous, Godly lifestyle anywhere to be found in his life. Reading Gods word during the week, ha! Barney scoffed it would be lucky if one can find that dusty Bible in his home. Talking to God? "Sure, I do," scoffed Barney "...," when I use His name in vain. Oh, once in a blue moon I'll fellowship with these Christians, if my parents have me over for dinner and some are also invited, but I find them boring, not like my drinking buddies."

Jesus said, "Why do you call me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say? As for everyone who comes to me and hears my words and puts them into practice, I will show you what they are like. They are like a man building a house, who dug down deep and laid the foundation on rock. When a flood came, the torrent struck that house but could not shake it, because it was well built. But the one who hears my words and does not put them into practice is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. The moment the torrent struck that house, it collapsed and its destruction was complete" (Luke 6: 46-49, NIV).

On a cool, fall, Friday evening, Andy thought it would be nice to take a drive up to a nearby town, just to get away and relax ... may let the top down on his comfortable so he could enjoy the freshness of the air. Hey, "while there, I can take in a dinner at the burger joint and maybe take in a movie," he thought. "I hear that new flick called "Courageous" is really good and have wanted to see it." When Andy arrived in the downtown area he headed straight to the "Burger Barn." He could hardly wait to sink his teeth into one of those thick and juicy Angus burgers. After chomping down a burger, some fries and downing a favorite chocolate shake, Andy left the Burger Barn to take a brisk walk in the direction of the theatre. Burr, it was cool out but his belly was now full and he was anxious to see this movie so he stepped up the pace. He was thinking

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this movie as going to be great based on what he heard; a movie that was clean, humorous, and has a spiritual message weaved into the story line. All of a sudden he heard a loud commotion at the doorway of a nearby bar. He could hear what sounded like someone who had way too much to drink and causing all kinds of ruckus. The sound this man and several others, caught his attention. In fact, the revelry had caught the attention of the local police too as they proceeded toward the entrance of the bar. What Andy witnessed at that moment was shocking. The mission director, of all people, was the man who was clearly drunk and belligerent, and to top it off a couple of “ladies” appeared to be companions of his.

What transpired in the weeks to come was quite devastating to the mission. Andy was quite sad that one he held in high esteem had fallen but he did not lose faith. In fact, Andy met with his mission director on several occasions in an attempt to convince him to repent of his sins and work toward a restoration in Christ. Barney, on the other hand, used the incident as an excuse to leave the mission and have nothing to do with these people who call themselves Christian but are “no better than I am.” His mission director’s fall rocked his world.

My grandson William loves to study and read about animals, bugs and the like. He likes it so much that he freely shares this with all who are willing to listen. One type of lizard he knows about is a “chameleon.” I believe most know of a distinct characteristic among chameleons that is interesting and that is its ability to change its skin color to match its environment. In other words, they can camouflage themselves either for purposes of hiding from predators or so they can be “invisible” to the next tasty meal.

It’s sad to say, but there are some church attendees each week are no more living a righteous life than this mission director who fell from grace, or like Barney who “looked good” on Sunday and lived like the devil the rest of the week.

I know myself that there were times in my life, so sad to report but true, that I was acting just as a chameleon, and would change “my colors” to fit the environment. I could hang out easily with the church folks (putting on my “halo,” so to speak) or if on a business trip laugh along with a crude joke told by another and/or otherwise try to fit in ... not wanting to be different. A couple of Scriptures come to mind, “... *be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God*” (Romans 12:2), and Jesus speaking to the Father regarding His followers, “I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one” (John 17: 14, 15).

In closing, I have to ask you a question because it is one the Holy Spirit asked me daily, “Am I really wearing my True Colors of Christianity 24 x 7, or am I like that chameleon that changes

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his color to camouflage myself to fit in to the environment?” I know for a fact that if I’m like this lizard that William finds so interesting, then I am really showing on the outside, what’s on the inside of me and quite able to adapt to my surroundings. God speaks of this being lukewarm and you know he detests this state of our heart.

My prayer for you is that you let the light of Christ shine through you daily and that when the storm clouds rise (oh yes, they will rise), you and I will have a sure foundation in Christ that will not be shaken.

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