



Nuggets 31: Turning Out My Light

"God bless America. Come party with us"--words on a bar sign shortly after 911. The horrors of the attack sobered our country for a little while. We heard more mention of God (God bless America) and less criticism of prayer and faith. We wanted God to save us from trouble. But there was little change in media morality or in our national lifestyle. I doubt if the bar owner ever realized the contradiction on his banner.

It is easy to say faith things and then do or say something that totally neutralizes our spiritual witness. One day I pulled up behind a pickup stopped at a traffic light. On the bumper was a sticker from a well-known local church. On its rear window was a decal. You have seen the ones with a little boy urinating on "Ford" or "Chevy." But in this case the shower was falling on "ex-wife." Again, the driver never saw the contradiction between the two messages speaking from the back of his vehicle.

Sincere Christian lives beautify God and his teaching before the world. But nothing turns people against God more than hypocrisy in professed believers. It might be better for some of us not to wear a cross, display a Christian sticker or talk about church and faith. Especially if we are going to run a foul mouth, join in gossip, cut corners on honesty, drive rudely, quarrel with our neighbors, leer at passersby, or tongue-lash the people we should love best. It would be better still if we did openly witness for Christ, asking him for wisdom and grace to make our life say what our mouth does.

Proverbs 15:32; Judges 2:10-19; 1 Peter 2:12-15; 3:1-4,15,16; 1 Timothy 6:1; Titus 2:3-6,9,10; James 1:26; 3:10; Romans 2:21-24; Matthew 5:13-16; 18:6-9

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