

A Distinct Way of Living ...

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Men who are closest to me have heard me say on more than one occasion that there are two unmistakable indicators of the movement of God touching the minds and hearts of men who are tired of mediocrity. The first represents a challenge, the second a call.

The Challenge

It used to be quite comfortable to have one foot in the purposes of the world and one foot in the purposes of God. No more. The gap between them is too large. It has always been that way. Committed followers of Jesus Christ are being asked to stand in bold relief against the backdrop of their culture and “give a defense for the hope that is in them” (1 Peter 3:15). The only other option is to give in, fold back into our culture becoming transparent with it and not distinguishable apart from it. There will be nothing in or about our lives that will draw anyone to the foot of cross of Christ.

The Call

Metaphorically speaking, the rattling of sabers on distant battlefields is getting louder. Can you hear them? They indicate the coming of the Lord preceded by the world getting darker, sin becoming more widespread, godlessness becoming more rampant, hatred for God becoming more verbal, and followers of Christ becoming more marginalized. We were told it was going to happen (2 Timothy 3:1-9; Matthew 24:1-51). God is calling men of after His own heart who are stirred by these sounds and the anticipation of holy battle. We don't know exactly where the battles will be waged but we sense the need to prepare for orders from the Holy One. We sense the need to be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ in anticipation of the battlefield to which we will be called. One day you'll receive your orders. Will you be ready?

George Barna's makes a similar observation in his recent book *Revolution*. He describes the change he is seeing in American spirituality. He points out that “millions of devout followers of Jesus Christ are repudiating tepid systems and practices of the Christian faith and introducing a wholesale shift in how faith is understood, integrated, and influencing the world. Because human beings become what they believe, and practicing what they believe is the swiftest and surest means of generating lasting change (sound familiar warriors?), this revolution of faith is the most significant transition you and I will experience during our lifetime.”

Barna calls these ‘activists’ Revolutionaries, some 20 million strong by his estimation. He describes a Revolutionary as follows ...

- *They choose to live in concert with core biblical principles.*
- *They have returned to a first-century lifestyle based on faith, goodness, love, generosity, kindness, and simplicity.*
- *They have no use for churches that play religious games marked by worship services that drone on without the presence of God or ministry programs that bear no spiritual fruit.*
- *They disdain and avoid ministries that compromise or soft sell our sinful nature to expand organizational turf.*
- *They refuse to donate one more dollar to man-made monuments that mark their own achievements and guarantee their place in history.*
- *They are unimpressed by accredited degrees and endowed chairs in Christian colleges and seminaries that produce young people incapable of defending the Bible or unwilling to devote their lives to serving others.*
- *They are embarrassed by language that promises Christian love and holiness but turns out to be all sizzle and no substance.*
- *They seek a faith experience that is more robust and awe inspiring, a spiritual journey that prioritizes transformation at every turn, something worthy of the Creator whom their faith reflects.*
- *They pursue an intimate relationship with God, which Jesus Christ promised we could have through Him.*
- *They make their decisions with great care, knowing that each choice matters to God.*

They invariably turn to God's word—the Bible—for their guidance, authority, and direction.

Are you ready to embracing the challenge of 'standing in bold relief?' Are you ready to respond to His call to be and act differently than the world around you? Is your life marked by the characteristics of a revolutionary? Don't just think about it. **ENGAGE!!**

