



February 26, 2010

Dear Friends:

BUDDHA BROUHAHA

In a time when most of the populace gets their news from Entertainment Tonight or The National Enquirer, much of the real news has been crowded out by a more important news story. . .Tiger Woods.

As one who has enjoyed watching his incredible talent and perhaps even buying into a bit of the image myth, the dubious, downward spiral of Mr. Woods has been tragic and sad to observe.

From the start, many of us prayed that someone could get in close enough to speak Godly direction and wisdom into the lives of him and his wife. Apparently, somebody else beat us there, Buddha.

In his painful, public act of contrition I felt myself leaning in, just waiting for a peek of the Gospel transformation message to come through. Instead, we got a verbal, triple bogey, "...I have a lot of work to do, and I intend to dedicate myself to doing it. Part of following this path for me is Buddhism, which my mother taught me at a young age. People probably don't realize it, but I was raised a Buddhist, and I actively practiced my faith from childhood until I drifted away from it in recent years".

OMG. Make that OMB! No "Eye of the Tiger" moment, here.

I noticed that very little media noise was generated after this part of the announcement. Certainly not like the idiot screeching that followed Brit Hume's concern and of his recommending the saving, redemptive power of Jesus Christ.

Hume had said, ". . .the Tiger Woods that emerges once the news value dies out of this scandal -- the extent to which he can recover -- seems to me to depend on his faith. He's said to be a Buddhist; I don't think that faith offers the kind of forgiveness and redemption that is offered by the Christian faith. . .My message to Tiger would be, 'Tiger, turn to the Christian faith and you can make a total recovery and be a great example to the world'".

How dare the arrogant, religious snob!

Since his message was Christian in nature and specifically about Jesus Christ, it was OK for all of his aghast adversaries to beat him like a baby seal with their Freedom of Speech clubs.

You see, Mr. Hume, the award winning, respected newsman, has walked through some deep waters including the 1998 suicide of his 28 year old son. In 2008, while scaling back his media involvement he said, "I want to pursue my faith more ardently than I have done. I was kind of a nominal Christian for the longest time. When my son died, I came to Christ in a way that was very meaningful to me. If a person is a Christian and tries to face up to the implications of what you say you believe, it is a pretty big thing. If you do it part time, you're not really living it."

Bravo, Brit! But it appears Tiger doesn't buy into it.

He clearly believes that this is the correct path to enlightenment and the willpower needed to keep him out of the "Don't Tell Motels". For his salvation and ultimate happiness, he has apparently embarked on the Noble Eightfold Path to Nirvana. This quest is only obtained by what he does. The human works thing. But, whether he admits it or not, it will all be done in faith. . .faith that it will be enough to get him in to the blissful, spiritual state of nothingness.

Buddha is not the role model Tiger needs to be emulating anyway. An eighth grader can Google the facts.

Born around 560BC, in Northern India, Sarvaartha Siddha was born. He later married a lady named, Yasodhara, and they had a son. However, chaffing under the bondage of a wife and a son and, deciding that he did not need any worldly attachments, he escaped in the night to search for the "real" truth.

Nah, leaving the wife and kids to find bliss is not the advice Tiger needs.

It just seems convoluted when faced with the fact that even our youngest Children's Church babies know the simple truth that Buddha snuck out on his family for. "For God so loved the world . . . that whosoever believeth on Him SHALL HAVE everlasting life. . .He did not come to condemn. . . He came to seek and to save that which is lost (in the rough, MG Translation)".

However, even though we have polar opposite beliefs regarding life here and the life to come, I'm not going to join the beat up Tiger club. I'm praying for a divine Damascus experience that will be covered worldwide by CNN, FOX, USA TODAY and even Entertainment Tonight. A moment when a handsome, clear eyed young man, with his beautiful smiling wife and happy kids, will stand before the world and say, "Let us tell you what Jesus of Nazareth did for us!"

Over twenty five years ago, my buddy, Russ Taff was singing the fun but profound lyric, "It won't be 'ole Buddha, that's sittin' on the Throne". That truth has no expiration date. It was true then, it is true now, and it will be true throughout the eternal, unending ages of joy His children will experience when Gabriel toots his horn. "And at His right hand are pleasures forevermore".

'Till then, "FORE!" . . .the golf term that literally means, "Look ahead". That's what I plan on doing.

Michael

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