



June 4, 2010

Dear Friends:

THE EYES HAVE IT!

Yogi Berra, one of our great American philosophers, delivered this enlightening truth, "You can observe a lot by watching". Truer words were never said.

The people watching part of our lives is just one of God's free gifts and with movies running at ten bucks a pop followed by the twenty dollar popcorn and Diet Coke, it is a bargain.

Many an airport layover has been made easier by watching the passing parade and you know us New Orleans folk love parades.

A few times each week, the drive on the Causeway is always a visual feast of the daring and ignorant and I'm not just talking about those drinking morning coffee or cramming down an Egg McMuffin.

The guys in Baton Rouge are haranguing to make laws about drivers on the phone and that is a big problem but let's talk about . . . reading legal briefs, kissin' and a huggin', reading the paper, shaving, tying neckties, and putting on makeup . . . not just powder and lipstick but fake eyelashes!! All while driving seventy on the longest bridge in the world. I think that's why some of them arrive at work looking like "The Joker".

Yeah, there is always something out there on the road of life to watch. Observing is fun and it can be important to our survival.

I recently heard someone talking about one of their business practices. They explained how they carefully observed the people they must deal with and how they had treated other business acquaintances and co workers. The practice of simple observation gave clues as to what was possibly ahead.

If you watch a Ralph Kramden type (loud, verbose and always right) verbally brow beat the wife and kids in the cafeteria line, you can quickly surmise that this poor lug nut has some issues and isn't going to be a barrel of laughs during the family vacation drive to Pigeon Forge.

But hold up, the guys shouldn't carry all the blame here.

I've also observed some on the other side who undermine and fully practice the "If Momma's not happy . . ." philosophy in order to bring the family train to a standstill until they get what they want. Mix this in with a few purple haired, eye rolling kids, a network of gossipy friends and relatives, throw in a late Sears payment or two and you've got yourself a dysfunction disaster looming just outside. Problem is, they are usually the last ones to connect the dots but others have "observed" the problem for years.

Real wisdom is being able to observe the walk of others and learn from the good and the bad.

We've all had someone we looked up to, a coach or a teacher that put something positive in us and, even today, it brings a smile as we remember it and put it into practice. Unfortunately, we've also had the opposite experience and, even after 25 or 30 years, the memory is still bad and can still make our stomachs flip when we think about it.

Observing a gracious walk and the delivery a kind word can go a long way and we should all endeavor to practice such. But when you look at some, and the less than gracious way they respond to life's stuff, the thought of pinching their heads off might come to mind but that impulse must be pushed back down under our baptism

memory. Gotta leave it in God's hands.

Some months ago, we were channel surfing and stopped on one of those reality shows. The premise of this one was that a few "famous" people had been dropped off in a jungle giving the pampered C list celebrities a rude survival wake up call.

I'm not fully hip to some parts of pop culture and did not know all of the participants. But two of them stood out . . . a silly, shrill couple that would have been great candidates to discover the benefits of Prozac. I had no clue as to who they were, apparently they were from some basic cable TV show but by the way they strutted around you would have thought that there was an Oscar, Emmy and a Tony on their mantles.

We soon figured out that they were married. Talking to Linda and the TV I said, "There is a God, they deserve each other".

These sniveling brats cried, screamed, complained and even made us miserable on our couch and we were 4000 thousand miles away. I can't imagine what it was actually like being with these two unhinged juveniles.

To make matters worse, midst the bleeps and tantrums, they would pray. They professed to be born again Christians and in periodic, bipolar type, screeching halts in the action they would join their hands, lift their voices and pray loudly in Jesus' Name. I'm thinking Jesus doesn't need these two to be the poster children for the Gospel unless they are the "before" examples. Some will observe this spectacle and think this is what Jesus does in a life. I finally calmed down by telling myself, "Jesus is capable of taking care of Himself".

The Apostle Paul reminded us that as we walk through our daily journey we are "Living Testaments, known and read by men". In other words, we are always being observed and judgments are being made. You never know who is watching.

Back to Sir Laurence Olivier in the jungle, during one of his rants, the young man started blurting out that he was the most famous person out there and did not even deserve to be among these other fame imposters. "I am famous!" he yelled. This dimwit was a "legend in his own mind" and his childish tirade brought an old statement back to mind . . . "There is a big difference between someone who is famous and someone who is great . . . Madonna is one, Mother Teresa is the other".

Somebody is always watching and, as it says in Proverbs, "He's making a list and checking it twice".

Michael

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LifeGate
