

The Bulwark

OCTOBER 27, 2024

LIFE IS LIKE...

“Arm-chair” philosophers are prone to try and encapsulate the depth of profound concepts associated with mankind’s existence with bite-sized sayings, designed to make the profound simple. For example how many times have you heard some thing that starts out with “life is like...”? Forrest Gump made famous the analogy of “life is like a box of chocolates, you never know what you’re going to get.” Then again there is “life is like a mountain railroad” or “life is like riding a bicycle”.

In James 4:14, James likens life to a vapor, “that appears for a little while then vanishes away.” In the comic strip Beetle Bailey, there was another “life is like” presented. “Life is like a swizzle stick.” When asked what that meant, the answer provided was, “you’re born...you live...you die...but it’s a drag if you don’t stir things up a bit.”

Paul and Silas, it is safe to say that they stirred things up a bit. Notice what is found in Acts 17:6, “*But when they did not find them, they began dragging Jason and some brethren before the city authorities, shouting, ‘These men who upset the whole world have come here also.’*” Paul and Silas had indeed stirred things up in Thessalonica, by merely preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ.

So, stand back, look at yourself, are you a swizzle stick stirring things up a little? Maybe some clarification is needed: not stirring things up by being a malcontent or uncaring trouble maker, rather by being a voice crying out amid the cacophony of falsehood found in the world. Boldly speaking forth the glad tidings of Jesus Christ and Him crucified.



There is no doubt that the truth of the gospel will provoke people. It will cause discomfort

for people to be faced with the glaring fact that they are sinners in the eyes of God, and as such lost. Most will become agitated and from raw remotion reject the message and perhaps even the messenger. But there will be those with a heart that is open and receptive to the truth (see Luke 8:1-15; Matthew 12:23) of God’s word.

In the first chapter of Peter first letter, he speaks openly about the seed being the word of God and that it is imperishable. As a result, that seed is still vibrant and capable of producing. What is needed is for those willing to plant the seed. Without such, there can be no harvest. “*The harvest is plentiful, but laborers are few. Therefore, pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest.*” (Matthew 9:37-38) That is precisely what Paul and Silas were

doing when they were accused of “stirring things up.”

Have we lost the “swizzle stick” mentality within the body of Christ. Have we become content with being keepers of the fish tank rather than being fisher’s of men? There could be any number of cliches that could be inserted, suffice to say we need to be about the work of planting the seed, aware of the fact it may cause others to be agitated/stirred up. But that isn’t necessarily a bad thing. “*I now rejoice, not that you were made sorrowful, but that you were made sorrowful to the point of repentance; for you were made sorrowful according to the will of God...*” (2Corinthians 7:9) Wouldn’t it be a drag not to stir things up? (wbe)

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