

No Welcome Mat!

At a recent meeting of concerned motorcyclists, considerable discussion was given to the recent developments inhibiting the rights of motorcyclists and others. Certain establishments in the state of Wisconsin have refused to allow those wearing "colors" to be admitted and served. There are any number of businesses, all over the country, that would rather not serve anyone dressed in "biker attire" or riding a motorcycle. This is, of course, radical discrimination, and sets the stage for all kinds of unjust activity in the future, as we lose our rights/freedoms in the name of security/safety. Those attending the meeting were challenged to visit known or suspected rights violators, and document any discriminatory activity in writing, and pass the information along to those working for biker's rights within the State of Wisconsin. Knowing that such practices occur all the time, my thoughts went to the many bikers who have told me of bad experiences that they had just showing up at Church. I have been told of a general unwelcome attitude on the part of Church people, in some cases resulting in bikers being asked to leave. I would really like to verify this information, if at all possible, because these Churches need to be put on notice. I emphatically affirm that this attitude on the part of Churches and Church-type people is totally wrong. It is not condoned in the Bible, but is condemned in the very Words of Christ. This is not a new problem, or one that is unique to you. I have had some rejection experiences myself. I would like to add this challenge to the one mentioned above:



Attend the Church(es) of your choice in your community, and write to me about your experience there. Tell me about how you were welcomed or shunned; whether you were asked to sit in the back, or up front; or if you were asked to participate in worship or asked to leave. I would really like to know how extensive this problem is. It reminds of a story about one of my favorite people, and one of his adventures with organized religion.

One day Jaysee and his brothers were in the capital city when Jaysee decided to visit one of the local mega-churches. This was one of the most influential churches in the region, and it caused quite a stir when a dozen Harleys pulled up in the parking lot. Conspicuous on most of the black leather vests sported by the club was a small patch that said, "These ARE my Church clothes." They were dusty and bearded, and there was no way they were hiding their body art, so they walked boldly into the Sanctuary, where the singing had already begun. The ushers were bustling about, trying to figure out what to do with a bunch of dirty bikers. The head usher tried to tell them they couldn't come in, because,

after all, they weren't dressed for Church. When it was obvious that the club was coming in, ready or not, they tried to steer them to a place near the rear exit where a number of apparently poor and homeless were standing along the wall. Jaysee wanted to sit down on a couple of available empty pews in the front, and there was no stopping him. Although it was nine in the morning, and nobody had been drinking, the bikers' singing voices definitely turned the music from solemn to upbeat. They were there to enjoy themselves, and a good song service was just what the doctor ordered before a rousing, heart-stirring sermon straight from the pages of the Bible, God's Word.

Of course, you can't get through most Church services without somebody passing the plate, and that was next on the agenda. For many, this is a very uncomfortable time in the service because of the great emphasis some Churches make on having to give more and more and more. Sometimes it is hinted or even said outright that God's blessing on you is dependent on how much you put in the plate. Jaysee always wished that the religious crowd would make this a much more private issue - give what God tells you to give, and don't let anybody know what, when, or how much. He always disliked the fact that so many of the well-to-do had ways of calling attention to their giving. One rich dude had a servant make an announcement at just the right moment, so everyone could see his exorbitant gift. Another had the worship team play a fanfare while he dropped his offering in. Yet another had convinced the Church to name the activity center after him, because of his great financial support. Jaysee was pretty upset about the whole thing, and then he noticed that the offering takers were some of the most crooked businessmen in town. They had gotten rich preying on the poor and less fortunate, and now they were fleecing the very flock of God.

Disgusted, Jaysee leaned over to Rocky and the others and said, "Follow my lead." The whole club stood as one, and began to march through the auditorium, front to back, knocking offering plates to the ground and scattering money all over the place. As the ushers ran and the money flew through the air, the poor and homeless erupted from their places and began gathering up handfuls of coins. The pastor's personal bodyguards came running with weapons drawn and proceeded to restore order and put the poor back in their places. As the disruptive bikers were being escorted from the building, Jaysee turned and addressed the mega-Church with one scathing Scripture:

"It is written, My house is the house of prayer: but ye have made it a den of thieves." Luke 19:46

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