

## Everybody Wants to Go To Heaven

Tuesday morning, Mid-February, the sun is partially obscured by scudding clouds as I travel to the truck stop in Portage, Wisconsin for weekday ministry. The temperature is about 20 degrees, and the wind is blowing snow across the two-lane highway I am traveling. As I pulled into the PETRO, I was amazed to see a motorcycle parked in the lot, looking cold and forlorn. I recognize that bike, I think, so I pull over to my place, stow my gear, and get on with the hunt for the mysterious sub-freezing rider. I half expected him to be propped up on a bench just inside the door with his arms stiffly outstretched and his feet frozen in a rider's position. But I couldn't find him anywhere in the whole truck stop, so I returned to the parking lot.



There it was, still sitting there with its three or four full-sized flags rustling in the northwestern breeze. The oversized gauntlets seemed to be frozen to the handgrips, and you could imagine the pain involved in prying away someone's fingers from the throttle and clutch. The last time I saw this bike was at the ABATE meeting in Wisconsin Rapids last fall, but then it had a smashed high side saddle bag and a deer in the passenger's seat. It was the million mile Harley, itself, sitting in the parking lot, new bag and all. All afternoon I had people asking me if I knew anything about the bike, and I told them what I could, but we never found the mystery rider. One guy came in and asked me if the rider was crazy, or what. I said, "Well, I don't think he's crazy, but . . . yeah, there's a lot of folks who think he is."

We've been whining a long time about the long cold winter, and our desire to pull out the bike and go somewhere. We've even talked about moving somewhere else so we can ride year-round. We've complained about the cold, and the snow and the frosted, bumpy roads. I've told many that I am waiting for the salt and sand to disappear before I take Ol' Blue out for a spin. I've told others that the snow plow piled up snow in front of the garage so I can't get in there anyway. I guess you could say that my bike is in hiding since a guy I know tried to trick me into telling him where it was parked. At any rate, we have all come up with many reasons why we aren't out riding through the winter. Almost all. There are some who are not deterred by weather, road conditions, or convenience and are out there riding through thick and thin. More power to them! I told one guy that you can't really put a million miles on a Harley, or a car, or a truck, if you only ride it when it's convenient or you feel like it.

It reminds me of an Kenny Chesney song from a couple of years ago, "Everybody Wants to Go to Heaven." One chorus goes:

Everybody wanna go to heaven  
It beats the other place there ain't no doubt  
Everybody wanna go to heaven  
But nobody wanna go now

There are still some REAL bikers out there who put the rest of us to shame. I, for one, need to keep my mouth shut unless I am ready to crank it up and swing a leg over the saddle under any and all conditions. This story does have its spiritual parallels, by the way. There are many who ARE hopeful of going to heaven one day, but they keep putting the thought of it out of their minds. We know that the Bible says, "The wages paid for sin is death," yet we continue ignoring the forgiveness that God extends to us through the death of Jesus Christ on the cross for us. The Bible also tells us that Eternal Life (life in heaven, etc.) is a gift from God to all who trust in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. We keep neglecting the only alternative to everlasting alienation from God and all that is good, the perpetual punishment of hell.

When I am called upon to conduct a funeral, I am struck by how many gaze toward the heavens and hope somehow that our loved one finally made it, because deep down, everybody wants to go to heaven. We don't want to go now, but we must be prepared. For each of us the day will come when we will finally leave this life behind. What you do with Jesus Christ will determine your eternal destiny. Not everyone who wants to go to heaven will actually wind up there, but you can, by trusting Him today.

Let me know if I can help.

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## AMA objects to unilateral action by the Administration for National Monument designations without public debate

PICKERINGTON, Ohio -- The American Motorcyclist Association (AMA) has formally objected to a process being developed by the Obama Administration to potentially designate as many as 13 million acres of public and private land as National Monument. The designation, currently being considered by the Department of Interior (DOI), would occur with no public debate.

"As the nation's largest organization advocating for the rights of America's estimated 20 million motorcyclists, the AMA is delivering the message that any measure to restrict our right to recreate responsibly on public land must be considered in the light of day," said AMA Vice President for Government Relations Ed Moreland. "It is government's responsibility to protect our lands for the people, not from the people, and that requires an open and fair venue for public discourse."

According to a document recently obtained from the DOI, the department is considering new National Monument designations totaling 13 million acres in 11 western states: Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington and Wyoming.

A letter to the DOI from the AMA, objecting to this particular National Monument designation process, can be accessed at: [AmericanMotorcyclist.com/legisltn/DOI\\_Nat\\_Monument\\_2-18-10.pdf](http://AmericanMotorcyclist.com/legisltn/DOI_Nat_Monument_2-18-10.pdf). The DOI document identifying the areas being considered for Wilderness designation can be downloaded at: [AmericanMotorcyclist.com/legisltn/documents/doi\\_internal\\_document.pdf](http://AmericanMotorcyclist.com/legisltn/documents/doi_internal_document.pdf).

Compounding the potential National Monument designations, many of the affected areas are also being considered by Congress for Wilderness. While the AMA supports the appropriate designation of Wilderness areas as defined by the 1964 Wilderness Act, the Association opposes any process that does not allow full public debate on the disposition of public land.

"Any designation that restricts the public's right to enjoy public lands must be debated publicly," Moreland said. "We owe it to ourselves and future generations to individually deliberate the designation of each tract and collect input from all affected user groups, local and state elected officials and Congress before any designations are made."

The AMA urges its members, and all motorcycle and ATV (all-terrain vehicle) riders, to contact their elected representatives and voice support for the public debate on the disposition of public land. Contact information for all federal elected officials can be found at [AmericanMotorcyclist.com](http://AmericanMotorcyclist.com)

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