

March 15, 2015

Insight...

***“Woe to him who strives with him who formed him, a pot among earthen pots!
Does the clay say to him who forms it, ‘What are you making?’
or ‘Your work has no handles?’”***

Isaiah 45:9

- **Mrs. Lovette ask her kindergarten Sunday School class**, “*Children, what do we know about God?*” Joshua’s hand went up immediately and he blurted out, “*He’s an artist!*” “*Very good.*” said Mrs. Lovette, “*and how do we know that?*” “*You know...our Father whose art’s in Heaven...*”
- **Do we ever**...pray “*Our Father...*” on Sunday and spend the rest of the week living like an orphan?
- **About the Lord’s Business**...According to the Barna Group, although 100 percent of “evangelicals” believe they have a personal responsibility to evangelize, a full 31 percent admit to not having done so in the past 12 months.
- **What’s the problem?** To find out why this is happening, Rainer conducted an unscientific Twitter poll, with the question, “*Why do you think many churches aren’t as evangelistic as they once were?*” I’ll give you the top five, and you can come to BreakPoint.org for a link to the rest. It’s painful to read. #1, “Christians have no sense of urgency to reach lost people.” #2, “Many Christians and church members do not befriend and spend time with lost persons.” #3, “Many Christians and church members are lazy and apathetic.” #4, “We are more known for what we are against than what we are for.” And #5, the churches too often are using ineffective evangelistic strategies.
- **Barna found**...that the practice of evangelism is falling among self-identified “born-again” “Baby Boomers (ages 54-76)” and “Baby Busters (ages 35-53).” However, evangelism is actually growing among a group you might not expect—“born again” Millennials (ages...15-34?). Some 65 percent of Millennials shared the Gospel in 2013, compared to 56 percent in 2010. That’s a good trend!
- **The Christian faith**...is not so much “*a cloak to put on*” – but better described as “*a life put in.*”
- **Also**...the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association reports very encouraging results using online evangelism. According to CT, “Of the 1.6 million people who told the BGEA they prayed ‘to accept Jesus Christ as [their] Savior’ in 2014, less than 15,000 did so in person, while more than 1.5 million did so with the click of a mouse.”
- **Wouldn’t it be wonderful**...if we could forget our troubles as quickly as we forget our blessings?

- **A few weeks ago**...the report on what is arguably the most respected annual survey of college freshmen was released. Conducted by the Cooperative Institutional Research Program at the University of California, Los Angeles' Higher Education research Institute for almost 50 years, the survey explores hundreds of issues – from politics to exercise habits, emotional state to spiritual moorings. Many of the results could have been expected.
 1. TV viewing is down.
 2. Use of social media is up.
 3. Fewer than one in 50 students smokes cigarettes.
 4. Students are less likely to identify with a religion.
 This coincides with a surprise finding regarding the emotional state of today's freshmen who are more likely than ever to "frequently feel depressed" ...a 6.1 % increase over the last 5 years.

- **Vacant lots**...like vacant minds usually become a dumping ground for garbage.

- **Trivia Question:** The "nones" is a designation for a growing number of young people who state no religious preference...a designation whose numbers have been increasing steadily since the mid-eighties. What percentage of this year's incoming college freshmen are classified as "nones?"
 - A. 14%
 - C. 28%
 - D. 57%
 - D. 78%

Happiness is...

"Your art, then, said Vertue, seems to teach men that the best way of being happy is to enjoy unbroken good fortune in every respect. They would not all find the advice helpful."

C. S. Lewis - The Pilgrim's Regress

Trivia Answer: B. 28%