



THE BLUE FAMILY TREE

Newsletter article October, 2018

This Georgia officer has made quite a splash in the last month, all for bowing his head. Some citizens complain that this is mixing church and state... Hardly worth a response. Others, like the woman who snapped the photo, are grateful for men and women of faith who are willing to stand on the front line of evil. But again, while we are encouraged by these sentiments, it is not what we are going to discuss today.

I am more intrigued by the officer responses I've heard. "Where is his officer safety?"

Please. Look at this man. You can tell by his entire appearance that officer safety is paramount to him. Taking literally five seconds to bow his head and give thanks to his greatest law enforcement partner for grace, protection, wisdom, and the blessings in his life, is not going to get him killed. I'd be willing to bet that just before assuming this position, he took a cursory glance to ensure his safety for the next five seconds.



We have a lot of things to help keep us safe and affective at our jobs. We wear shoes designed for physical activity, but still provide comfort and keep us separate from the biohazards we often find ourselves walking in. Around our waists we wear guns, sticks, and electricity, all to neutralize threats against us so we can go home. But in case we are caught off guard, we also wear tourniquets, and bullet proof vests. We carry poke resistant gloves in our sap pockets to protect against hypodermic needles on a search. We carry pens in our pockets and even body cameras to adequately protect ourselves from outrageous accusations.

How many of us carry a cross, or a St. Michael medallion in our trauma plate pouch? Of course this is not issued gear, and many thousands fail to see its importance in the same way they do their handgun, but if you are leaving home without all your armor, you are leaving an area at risk to attack.

The obvious protection of faith is God's strength in the moments you need it most. The physical battles for your life. The times when God moved you one inch left, or you just happened to zig when zigging was the right choice. There are thousands of post incident interviews with officers that suggest that the officer believes he or she is only alive today because they had faith in something greater, and that allowed them to do their job without fear or concern of dying. That is a great tool to have. But the purpose of God's armor on police largely goes missed even by those who do it.

We enter ourselves into the depths of Hell in our communities every day. We see trauma. We are exposed to Godless people who think and prioritize their lives differently than us. Some of those people can do quite well for themselves, at least on the surface. They drive nice cars, they have lots of friends, and they throw great parties. Sometimes those people can influence us to do things we shouldn't do and suddenly police are on the wrong side of the law, or having relationships with people they shouldn't. Many police have destroyed their careers and their lives, because they failed to adequately armor their morals against the temptations they see every day. We are human, and thus, susceptible to human temptations. It is only with protection from temptation that we can be true to ourselves.

I am not suggesting every officer must be Christian, or that agencies should issue St. Michael medallions. But I do believe agencies should encourage faith. It is not a violation of church and state. If you think it is, please read the constitution again... or, for the first time. If you're an administrator and you're tired of paying settlements because of officer indiscretions, maybe consider promoting faith and clean living as a way to reduce agency liability, just like an ANSI vest.

For those of you who are agnostic, It is not about believing in God as much as it is about having your values tethered to something greater than your temptations, and knowing unequivocally that your family is secure even after your passing, allowing you to enter life threatening battles without fear, and with a clear head. To meet these needs, most of us need faith in something.

God bless.