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Christians & Circus Performers

Through the eyes of the world there are many similarities between Christians and circus performers. It is rumored that children run away from home to be in the circus. Most circus performers were either born into circus families or became involved with the circus out of a love for it. This is the same for Christians. There are those who have separated themselves from their families in order to do what God commands. Christ stated that if we love mother or father or son or daughter more than we love him we are not worthy of him (**Matt 10.37**). There are others who are converted because they have come to know the gospel and desire to be part of the family of God. This happened on the day of Pentecost (**Acts 2**) and is true of the conversion of those such as Cornelius (**Acts 10**) who loved God out of an honest and good heart. Peter tells us that true obedience is the answer of a good conscience toward God (**1 Pet 3.21**). Paul commended Timothy for his faith that had its roots in the teachings of his mother and grandmother (**2 Tim 1.5**). Circus performers develop their individual talents and abilities. This is done through hard work and dedication. Christians search their hearts and minds to find and develop the abilities they have. This is accomplished through learning (**1 Pet 2.2, 2 Tim 2.15**) and by using that which has been learned (**Heb 5.12-14, 1 Tim 4.7**). Christians become skilled at sharing the gospel with those who have a good and honest heart and obey God. Circus performers work with animals that have been tamed but are dangerous if not handled correctly. Christians have an adversary, the devil, who walks about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour (**1 Pet 5.8**). There are no visible dangers, but the end result is the same. Circus performers tame animals to control them. Christians are not able to tame the lion who stalks us, but we can tame ourselves. Solomon compared the person who cannot control their spirit to a city without walls (**Prov 25.28**). James reminds us that if we resist the devil he will flee from us (**Jas 4.7**). Lion tamers do not walk into a cage with untrained animals hoping nothing will happen. In the same sense Christians are cautious about being asleep since this will spiritually undermine and ultimately defeat our efforts to reach Heaven and teach others (**Lk 22.46**). Circus feats are not run of the mill acts. If they were no one would be interested in them. Circus performances are energizing causing others to sit up and take notice. Christians are to be filled with joy and zeal (**Gal 4.18, Rom 15.13**). Over the centuries “religious”

people have expended much effort presenting a straight, uncompromising, and often joyless discontent under the name of Christianity. There are hardships that will come upon us as a result of adhering to the word of God but there is much to be appreciated, enjoyed and pursued. The simple joys and comforts of life are the most fulfilling if we pursue peace through God (**Rom 5.1, Gal 5.22**). Christians may forego pursuit of things that bring great gain to do that which is needed for God, others and ourselves but as the scriptures state there is great gain and contentment in knowing that we have a home prepared for us and for all who are faithful (**1 Tim 6.6**). Circus performers execute feats involving a degree of danger. Christians live by the promises of God as recorded in his book to keep us safe. It is a true measure of faith that we are willing to go out into the world, remain faithful and teach the gospel. The world may see Christians as clowns rather than taking us seriously. Circus clowns however only appear to be irrational in their zany exploits. Behind the scenes there is training and routines must be worked out so that timing and execution are delivered precisely. While spectators see only the slapstick antics of the clowns, there is an enormous amount of work and dedication that went into them. Christians may look like clowns as we hold to ideas that appear to be solidly refuted by the “scientific” world. Ideas such as a global flood that destroyed all life and creation in six days as God spoke the universe into existence (**1 Pet 4.4**). Christians appear foolish, holding to God’s word instead of the prevailing attitudes and philosophies of the day. Christians appear to stand in the way of advancement and resist violation of God’s laws. Such things appear to be “backward” and uninformed in contrast to the wisdom of the world (**1 Cor 1.19-21**). Paul states that he came to the Corinthians with only the wisdom of God (**1 Cor 2.1**). In its wisdom the world did not know God and considered preaching the gospel to be foolishness (**1 Cor 1.21**). We have a choice to be a clown, in the eyes of the world, but seen by God as his children. Circus performers are under the direction of a ringmaster who commands all parts of the performance. Christ is our ringmaster who commands and guides through his word, and who will return to pass judgment on the deeds of all.

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