

April 30, 2019

Has anyone else seen an uptick in the number of "friend" requests on Facebook over the last couple of months from people whose pictures would appear as someone with whom you would want to be friends, but after digging into their profile, you realize that "all that glitters is not gold?" I know I have on my personal account and, even more so, the account I manage for my aunt Dottie and uncle David, which has Dottie's date of birth on her account (she is 85). I just deleted two more requests from their account moments before writing this post, one of them from a man dressed in the uniform of our US Army who, after researching, discovered was not real, at least not the name the profile was using. Since I no longer question the voice of my intuition, I have no doubt these are "bots" which will be used to influence not only the political opinions of voters, but also the deepening divisions pitting brother against brother and neighbor against neighbor.

You can consider this my "rally cry," like the song in this powerful performance of P!nk's "Wild Hearts Can't Be Broken," my Paul Revere "The British are Coming" ride, or my personal plea to you to cash in whatever goodwill or favors I may have accrued with you over the course of my lifetime and our interactions together, because this moment in our American History, and the history of humanity is just as critical as those during our American Revolution, the moment of human history and story/life of Jesus and, most glaringly, the last two months of my own personal life which, on an individual level, has been every bit as revolutionary and transformative as those other events which affected humanity on a much larger scale.

In the three weeks leading up to and since this Easter, a time in which Christians celebrate as the rebirth of Jesus Christ and Pagans celebrate because it is the time of year in which the daylight hours overcome the dark, I have had, through my own personal experiences many of the same lessons of those in our history whose lessons and meanings we have somehow forgotten by the distractions of our vanity, selfish greed, personal ambitions, the use of our cell phones, televisions,

and misuse/abuse of technology in general -- all to a point where younger generations now give more reverence to their Instagram followers and which posts get the most likes than to their fellow humans who are suffering and dying around them.

There is no way for me to fit all of the details from the experiences which taught me the following lessons I have learned, or had to learn again in my life over the last couple of months. Some of my friends whom I see regularly have been witness to my stories of these events as they have unfolded and know first hand, and it is my plan is to begin writing them down in greater detail, not just for my own personal history, but in hopes that these difficult experiences of my own can be shared with others who may learn those lessons without having to go through the incredible struggles themselves. "Only a fool learns from his own mistakes. The wise man learns from the mistakes of others." - Otto Von Bismarck

But of all the lessons learned, the most important from these last two months are these:

1. That individuals will come into your life posing as one thing only to later find out they were something else entirely: perhaps a spy, perhaps a saboteur, or perhaps someone with such blind ambition they would sell one of their children to get ahead, and that you must be prepared to protect and defend yourself and your own interests by whatever means necessary without violating the law of the land and your own personal ethics and moral doctrines, else becoming the monster you sought to abolish. Like these Facebook "friend" requests on Facebook, not everyone who initially appears as a friend is truly your friend or has any of your interests at heart, nor will they "have your back" when you need their help the most. You must rely on your own intuition to guide you in your decision of who you allow into your life both digitally and in your real world.
2. Who you choose to help and who you choose to step on as you walk through this world speaks so loudly to who you are that no one will ever be able to

hear a single word you may speak from your mouth. We are how we treat each other and nothing more.

3. That someday you will be betrayed by those you would expect to naturally have your back, no matter what: just like Brutus to Julius Caesar, in his hunger for power, or Judas to Jesus for 30 Gold Coins, in the shame of his brethren and his jealous greed; or the many other examples from history that have attempted to teach us those very lessons time and time again, for at least 2,000 years of which we know..
4. That you will be faced with increasing government tyranny and influence from outside powers as well as the greed of powerful corporations in the face of their immorality who also, in turn, influence the government, write the laws they want, and elect the politicians they know will, because of their own personal greed and fear of not getting re-elected, do the greedy corporations bidding, selling bullshit lies to their constituents and sowing division to accomplish those goals.
5. That you can know, with absolute certainty, the best path forward for someone struggling and begging (by either word, action, or emotion) and that, even with that knowledge and advice, they still may choose to continue their path toward misery and destruction and you are powerless to stop them because of their free will as an individual.

But knowing all of this and the examples of our history as a country and the human race, it is our choice, as **WE THE PEOPLE**, the citizens who embody the establishment of America, "The Shining City on the Hill," like Ronald Reagan reminded us, and as individuals who proclaim to be Christians and followers of the doctrines which the story of Jesus taught and, even more broadly, all of us who belong to the human race and will be held responsible for not only the actions and decisions we make in our own personal lives to protect and defend what is morally right which ripple out into the world like a rock thrown into a pond, creating a butterfly effect which encircles the world. But also the ambivalence and indecision

which directly affects the ones we love most and our children who will endure the consequences of our choices the longest. Every member of the human race and beautiful animal is affected. Take dogs, for example, who naturally approach life from a place of love and even trust humans to their own detriment; often in spite of their experiences by those who neglect them, mistreat them, exploit them, and abuse them for personal pleasure, a sense of "power," "control," or just out of sheer ignorance or lack of empathy for an animal which does not look like your child/friend/neighbor.

So my personal plea to you, and my highest of all hopes that you will share not necessarily this post (though you may), but this plea with your family, friends, and fellow man. You should trust that gut feeling in your stomach, or nagging inner voice in your head which, if you had only listened to, "this" or "that" wouldn't had gone wrong, to guide you in your decisions of what to do in the face of injustice, the face of greed, the face of hunger for power. Let it guide you for whom to trust, and whom to stand firmly against in the face of every potential fear of loss or retaliation for the sole sake of knowing. Then doing what is right, not just for yourself, but for the downtrodden, those who do not have the mental capacity to defend themselves and, just as importantly, your fellow man whom you may not ever meet or know of, but who is just as important and affected in the sum total of this human experience we call life.

Whether you choose to read the Bible and learn/be reminded of the lessons from that book of the story of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, or read one of the many, many history books which have been written over the course of American History. Whether you go out and serve your fellow man by volunteering to make a difference for good in the world or to help the less fortunate you encounter on any given day, or of whom you become aware. Whether you choose to help someone whose fate or choices in life has stricken them with circumstances which prevent them from helping themselves to experience a life of joy.

Or, whether you just take this simple and practical advice from me, whom the world and its custodians has shit on, exploited, and taken advantage of over and

over again. Yet in spite of, or maybe even because of being shit on and, just like the dogs I take care and love more than any human in my life, continue to act from a place of love, forgiveness, and emotional support in spite of the knowledge of, and treatment from, individuals whose consciousness is more underdeveloped, barbaric, and primitive than the natural instincts of a 6-week old puppy or other creature upon whom humans foolishly look down.

It is up to **EACH OF US** to act in **EVERY INTERACTION** and with **EVERY INDIVIDUAL** with whom we encounter in our daily lives as we walk through this life together to fight for the injustices of our own lives and to support and defend those who cannot do so themselves for whatever reason. To give when it's not fair but know in your heart, it is still the right thing to do. To forgive someone who hurt you, betrayed you, manipulate you, or stole from you, but not relinquish responsibility from, nor **EVER** forget, the betrayal of those to whom you have placed the most sacred of trust. To rise up and fight for what is right for everyone, political and societal enemy and ally alike, and including your own life and self preservation.

So, like the lyrics of the song in this video below, which I hope you will take time out of your busy life to watch, even though you may have already. But most importantly and **ABOVE ALL ELSE** I have said in this post and before, to love each other and do your best to be kind whenever humanly possible. That, if you proclaim to be a Christian, that you remember that in Matthew 7:12-13 we are reminded to "Do for others what you would want them to do for you. This is the meaning of the Law of Moses and the teaching of the prophets." and that, "You can enter true life only through the narrow gate. The gate to hell (read also as suffering, misery, frustration) is very wide, and there is plenty of room on the road that leads there. Many people go that way. But the gate that opens the way to true life is narrow. And the road that leads there is hard to follow. Only a few people find it."

I also hope you will take to heart the meaning of the words in this song below and know that, with every ounce of emotion in P!nk's performance and, as Matt Williams and Oley Sassone eloquently wrote and then P!nk so beautifully sang, "I

will have to die for this I fear. There's rage and terror and there's sickness here. I fight because I have to. I fight for us to know the truth. There's not enough rope to tie me down. There's not enough tape to shut this mouth. The stones you throw can make me bleed, but I won't stop until we're free. Wild Hearts can't be broken. No, wild hearts can't be broken" And I reverberate her poignant words that **MY Wild Heart Can't be broken.**

I really and truly hope you will read these words and hear my voice, and then follow my lead to help restore kindness, tolerance, understanding, compassion, empathy, giving, and love for all creatures both powerful and impotent, and without regard to the number of legs, size of their brain, or their perceived intelligence; to our Earth whose natural elements flow through and form to compose our very bodies and, upon literally our very own lives and those we love depend; and to your fellow man whom, though he may not look like you, dress like you, live the same lifestyle as you, have the same job as you, or make the same choices as you but is, as Bette Midler tried to convey in her song "From a Distance" in 1990, that "From a distance, we are instruments marching in a common band: playing songs of hope, playing songs of peace. They're the songs of every man." And that "From a distance, you look like my friend even though we are at war. From a distance I just cannot comprehend what all this fighting is for." While I was not consciously aware of the reason at the time, or even the deeper meanings, when I was a 13-year-old kid, I made an entire cassette tape, both sides, of the song "From a Distance," and played it over and over and over again because of the feelings it evoked in me. What I absorbed then with whatever level of comprehension I had at the time and what I felt then and the meaning today is nevertheless the same.

It is always **OUR CHOICE** to do or not do the things which makes the lives of others better; to help even though it may not be convenient or financially prudent, or make a **CHOICE** to blindly turn your head so that you may proclaim ignorance to the knowledge of the injustice or make a **CHOICE** of simple apathy saying, "What am I supposed to do about it? I am just one person." Or to walk away from defending an injustice because, "It's just not worth it to you." We make a

CHOICE every single day, every single hour, and with every single moment of our lives when we interact with others.

With all of that said, the lingering questions remain: What will **YOU** choose? What will **YOU** do to help? Or will you help at all or just look away as people did during the story of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ; or the Holocaust in Germany as ships of Jews tried to come to America for refuge from their Hell, only to be turned away at our shorelines; the many Genocides in Africa and other countries; the suffering of the patients during the AIDS crisis of the 80's who became pariahs of society and whose very own families disowned and abandoned them in the hour of their greatest need. Each of these moments in history were moments which we were given the **CHOICE** to help or look the other way, just as it was written: "Eloi Eloi lama sabachthani?" which is translated, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

Hear me now and believe me later, but please let these words given me to resonate in your mind forever: **WE. WILL. BE. HELD. RESPONSIBLE.** In either a history book written years from now if we do not destroy ourselves through the destruction of the environment, the insects which pollinate our food sources and feed the lower rungs of our food chain; the innocent animals slaughtered in rainforests who are just trying to survive, find food, and raise their babies: all in the name of corporate greed/profit; by war between countries over imaginary lines in the sand, a power grab, or just because a world leader has a bad day and makes a horribly bad decision; or, even as Christians believe, on their final judgement day. There is reason the rule passed down to us was called the **Golden Rule** because, of everything else in the New Testament attributed to the teachings of Jesus, it is the primary force for good in this world and transformation in our own lives and in the lives of others, if we can just follow this **ONE SIMPLE RULE.**

This post, this message, which woke me up flowing with words at 5 a.m. today, is definitely a sermon. I am not even going to pretend it isn't. I sincerely hope you will follow my lead, but please do not tell me you have not been warned of the dire

consequences of your choices, actions, and inactions, which affect us all. Because in truth, **WE ARE ALL ONE.**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z8Vssi0mZdg>

I will have to die for this I fear
There's rage and terror and there's
sickness here
I fight because I have to
I fight for us to know the truth

There's not enough rope to tie me
down
There's not enough tape to shut
this mouth
The stones you throw can make
me bleed
But I won't stop until we're free
Wild hearts can't be broken
No, wild hearts can't be broken

This is my rally cry
I know it's hard, we have to try
This is a battle I must win
To want my share is not a sin

There's not enough rope to tie me
down
There's not enough tape to shut
this mouth
The stones you throw can make
me bleed
But I won't stop until we're free
Wild hearts can't be broken
No, wild hearts can't be broken

You beat me, betray me
You're losing, we're winning
My spirit above me
You cannot deny me
My freedom is burning
This broken world keeps turning
I'll never surrender
There's nothing, but a victory

There's not enough rope to tie me
down
There's not enough tape to shut
this mouth
The stones you throw can make
me bleed
But I won't stop until we're free
Wild hearts can't be broken
Wild hearts can't be broken
This wild heart can't be broken