

Christians Unite

The culture in our nation is becoming fractured, not just politically, but seemingly in all areas. This includes the push back against the Christian faith. Prayer is taboo in school and many public places, and 10 Commandment monuments and crosses are being removed from government buildings and public parks. Religious symbols are being challenged at the Supreme Court level as “offensive” to non-believers. A recent Gallup poll revealed that 76 percent of Americans feel religion is “losing influence” in this country. Instead of being a country with “freedom of religion” we are being pushed towards being a country “free from religion.”

As Christians we are a relatively easy target. Our world seems to accept a different way of life as the norm. We have grown accustomed to treating each other with disdain, accepting the public bashing of people on social media, the news and television shows. “The values of our culture are at the other end of the spectrum compared to Christian values,” said Christian writer Matthew Kelly. My perception is that people don’t like what is happening but feel powerless to stop it. But, together we can do our part to stop it.

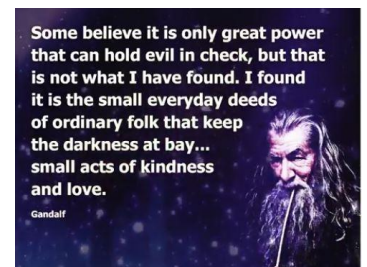
What can we do? What we don’t think about is that we have a built in alliance that could change the culture of our community. The alliance involves Christians from all across town. If we would just band together with other Christians we could reverse the negative trend and create a more healthy culture.

That sounds good, but what are we trying to do? To be effective an alliance has to actually do something, not just wish for something different to happen. In his book The Biggest Lie in the History of Christianity, Matthew Kelly describes the concept of Holy Moments. “A Holy Moment is a moment when you are being the person God created you to be, and you are doing what you believe God is calling you to do in that moment.” It is simplicity in a complex world. What does it look like? It involves just intentionally and frequently doing things to help others in their time of need. Here are a few examples:

- It may be mowing the lawn or shoveling the driveway for a neighbor with an injury or illness.
- It may be spending a vacation day visiting people you don’t know who are in a nursing home. You might be the only visitor they have that week.
- It may be spending an hour with an elderly man who has just lost his wife.
- It may be writing a love letter to your wife for no special reason.
- It may be paying for the meal of the next person in line at the drive through restaurant.
- It may be donating a vacation day to a fellow employee who has used up all of their sick leave at work but still is not able to return to work.
- It may be just truly listening to someone, giving them your full attention.
- It may be doing someone else’s tasks around home when a family member is having a difficult time.
- It may be bringing in a lunch or doing a task for someone at work when they are overwhelmed or maybe going through a difficult situation.
- It may be taking a child who has no father to a baseball game or a movie.
- The list is as long as your imagination and observation of the needs of others. They don’t need to be big things – just acts of kindness and service from God’s heart through your heart.

It has been rightfully said, “faith without works is dead.” The Bible says, *But someone will say, “You have faith and I have works.” Show me your faith apart from your works, and I will show you my faith by my works (James 2:18)*. A good deed becomes a Holy Moment if you do it as a service to God, with no personal gain in mind. At the time of a Holy Moment you are being the person God intended you to be.

All of these examples are a willing sacrifice on your part but would they make a difference for another person? A small deed may be perceived as something really big to the person receiving it.



Each good deed just might encourage the other person to want to help someone else, in gratitude for what they received from you. Good deeds become contagious. “Every Holy Moment triggers a chain reaction of other Holy Moments.” As people see you helping others through Holy Moments they will realize you are doing this because of your faith. As they recognize the goodness of your heart they may want to also do acts of service as well. Oswald Chambers said, “We become God’s message in the flesh.” *But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8).*” Because of our living witness others may want to experience the joy that comes from serving. The Bible says, *In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven (Matthew 5:16).*

Now for the uniting part: If we can also convince our friends to encourage others to do their first planned Holy Moment, we multiply the kind gestures. As we replicate this effort in neighboring churches we will have started a movement that can incrementally alter the culture of our community.

The reason why this is so important to Christianity is that we are losing ground in today’s culture. Christians are often viewed as passive, attending church but not fully displaying the fruits of their faith in everyday life. Matthew Kelly said, “Either we will unite as Christians despite our differences, or our enemies will win and our grandchildren and their grandchildren will live in a truly post-Christian world.”



If Christians don’t change the culture for the better, who will? Is this an impossible task? Conventional wisdom tells us that “past performance is the best indicator of future performance,” and, in general, Christians are coming up short. We may have been passive outside the walls of our church. God is the exception to judging the future just by looking at past trends. The Bible reminds us that God can enable us to do *anything* if we are doing it for Him. *I can do all this through him who gives me strength (Philippians 4:13).* That means He will be with you and He will transform you and enable you to enhance the lives of others through Holy Moments. Kelly reminds us, “Transforming people one at a time is at the heart of God’s plan for the world.”

Just think how our community will be changed if we are part of a movement that spreads goodness, beauty and hope. Let us show by our actions what it is like to be Christians. Then “kindness, patience, courage, thoughtfulness and selfless care” will prevail. That is God’s plan for His world.

Questions: How powerful would it be if every member of every church in your community made it a point to do frequent Holy Moments each day? Are you willing to commit yourself to help transform people around you?

Prayer: Loving Heavenly Father. Use us to carry out your plan for our lives so that we may improve the world. Let us encourage others to show their love for others – through Holy Moments. Together, we can change the world. Amen.

All the devotions in this “Holy Moment” series are based on key points and quotations from the Matthew Kelly book, The Biggest Lie in the History of Christianity. This book motivated me to share the author’s plan for Christians everywhere to show their faith by helping other people. If we all do this, others will take notice that the Christian faith will make this a better world. It is my hope and prayer that Christians will unite and reverse some of the unhealthy trends we see in today’s world. The world desperately needs to be on a different path than it is on today. You and I can make a difference.

I highly recommend that you read this book, The Biggest Lie in the History of Christianity, by Matthew Kelly.

Note: Statistics on the percentage of Americans feeling that religion is losing influence are from the Winston-Salem Journal, March 9 edition. Although this devotion concentrates on the American culture, European and Scandinavian counties have fallen even further away. 80% of Swedes consider themselves to be “non-religious,” according to the Gallop Poll.