

DEVOTION FOR SEPTEMBER 13, 2020

## 15TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

### WATCHING OUR SIX

**“Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.”**

**Galatians 6:10 (NIV)**

**“In the virtuous days of the Roman Empire, the Roman citizens feared harm only from their enemies, but when those days had become degenerate, they had to endure greater misery from their fellow citizens.”**

**St Augustine, *The City of God***

Though time has passed quickly since I retired as an Army Chaplain in March 2000, some things are as vivid to me as ever. The dire events and devastation connected with Hurricane Katrina and the hurricanes that followed, the nightly installments on the news from around the country, and the worldwide news of our deployed American military all serve to remind me of the absolutely crucial nature of our dependence on each other. Our safety and well-being in neighborhoods, communities, as well as in communities of faith, are tied directly to the strength of our human connections and the way we care for each other. During my 31 years of Army active duty, Army National Guard, and Army Reserve, we often talked of another soldier, a true comrade, as "watching our six." In this one phrase, we recognized two far-reaching truths:

- (1) All soldiers potentially can be in the same foxhole with each other.
- (2) A soldier cannot watch his/her own back --- we count on each other for that.

When we are so dependent upon other people, we are either friends or enemies. When the content of our character is marked by our higher values, we act for the benefit of others. BUT --- when our character degenerates, we become their enemy. Think about it --- by conservative estimates, employee theft now accounts for over 10% of the cost of goods and services in America, and much of our tax money gets eaten away every year by graft, corruption, and pure political pork! The comic strip character, Pogo, said years ago, ***"We have met the enemy and he is us!"*** Pogo is still right!

As is the case with so much else, none of us can fix the whole problem alone. But, each of us can fix our own part of it! Try this week to be a genuine friend --- to watch out for "others' six." The smallest acts of kindness and mercy could be the very touch of God in the lives of others. Lately, all of us have seen the horrible scenes of arsonists, looters, thugs, and others acting purely in their own self-interest. Why not become the model of something else? Why not allow God to make you the person who kept someone's "six" safe?! Yes, I know we can't change all of society --- but we can change our part of it!

**Remember --- any journey begins with a first small step. Take that step this week!**

**“To be worth anything, character must be capable of standing firm on its feet in the world of daily work, temptation and trial; and able to bear the wear and tear of actual life. Cloistered virtues do not count for much.”**

**Samuel Smiles**

***Soli Deo Gloria!***  
**Don Yancey**