



*Gary Wadding*

# GOD'S HIGHWAY

On Memorial Day weekend, I spoke at a church in Central Florida where Pastor Daniel Richwine and the congregation welcomed us, and all the veterans who came out to the service. Many churches just went through the weekend without a mention of this nation's veterans who made it possible for us to enjoy our freedom to worship together. Thanks Daniel.

A number of veterans were on bikes in spite of the threat of the Florida summer showers. Afterwards one of the oldest riders, Dan, said that he rode a particular bike that day, but he actually had a number of different bikes, and enjoyed them all. That comment made a lot of sense to me. Although I have had favorites, every motorcycle that sat in my garage still has a special place in my heart. This older veteran biker told me that he had recently purchased a bright red Ducati sport bike. That statement caught me totally off guard. Dan didn't look like the right kind of rider to jump on a motorcycle of that type. Further, he told how much fun he had riding with the younger folks on their FZ's, ZX's and GSXR's. They loved having him with them, and he loved being able to bridge the motorcycle generation gap. Good for Dan.

My erroneous thinking embarrassed me (although nobody knew what thoughts my thinker was thinking until just now when I let them out.) If I am also an older veteran biker and this kind of thought came out of my head, what kind of thoughts might come out of a non-older-veteran biker? Pre-judging a person or a situation is prejudice by definition, and I entered into it for a minute. I'm sure I do it in other areas of life too, without being aware that I'm doing it. Somebody passes too close to my motorcycle and my lane. I figure he is an ignoramus who hates bikers and wanted to scare me or wreck me. The more expensive the car, the more those thoughts. Maybe he was actually distracted because he was on the way to see his momma after hearing that she just had a heart attack. Maybe he was almost asleep after working two full-time jobs to support his family. We are all quicker to jump to wrong conclusions than we like to admit. I've been the object of this kind of thinking many times simply because I rode on two wheels; nevertheless, bikers are just as susceptible as anybody else to this mistake.

How many of you picture TV evangelists as people out to get your money, phonies, hypocrites, loud, condemning, deceiving, etc.? How many of you look at most Christians as basically unintelligent, easily manipulated, deceived, brain washed, reactionary do-



gooders? How many don't attend church because you're sure those people are going to judge you for not being like them? Let me suggest that you might have pre-judged a lot of decent folks on the basis of a few rotten eggs.

Somebody once saw the mural painted on the faring of my Harley by my friend Mountainman. They started into me with loud accusations, telling me that I was in cahoots with preachers who steal people's money and live a sorry life of hypocrisy. They named several Christian leaders who had been in the news. When I got a chance to get a word in, I asked if they knew anything about me personally. They didn't. I then asked whose picture was painted on the front of the bike. They said it was Jesus. I asked if they had anything against Him whom I had presented there. They admitted that Jesus had not done wrong to them or to anybody else. They slowed down, and eventually apologized before walking away.

I know that you wouldn't want to misjudge Dan any more than I did. I know that you certainly wouldn't want to misjudge Jesus Christ, the Savior sent by God either. Jesus appeared to one man who was persecuting Christians, and He asked, "Why are you persecuting Me?" Jesus takes it personally when we attack Christians, even if they are imperfectly walking out the perfect salvation granted to them by of the cross of Calvary. Bumper stickers say, "Look twice, save a life." I agree. Look twice at Jesus, the Son of God. Look twice at the Gospel that tells of Jesus dying to give us an opportunity to be rescued from Hell, and reconciled to God. Look twice at Christians who want to help you know Jesus. Look twice, and I think you'll soon be riding on God's Highway.

