

MercEmail A Weekly Devotional by Steve Higginbotham

Outlive Yourself

July 4, 2012

My wife and I just returned from a visit to Mt. Airy, NC, the home of Andy Griffith. Since we're fans of the Andy Griffith show, we thought it would be fun to go to Mt. Airy, Andy's real-life home town, and the model town for the fictional town of Mayberry. We went through the Andy Griffith Museum, took a few pictures, and headed home. Within hours, we learned that Andy Griffith had passed away.

Since hearing the news of his passing, I listened to an interview he gave a couple years ago. The interviewer asked him if he could remember all the episodes of the Andy Griffith Show. Surprisingly to me, he said, "no." Oh, he remembered many of them, had some favorites, but just didn't remember all of them. I found that amazing because there are thousands of people across the country who remember every episode, can tell you what's going to happen next, and even quote lines. But Andy, himself, couldn't.

That caused me to reflect on how our influence can long outlive our lives. Some of the episodes that Andy Griffith actually participated in were not remembered by him, but thousands of people who simply "looked on" remember every detail. What that tells me is that I had better be cautious about my words, attitudes, and actions. What I might say or do today, and forget about tomorrow, may never be forgotten by an "onlooker," even long after I am dead and gone.

The passing of Andy Griffith reminded of a truth spoken by the apostle Paul, "For none of us lives to himself, and no one dies to himself" (Romans 14:7). Make sure that the influence you have on others is the kind that you want to outlive you.

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