

Rom. 14:19 So then let us follow after things which make for peace, and things whereby we may edify one another.



John 8:32 and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

January

21

2024

SPIRITUAL HEROISM

by Jim Stauffer

Something nearly all share is the concept of heroism and childhood thoughts about heroes. In whatever genre of literature there are heroes and those who enjoy that particular literature take joy in reading about heroic adventures. Yet, far and away the majority of us never realized heroism in the sense we viewed it at that time.

Let me draw your attention to a hero in the Bible. Yes, there are many, but let us select one Joseph, the favored son of Jacob who became Israel, the father of that nation. What was it about Joseph that made him a hero? And what was the heroic thing or things he did? And what enabled him to be such a hero to so many?

Joseph was chosen by God to fill a role that has brought great recognition to him in the Scriptures. He would eventually save his own family leading them to become a people to whom God would grant the promises He made to Jacob's grandfather Abraham. God had promised Abraham his descendants would be granted a land, become a nation and be blessed through his seed Jesus Christ (**Genesis 12:1-3; Galatians 3:16**).

There were many challenges for Joseph before his heroic deeds were to come to pass. He was sold to slave dealers by his jealous brothers. Blessed by God he excelled as the master of Potipher's household in Egypt until the wife of Potipher tried to seduce him. When Joseph rejected her attempts, she lied to her husband and Joseph was jailed. A very important lesson we learn is God did not forsake him during his stay in prison. God enabled him to interpret dreams and he eventually interpreted the dream of Pharaoh

concerning a coming famine. He was placed in a high position by Pharaoh in order to preserve the people of Egypt.

It was during this time his family came to Egypt to buy grain that was available because of a plan Joseph implemented to save grain during prosperous years in preparation for the years of famine. Joseph was restored to his family and his reply to his penitent brothers was, *"As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good in order to bring about this present result, to preserve many people alive. "So therefore, do not be afraid; I will provide for you and your little ones." So he comforted them and spoke kindly to them.* (**Genesis 50:20-21**)

How was Joseph able to be this hero we read about in Scripture? Joseph answers that for us when he attributes his role to God. Joseph's heroism was in his trust and faith in God. He obeyed and trusted God during good times and bad times.

We are called upon to be faithful and obedient just as he was and when we are we too can save people. We can influence those around us with our faithfulness in the face of crises. Helping someone overcome fear and trust in the Lord is a heroic deed. But just as Joseph said, it is not our doing, but rather God guiding us that allows us to endure when times are difficult and to encourage brethren to do likewise. People of the world will see our faith as well and be led to inquire concerning the source of our strength.

Consider being a Joseph for those in your life and for all whom you may encounter. Many people in this world (Those Jesus calls to Him **Matthew 11:28-30**),

need an example. Many of our brethren are hurting in various ways that challenge their faith. Let us be the example that encourages them to hang on and trust the One Who died for them. Who else has a greater investment in us than our Savior Himself. He is the author of our salvation (**Hebrews 5:8,9**), therefore we have good reason to trust in Him.

DOES GOD CREATE SINNERS?

Jerral Kay

Catholics and Protestants teach that God creates sinners. They say that all babies are born totally depraved, wicked from birth. The Bible does not teach this. Jesus was born totally human, coming from a sinful mother, and according to their doctrine, all humans inherit sin from Adam. Jesus and us trace our lineage back to Adam (**Luke 3:38**). Christians read the Bible and teach that all are born innocent and sinless (**Matthew 10:13-15; Romans 7:8-9**).

What does the Holy Spirit teach concerning being born with the sins of our parents?

Deuteronomy 24:16 – *“Fathers shall not be put to death for their children, nor shall children be put to death for their fathers; everyone shall be put to death for his own sin.”*

Ezekiel 18:20 – *“The person who sins will die. The son will not bear the punishment for the father’s iniquity, nor will the father bear the punishment for the son’s iniquity; the righteousness of the righteous will be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.”*

Isn’t this simple and plain truth? When a father misleads his family, the effects of that misleading are often felt for generations. This is because the father’s unfaithfulness to God’s covenant may lead his children into the consequences of breaking their covenant with God. If a father rejects the covenant of God he will set a sinful example before his children, and they could follow Him with the same consequences for several generations (**Ephesians 6:1-4**). Whether or not this is fair is not the issue. Sin is in the world; consequences of sin affected many generations. But one thing is certain – children do not inherit sin from Adam nor their parents.

The Bible says man is tempted and seduced by his own lusts; sin originates acting on one or more lusts

(**James 1:13-16; I John 2:15-17**). All are born with free-will and sin comes forth by the evil choice of the one being tempted. Each individual becomes a sinner when he breaks God's law (**I John 3:4**). People become servants of sin because they present themselves as servants of sin (**Romans 6:16-19**).

There is no denying these truths from God. Why would anyone believe that all are born with sin? They must believe what man teaches them, as the Bible never says children are born sinners or with sin. The devil added one word in telling Eve what God commanded of her, and the devil continues to change one word to deceive. In **Psalms 51:5**, Satan and his ministers change the word “in” to “with.” This verse does not say that King David was born with sin (possession of), but David said he was born in (surrounded by) a world of sin (**Psalms 139:13-16**). Christians do not accuse their God of creating them totally depraved with a sinful nature. Listen -- If God creates babies with sin, it is God’s fault they are sinners. I will not accuse my God of that (**Matthew 19:13-15**). We, being free-willed, make the decision to choose righteousness or sin (**Joshua 24:15**).

Dealing With Criticism

Mike Grushon

One of the persistent problems young people must overcome is the criticism from adults. Paul exhorted Timothy to conduct himself in such a way that he would give no one a basis of truth for such criticism (**I Tim. 4:12**). Unfortunately, some choose to criticize the young even if they do not provide ample fuel for the critic’s fires. This is especially so when the young people happen to be actively involved in the Lord’s service.

This short article is directed to young people who are trying to use their talents to serve God and proclaim Christ. Our intention is to encourage you not to let the criticism of others deter you from active service. All Christians have an equal responsibility to use their talents to teach the gospel to the lost (**Matt. 28:19-20**). Do not allow anyone to deter you as a young Christian from fulfilling your responsibility.

The criticism young people receive is one of two classes. It is either deserved or undeserved. Regardless of the type of criticism you receive, you should not allow it to keep you from serving God. If you acted in such a way that you deserved the

criticism, you should make the necessary correction, and press on in your service to God. If you were the subject of criticism that you did not deserve, or of that which proceeded from an improper motive, pay it no need, simply continue to do what you know is right.

In dealing with criticism, it helps to try to understand the reason the criticism has been offered. Some people offer criticism out of a genuine concern for your spiritual well-being. It is usually not difficult to see who such people are. Their attitude and the manner in which they criticize makes them easy to spot. Young people should have no problem getting along with such people. No matter how sharp their criticism may be, you know they are really interested in you.

However, what about the others? I am convinced that some of the criticism leveled against young people who are actively serving the Lord are outright attempts to discourage such activity. When young people show more zeal than the adults of a church, the adults are only left with a few alternatives. They can either (1) allow the young people's zealous efforts to continue and suffer the embarrassment of their own inactivity, or (2) they can follow the young people's activity and become energetic themselves, or (3) they can try to squelch the young people's zeal and try to salve their consciences by removing the constant reminder of what they ought to be doing themselves. When older members of the church discourage teenagers from doing personal work, visiting meetings, making notes on sermons, etc., I find it hard to believe that they have not selected the third option.

Young people, I am not saying that you should not pay attention to the criticisms made by older Christians. Constructive criticism offered by mature and understanding saints should make your talents even more useful to the cause of Christ. What I am saying is that should not allow the unjust criticism of lazy Christians hinder or prevent you from doing what you know you should be doing! Be a faithful and active Christian regardless of what others, young or old, may say about you. Look to the faithful Christian that you may know, whether preachers, elders, teachers. They are often the objects of severe criticisms, yet it has not stopped them. Paul was criticized by some of the Corinthians, yet they could not keep him from doing what he knew needed to be done. Do what you know you can do in God's service.

UNDERSTANDING GOD'S WILL

The final passage in Hosea is a message of hope. It encourages and reminds us to turn to God's will, the only safe guide for life and eternity. The Lord conveyed His will for Israel through the anguished spotlight of a godly man, Hosea, and his unfaithful wife, Gomer. How much more was the heart of a holy God shattered by the sin of His own bride? Again, though, there is hope, but that hope comes at the price of the recognition that we need God. At times, God doubted Israel's desire to return home; their faith was like the morning clouds, quickly blown away. But the promise of renewal and restoration lingered. The harshness of the dry desert winds of idolatry would give way to the shade of Lebanon's cedars and fresh grain and the delights of the olive tree filled their tables.

Israel lacked a knowledge of God. Were they aware of His precepts? *"Though I wrote for him ten thousand precepts of My law, they are regarded as a strange thing" (8:12)*. Yes, they knew but they did not know. The reality of knowing God, results in obeying God. Obeying God means loving God as a husband loves his wife. Israel lacked a close, personal relationship with God; there was no knowledge of God in the land. A relationship with anything, whether, idol, money, fame, education, or the world, can remove God from the heart. Remember what Jesus said: *"No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth" (Matthew 6:24)*.

God's plaintive cry lingers: *"O Ephraim, what more have I to do with idols?"* How could God's people utter the Name of God and in the same breath sing to a wooden stump? David's cry, *"O my son Absalom"* speaks of a father's love; a love that would gladly take the place of the rebellious son; let me die your death David implored. Jesus cried over the city of Jerusalem saying: *"Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling."* God remained attached to His people by the strong threads of love. He longed for a reunion. He still does. Do we?

Randy Harshbarger

Psalm 1:1 ~ Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the wicked, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of scoffers: ² But his delight is in the law of Jehovah; and on his law doth he meditate day and night. ³ And he shall be like a tree planted by the streams of water, that bringeth forth its fruit in its season, whose leaf also doth not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. ⁴ The wicked are not so, but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. ⁵ Therefore the wicked shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. ⁶ For Jehovah knoweth the way of the righteous; but the way of the wicked shall perish.

HOURS OF WORSHIP

- Sunday A.M. ~ 9:00 Bible Study
- Sunday A.M. ~ 10:00 Assembled Worship
- Wednesday P.M. ~ 7:00 Bible Study & Worship
- **Visitors welcome**
- **We conduct in home Bible Studies**
- **We offer Correspondence Courses**

OUR ADDRESS IS:

**7845 Cottonwood Drive
Lenexa, Kansas 66216
(913) 620-0563**

Check out the following websites:
facebook.com/LenexaChurchofChrist
lenexachurchofchrist.org

Evangelist and Editor: Jim Stauffer

Elders:

Ron Peck and Jim Stauffer

Deacons:

Bill Miller

Troy Armstrong

*"Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, to all the saints in Christ Jesus that are at Philippi,
with the bishops and deacons:"*

Philippians 1:1

NEWS AND NOTES:

PLEASE REMEMBER ALMA
BAUMGARTNER, BROOKLYN BOYER,
DAVID AND JOANNE BECKLEY,
WAYNE MOODY, BOB OWEN, MARK
WALKER, PAT M-CLOUD, ELLIE
GOLDSTON, WINNIE RAWSON,
GENE MCCLUNG, DALE RICHARDSON,
ZACH FLAXBEARD AND JORDAN
MOODY.

BIBLE CLASSES:

SUNDAY MORNING - BILL MILLER
FELLOWSHIP
WEDNESDAY 7 PM - JIM STAUFFER
MINOR PROPHETS

SUNDAY SERMON:

A SCREENSHOT OF THE FAITHFUL



What Must I Do To Be Saved?

- **Hear** the gospel - Romans 10:17
- **Believe** in Jesus Christ - Hebrews 11:6
- **Repent** of sins - Acts 17:30
- **Confess** Christ as Lord - Romans 10:9,10
- **Be Baptized** for remission of sins - Acts 2:38
- **Be Faithful** unto death - Revelation 2:10