

God Is Looking for Heroes

King David spoke for God when he declared, "I will make the godly of the land my heroes" (Ps. 101:6, LB). We may not win a Heisman Trophy, Olympic gold medal, Nobel Peace Prize or Congressional Medal of Honor, but we can surrender our lives to Jesus Christ and let Him use us to make a significant impact through our lives. Our lifestyle should be so courageous in the cause of Christ that it demands an explanation!

"It is an unhappy country that has no heroes," mourned an actor in the 1939 play *Galileo*. Maybe the only thing worse than having no heroes is having heroes like those paraded before us on the newsstands and the silver screen. That's why Christians must come out of hiding and into the light. The same is true for silent shepherds who for too long haven't fully equipped their flocks for effective service in the marketplace of real life.

In this dark hour of our nation's history, what will our children and grandchildren say about us?

That in our personal lives, we held a defeatist mentality, believing the inevitability of same-sex marriage and that loving our neighbor meant a spineless, nonjudgmental approach of never saying or doing anything that might possibly offend advocates of the radical gay agenda or interfere with their propaganda being distributed to our children in our schools?

That in our churches, we avoided speaking directly and biblically on subjects like abortion, atheism, legalization of marijuana, homosexuality, same-sex marriage, living together before marriage, divorce and remarriage, pornography, Islam, premarital sex, human trafficking and other "hot button" moral issues because we wanted to remain seeker friendly and nonpolitical?

That in our businesses, we thought it prudent to avoid identifying with traditional marriage and conservative positions, lest we hurt profit margins and be perceived as intolerant in today's progressive society?

That in our conversations with neighbors, students and associates, we steered clear of topics that were political or out of step with what the majority probably believed?

Or will it be said of us, like Winston Churchill said of the courageous Royal Air Force pilots who arose to save Great Britain from destruction in World War II, "Never was so much owed by so many to so few"?

Someone once said, "A hero and a coward are both scared—but a hero runs in the right direction." Recognizing that courage is not the absence of fear but the overcoming of it, will you join me and countless others in asking God for boldness that this might be our finest hour?

Erwin Lutzer, in his book *When a Nation Forgets God*, cited a German eyewitness in the '40s who was part of a church flanked by railroad tracks. He wrote:

"We heard stories of what was happening to the Jews, but we tried to distance ourselves from it, because we felt, what could anyone do to stop it?

"Each Sunday morning, we would hear the train whistle blowing in the distance, then the wheels coming over the tracks. We became disturbed when we heard cries coming from the train as it passed by. We realized that it was carrying Jews like cattle in the cars!

"Week after week the whistle would blow. We dreaded to hear the sounds of those wheels because we knew that we would hear the cries of the Jews en route to a death camp. Their screams tormented us.

"We knew the time the train was coming and when we heard the whistle blow we began singing hymns. By the time the train came past our church, we were singing at the top of our voices. If we heard the screams, we sang more loudly and soon we heard them no more.

"Years have passed and no one talks about it now, but I still hear that train whistle in my sleep."

At the pinnacle of his power in the mid-1940s, Adolf Hitler and his Nazi party had only 8.5 million members out of almost 80 million Germans. Ninety percent of the German population—the workers, the pastors, the teachers, the farmers, the homemakers and the youth—were passive and compliant in the face of the growing evil. When courage was needed to confront the menace, it was too late.

In my study, I have these quotes from two of my heroes:

"You may choose to look the other way, but you can never say again that you did not know." —William Wilberforce

"If you will not fight for right when you can easily win without bloodshed; if you will not fight when your victory is sure and not too costly; you may come to the moment when you will have to fight with all the odds against you and only a precarious chance of survival. There may even be a worse case. You may have to fight when there is no hope of victory, because it is better to perish than to live as slaves." —Winston Churchill

Also: "If you have raced with men on foot and they have worn you out, how can you compete with horses? If you stumble in safe country, how will you manage in the thickets by the Jordan?" (Jer. 12:5, NIV).

Multitudes of us Christians are admittedly discouraged today. We scan the horizon and see what is happening to our nation and the lack of bold, outspoken Christians with the fortitude

to stand strong and do what's necessary to change course. Yet God can turn things around if we will humble ourselves and pray (2 Chr. 7:14) and act courageously as He leads us in these turbulent times.

It would do us all good to recall how less than a generation ago, at the height of communism, God's people prayed and fasted and a courageous leader named Ronald Reagan emerged to defend the sanctity of life and champion the collapse of a demonic system that enslaved 250 million people in Eastern Europe. In a relatively short period, the Berlin Wall came down, the Soviet Union collapsed and the "Evil Empire" fell apart. Remember Reagan's bold declaration in 1983: "There is sin and evil in the world, and we're enjoined by Scripture and the Lord Jesus to oppose it with all our might." (To read more of this inspiring history, read Ralph Reed's book *Awakening*.) May God do it again as we throw off fear and compromise and rise up in the strength of His might!

Against this backdrop, are you a candidate for courageous leadership? Many may be falling like flies, but others are arising who "know their God [and] shall be strong and carry out great exploits" (Dan. 11:32, NKJV).

"For the eyes of the Lord range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him" (2 Chr. 16:9, NIV).

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