

Heroes

Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need.

Matthew 6:33

In a column, reporter Bob Greene once opined on “How to Become a Hero.” He described a Texas gem dealer who went to a mineral show in Arizona. There he met a man who wandered creek beds, looking for interesting stones. This man was displaying some of his finds in plastic containers.

Among the smaller stones the dealer saw a large rock, and that’s all the displayer thought it was—a big rock. But this gem dealer knew otherwise. He recognized it as the biggest star sapphire he had ever seen.

Knowing that the owner had no idea of the true worth of the stone, the gem dealer bargained with him and paid \$10 for the rock. Later he reported that it was worth \$2.5 million.

And, noted Greene, this gem dealer has become a sort of folk hero because he found something of value and purchased it at the lowest possible price, without hinting to the original owner what was going on. Greene went on to say, “This is just a particularly dramatic example of the way so many people are getting rich these days. They don’t do anything of importance or value; they just manipulate and sidestep and feint and parry. They make people think they are going to do one thing, and then they do another. The lesson seems to be that only suckers believe in putting in a day’s work for a day’s pay. The smart boys are the tricksters.”

Unfortunately, Bob Greene is right. People’s lives today seem consumed with lotteries, long shots, and insider trading . . . and a continuing saga of greed, bribery, extortion, and embezzlement.

As Christians, however, we shouldn't be too surprised. Jesus said that his values are the opposite of the world's and that people who follow him will be misunderstood. True followers of Christ won't fit into society.

The Bible says that who we are on the inside is infinitely more important than our outward appearance, the way we achieve our goals is as important as the goals themselves, and that seeking Christ and his kingdom is more important than being the richest person on earth.

Greene concludes his column with these thoughts: "Let's imagine that the gem dealer sees the star sapphire and instead of purchasing it for \$10, he tells the man of its real worth and urges him to get some advice about what a fair asking price is before selling it. I know, I know; that's not the way the world works. Maybe, though, he could have at least cut the poor rock-hunter in on his profits. But then he wouldn't have been a hero for these days, would he?"

"And what do you benefit if you gain the whole world but lose your own soul?" (Matt 16:26).

Don't worry about making it in today's world. Focus your attention on being a "hero" where it counts . . . in God's eyes.