

Quiet Time Guide For Wednesday, July 30, 2008

Greetings:

Are you a positive or a negative person. In other words, are you an optimist or a pessimist? You know, is the glass half full or half empty. The way we answer these questions determine a lot about how we live our lives and what our spiritual condition is. When I read the Bible, I am constantly amazed at the mistakes that all of the key figures made, with the exception of Jesus. I don't exactly know why this should surprise me. They are all mere humans that God used to accomplish His work. As humans, they are going to achieve some great goals, as they follow God's lead, and they are going to fail miserably as they try to do things their way. I want us to take a look at some of these "giants" of the faith and see what we can learn from them.

Scriptures For Today:

Genesis 12:12-13: And it will come about when the Egyptians see you, that they will say, this is his wife, and they will kill me, but they will let you live. Please say that you are my sister so that it may go well with me because of you, and that I may live on account of you.

Exodus 4:14: Then the anger of the Lord burned against Moses, and He said, is there not your brother Aaron the Levite? I know that he speaks fluently, and moreover, behold he is coming out to meet you; when he sees you, he will be glad in his heart.

Judges 6:27: Then Gideon took ten men of his servants and did as the Lord had spoken to him; and it came about, because he was too afraid of his father's household and the men of the city to do it by day, that he did it by night.

2 Samuel 11:24 : Moreover, the archers shot at your servants from the wall; so some of the king's servants are dead, and your servant Uriah the Hittite is also dead.

Matthew 26:69-70: Now Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard, and a servant girl came to him and said, You too were with Jesus the Galilean. But, he denied it before them all, saying, I do not know what you are talking about.

Acts 7:58: When they had driven him out of the city, they began stoning him, and the witnesses laid aside their robes at the feet of a young man named Saul.

Life Applications:

When we look at all of the above Biblical passages, we can see that none of the main characters acted in ways that were pleasing to God. Abraham offered his wife to Abimelech because he was afraid. Moses was quite sure that he could not accomplish the task that God had given him. Gideon was terrified to do the assignment that the Lord had given him, so he did it in the dark of the night. David had Bathsheba's husband, Uriah, killed for his own selfish reasons. Peter lived up to the prediction of Jesus and denied he even knew Him. Paul, who persecuted the early church, was present at the assassination of Stephen.

Yet to look only at these negative event in the lives of the people we have listed above would be doing a great disservice to what God wants to teach us about ourselves. Yes, they did things that were bad, but to leave it at that would only be telling half of the story.

Remember, we want to be people that say the glass is half full. God continued to work in the lives of all those listed above. He did not give up on them just because they made a few mistakes. Abraham became the father of a mighty nation. Moses led the children of God into the promise land. Gideon's 300 men put 120,000 enemy soldiers to death. David was the great king of Israel. Peter became one of the leaders of the early church. Paul turned the world upside down with his three missionary journeys. We need to take positives from our stories and realize that as flawed as we are as human beings that God can and will accomplish mighty things through us if we will just let Him. If we focus only on the downsides and failures of our lives then we will be of little use to God when He wants to use us.

Spiritual Exercise:

Confess and then forget the failures of your past. 1 John 1:9 tells us that if we confess our sin, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Did you get that? Not from some of our unrighteousness, but from all of it. Then start concentrating on the positives. Remember some of the things you have done that were pleasing to God. In other words, concentrate on the positives. When you do that, your spirits will be lifted to the point that you will be ready for the next assignment that God has for you.

Thought For The Day:

Be positive about your life and the things you have done. Remember, I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.