

Martyr



I took this off the "Inpursuit Website" (<http://www.inpursuitca.com/new-page-1>) and I thought that living in America insulates us from all that is going on in the rest of the Christian world. This is certainly not a "happily ever after" story but one that depicts the conviction of this Christian man.

In 1980 a young man from Rwanda was forced by his tribe to either renounce Christ or face certain death. He refused to renounce Christ and he was killed on the spot. The night before he had written the following commitment which was found in his room.

"I'm part of the fellowship of the unashamed. The die has been cast. I have stepped over the line. The decision has been made. I'm a disciple of Jesus Christ. I won't look back, let up, slow down, back away or be still.

My past is redeemed, my present makes sense, my future is secure. I'm finished and done with low living, sight walking, small planning, smooth knees colourless dreams, tamed visions, worldly talking, cheap giving, and dwarfed goals.

My face is set, my gait is fast, my goal is heaven, my road is narrow, my way is rough, my companions are few, my guide is reliable, my mission is clear. I won't give up, shut up, let up until I have stayed up, stored up, prayed up for the cause of Jesus Christ.

I must go till He comes, give till I drop, preach till everyone knows, work till He stops me and when He comes for His own, He will have no trouble recognizing me because my banner will have been clear."

We know that what comes to us via the internet isn't always accurate but that taken into consideration, what an admirable statement of faith and intention of service to our "Lord and Savior". If every Christian repeated that mantra regularly, what power of God could be displayed through them. This man may have lost his life but what he gained was immeasurable.

What does the Bible say about this kind of activity? Esther 4:13-14 reports, "*Mordecai, sent back this answer to Esther: "Do not think that because you are in the king's house you alone of all the Jews will escape. For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance for the Jews will arise from another place, but you and your father's family will perish. And who knows but that you have come to your royal position for such a time as this?"*" You may complain "this was taken out of context" but reading the whole book of Esther will leave you with the same message. That message being, "Each one of us has been placed where we are for a reason and if we are to serve God in that place where we are, we may have to take risks and we may have to make sacrifices".

Daniel chapter 6 tells us more about what the character of a Christian might be. The "Administrators & Satraps" became jealous of Daniel, went to King Darius and convinced him that no one should worship anyone other than "King Darius", because of their flattery he didn't consider all the consequences and signed the law. When Daniel heard of the law he did just what he always did, climbed down on his knees and asked God for direction, which was exactly what the "Administrators & Satraps" knew he would do. They reported him to Darius and reminded him of the law he recently signed. The king was

not happy about the punishment, but “The Law is The Law”, when Daniel was found alive the next day, the king was relieved and vindicated him by throwing his accusers into that same pit. The message “Serve and Worship God no matter what the circumstances” and He will take care of the details.

Daniel 3:16-18 sends the same message. The three boys from Juda exclaim that they will only serve one God and Nebuchadnezzar can pack all those other gods up. They are convinced that God will deliver them from that “Fiery Furnace” and even if He doesn’t that is still a better route.

You might say, “This is Old Testament Stuff”, so let’s thumb to the back of the Bible. Acts 4 + 5 recount two instances where Peter and John were delivered up to the Sanhedrin to account for their activities. In both cases Peter reminded them of what propelled them to do what they did, that being the Jesus they had spent years with and the God that brought Jesus back from the death those Sanhedrin had inflicted on Him. In the first case the Clergy were in a quandary as to what should be done, since as with Jesus much of the population had taken a liking to them and the act of healing was compassionate and benign, so they let them off with a warning. The second time didn’t go as well, they were thrown into prison again, got to witness a miracle as an angel released them but when they were found preaching in The Temple they were again brought before the Priesthood. When Peter reminded them for the second time of the Apostles commitment to God they became angry enough to kill them and were it not for the diplomacy of Gamaliel things might have gone differently, instead they beat them and sent them off again with a warning. Interestingly, they “Rejoiced” that they were worthy of such suffering.

In 2 Corinthians 11:23-28 Paul exclaims, “I am out of my mind” but then he details all of the afflictions he had been exposed to, *“I have worked much harder, been in prison more frequently, been flogged more severely, and been exposed to death again and again. Five times I received from the Jews the forty lashes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was pelted with stones, three times I was shipwrecked, I spent a night and a day in the open sea, I have been constantly on the move. I have been in danger from rivers, in danger from bandits, in danger from my fellow Jews, in danger from Gentiles; in danger in the city, in danger in the country, in danger at sea; and in danger from false believers. I have labored and toiled and have often gone without sleep; I have known hunger and thirst and have often gone without food; I have been cold and naked. Besides everything else, I face daily the pressure of my concern for all the churches.”* Certainly, as he pointed out bragging about all this is one thing but us knowing what he went through for “The Gospel” puts his message in a whole different light and makes us more grateful for him and his service.

The key ingredients in each of these narratives are, full commitment to your Lord and Savior, do everything you are capable of, stay in constant contact with your Lord and God, expect difficulty and don’t be surprised when things work out differently than you thought. Remembering Jesus’s promise “I am with you always to the very end of the age”.