

“Gift ideas for Jesus ~ To be Accountable” 1.10.10

CELEBRATE = Project 3.19

Question

In your lifetime has anyone ever rescued you from imminent danger & without them you would have not survived? Has this ever happened to anyone?

At my 1<sup>st</sup> church that I served in after Bible College, 1 of my elders & a dear friend had this happen to him in Vietnam.

- Tom Bottorff was a young Captain in the USMC
  - He was a helicopter pilot that flew the Marine Corp H-34 which were used in multi-tasks operations.
  - Tom said he would fly re-con missions inserting troops into hills of Vietnam; in addition his helicopter was used as a medi-vac unit extracting wounded soldiers from the ‘hot zones’ to nearby M.A.S.H. units
- One morning he was flying a medi-vac mission when he was ordered into a ‘hot landing zone’ under enemy fire.
  - He & his 4 crew members had just landed when a N. Vietnamese missile exploded into his helicopter, shattering it literally into pieces; miraculously none of his crew members were killed & all escaped the burning copter.
  - Tom was not so fortunate - - the explosion had critically damaged both of his legs & feet; on top of this, his flight suit was on fire barely able to crawl out from the burning rubble; he was collapsed unable to walk.
  - When out of the wood line came a young Marine who hoisted him up on his shoulders, carrying him to another helicopter that had just landed.

But Tom was not out of harm’s way yet:

- When Tom was loaded onto the 2<sup>nd</sup> helicopter was not able to take off because it was too heavy so the crew began unloading tool boxes; ammo cans; water supply & the 2 M-60 caliber machine guns attached to the copter.
  - Tom said when the helicopter finally made it back to the M.A.S.H. unit; he was the nearest to the door; & 2 corpsmen grabbed his stretcher taking him backwards down the hill, his eyes still facing the helicopter.
  - He said that as soon as the helicopter landed the rudders began slowing, in battle these flying medi-vacs never shut down until every wounded soldier is extracted from the battlefield.
  - Come to find out - - the helicopters’ engine had taken so many rounds of enemy fire, that by God’s grace it was able just to land & before it quit ☺

Tom said he never found out the name of the young Marine who carried him to safety; but without him, he would not have made it!

Question:

Do you have someone in your life that’s got your back? That you literally have ENTRUSTED YOUR LIFE into their hands?

King David did...

- I. King David’s entrusted friends
  - A. (R) II Samuel 23: 8 or p. 254 in pew Bible
    - 1<sup>st</sup> entrusted friend = Jash – o – beam (a fun loving guy)
      - i. Leader of ‘the Three’ = (3) mightiest warriors among David’s army

- ii. He once killed (800) enemy warriors single-handedly w/only a spear!
- David's elite fighting men were divided into 2 groups:
    - i. 1<sup>st</sup> group = 'the Three' – tough hombres
    - ii. 2<sup>nd</sup> group = 'the thirty' = round # rather than a mathematical indication.
- B. (R) II Samuel 23: 9 – 10
- 2<sup>nd</sup> entrusted friend = El – e – azar (a very gentle soul himself)
- C. (R) II Samuel 23: 11 – 12
1. 3<sup>rd</sup> entrusted friend = Sham – mah (by no means a push-over)
  2. I like this guy = he stood his ground when everyone else ran for cover:
    - a. He took personally responsibility for God's Pea Patch
    - b. Sham – mah knew some things are worth fighting for:
    - c. My list is short that I would die for = my family & friends + my country + the lost to know Jesus + God's Kingdom, I will give my life for that list!
- D. (R) II Samuel 23: 13 – 14
1. Cave of Adullam became headquarters for David & his troops.
    - a. The cave was a semi-secure location from King Saul & his army; by this time David & Israel's 1<sup>st</sup> King were @ odds - Saul's insecurities drove him literally insane & he wanted David dead.
    - b. Back-drop of the text ~ David is day-dreaming about a better, more simple time in his life ~ when no stupid politics threatened his life.
  2. (R) II Samuel 23: 15 – 17
    - a. David's entrusted friends knew their friend & leader gave much more than he took & they did not hesitate to risk their lives to get him a drink.
    - b. So why did he pour out the water?
    - c. It was much too valuable for him to enjoy = David likens the water to the precious blood of his men. To drink this water would have been to take the sacrifice of these men lightly; his gesture proved he was not worthy. Only God is worthy of such an offering = drink offering.
- (1) more entrusted friend = Benaiah (affectionately known as 'Mr. Sunshine') ☺
- E. (R) II Samuel 23: 20 - 23
1. If I had a son I would consider naming him Benaiah – I love his courage!
  2. Let me state the obvious: Benaiah was not the odds on favorite in any of these encounters:
    - a. He was double-teamed by 2 Moabites = 2 to 1 underdog
    - b. Taking away the Egyptians spear & killing him w/it was no cake walk!
  3. There is no way to calculate the odds of a man vs. a lion.

- a. Full grown lions weigh up to 500 pounds & run (35 mph), their vision is five times better than a human with 20-20 vision.
- b. This lion had the advantage in this dimly lit pit – not to mention its sure-footed cat like reflexes certainly gains the upper paw on a snowy day ☺

These are the types of men who David entrusted his life with each day.

Question:

Whose got your back = have you entrusted your life to anyone?

Question:

Do you have someone in your life that you are ACCOUNTABLE TO for accepting responsibility for your own actions & poor behavior?

Thankfully we live in a relatively safe world that has come @ great costs from our deployed troops & retired military personnel that went before them.

Our greatest dangers we face today ARE NOT physical threats to our very lives; but another type of danger that attacks us daily on moral fronts.

God did not intend for any of us to live our lives in isolation w/out friends that could watch our backs ~ protect our families!

TRUTH is...

Many of you live life in isolation & God never intended for you 'to do live alone.'

Hasn't there been enough broken hearts due to 'marital unfaithfulness' / moral failures that that have taken a drastic toll on families?

Trace the reasons good men & women have fallen...search for common threads in the tapestry of tragedies; more often than not, you will find a breakdown in the realm of personal morality.

None of us are above this painful reality: Moral break downs come about slowly; almost imperceptibly; like a slow leak in a tire.

Accountability partners help us not lose our edge...when we begin to slip...begin to allow disobedience in small areas that we've hidden or dismissed; Entrusted friends care enough to ask the hard questions! Not only do they have your back but they also kick you in the pants when needed!

II. Accountability = entrusting my life to another

- Down-side = what holds you back?
  1. Perhaps the pangs of shame, guilt, or self-condemnation strikes fear into your heart @ the thought of openly sharing w/others your failures & struggles?
  2. Maybe your pride & stubbornness won't let you admit you need help?
    - a. @ least PRAY about it ~ ask God to bring someone who can be an entrusted friend that you can be mutually be accountable too.
    - b. Be patient = pray for Proverbs 27: 17

"As iron sharpen iron, so a friend sharpens a friend"

- These accountability partners will...

1. Help in time of need (Proverbs 17: 17)
2. Comfort in times of sorrow (II Corinthians 1: 3 – 5)
3. (R) Galatians 6: 1 – 2 or p. 893 in pew Bible
4. Will speak the truth in love (Ephesians 4: 15)
5. Encourage daily (Hebrews 3: 13)
6. (R) Hebrews 10: 24 – 25 or p. 926 in pew Bible
  - a. Encourages you in your spiritual walk
  - b. Divine Habit of coming & being the church!
  
7. Most of all = they will stand firm & love you thru the difficult times (Philippines 4:1)

They will care enough to ask you about:  
SILVER ...SLOTH...SELF...SEX C. Swindoll

Accountability is God using others to shape your life to act in conformity with His image & good will; a life intended to be free from bondage from strongholds.

When it's working right:

Godly accountability has less to do about you trying to stop a particular sin as much as it has to do with engaging your heart in loving & serving God & others!