

The Bulwark

MAY 22, 2022

“WHILE WE HAVE OPPORTUNITY...”

The noted boxer, Muhammad Ali was more than a little loquacious. He was at times humorous, but he could also be profound with his comments. “Service to others is the rent you pay for your room here on earth.” A most excellent sentiment is expressed and enjoined with a clearly defined individual responsibility. In Paul’s letter to the brethren in Galatia, he points out in chapter six and verse ten, “*So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all men, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.*”

Opportunity is defined as being, “a set of circumstances that make it possible to do something” (Oxford Dictionary)

A simple equation is opportunity plus ability equals responsibility. This seems to echo what Solomon wrote in the book of Proverbs, chapter three and verse twenty-seven. “*Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due. When it is in your power to do it.*” Clearly the “*certain priest*” and the “*Levite*” depicted in the parable of the Good Samaritan as found in Luke 10:30-37, had the opportunity and the ability to help the one who had been waylaid, but rejected responsibility. Such wasn’t the case with the Samaritan as he was presented with an opportunity to be of service and accepted the responsibility. An interesting side bar to this is “The Good Samaritan Law”

which has been put into effect in several states. Basically stating that in certain scenarios, the law may impose a duty upon you to help rescue someone else who is in danger.



When Hurricane Katrina hit Louisiana in late August of 2005, people from all across the United States rallied together to help provide what was needed to those impacted by the devastation left in its wake. In 2017, when Hurricane Harvey brought catastrophic flooding to eastern Texas, strand-

ing thousands of people, a veritable “navy” was amassed. This so-called “Texas Navy” was a collection of volunteers who came into the area with their boats to evacuate those who needed rescuing. Opportunity + Ability = Responsibility.

No doubt there were many that joined in to help rescue those in dire need, might not have felt adequate enough to do the job. Yet instead of doing nothing, they did what they could and it made a massive difference. Using the rising waters of floods from torrential rain and storm surge as a backdrop, think about those who are struggling to gain a foothold spiritually. An old hymn comes to mind, “Throw Out The Lifeline”. The refrain of the song is, “Throw out the lifeline! Throw out the lifeline! Someone is drifting away; Throw

out the lifeline! Throw out the lifeline! Someone is sinking today.”

The second verse implores, “Throw out the lifeline with hand quick and strong; why do you tarry, why linger so long? See, he is sinking, O hasten today...” The greatest service one can render to another is to share with them the gospel of Jesus Christ. Someone is sinking today. While we may not feel adequate if we don’t do it, who will?

Yet another song we sing is haunting inasmuch as it confronts IF we have done what we could. That song is “You Never Mentioned Him To Me.” Every day opportunities are presented, let us not let them pass by. (nbe)

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