

Be a Berean!

The Bereans...received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day (Acts 17:11).

We know Jesus through the Bible, or we know him not at all. That is the urgent premise behind LAC's efforts to encourage personal Bible reading and systematic Bible study. We fervently hope that you will--

1. "Stand in the Rain" with us every day as we read through the Bible in three short years. Just go to lockportalliance.blogspot.com

2. Attend one of these Bible-based classes this week—

"Stand in the Rain Whole-Bible Class"--Sunday at 9:45

"Becoming a Woman of Freedom"--Sunday at 9:45

(Contact Franklyn Pfeil--pfeilmail@yahoo.com--with questions or comments.)

"O Lord, I want to be in that number"

Behold, he was honored among the thirty, but he did not attain to the three. (1 Chronicles 11:25)

Looking at the title for this article, it appears that I want to be a saint.

But I don't have to want that, silly. I already am that. Everyone who trusts and follows Jesus is a saint; that's what *saint* means.

No, I want more. I want to be counted amongst Jesus' mighty men. Don't you?

The Kingdom of God is not going to be politically correct. Everyone there will be a saint, and in that way on a kind of equal footing. But beyond that, "equality" (our notion of it, anyway) will end. Because there are going to be those whom God marks out like the mighty men are marked out by David in today's reading.

This scriptural precept is unsettling to some. But let's level with one another. If we think that we are going to have the same reward as those being beheaded for their faith this very day--while we decide it's too much to help once a month with the 2 year olds in the nursery during Sunday service, thus ignoring the lady in charge of the nursery as she puts out one urgent appeal after another--then political "correctness" has warped our minds.

Some will be mighty men in the kingdom and some will not. Some will be rewarded beyond salvation and some will not:

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ. If any man builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, his work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each man's work. If what he has built survives, he will receive his reward. If it is burned up, he will suffer loss; he himself will be saved, but only as one escaping through the flames. (1 Corinthians 3:11-15)

I watch my kids train to be champions. Yesterday they both ran a fast 15 miles. But somehow--maybe because salvation is a free gift; maybe because what we hear from our pulpits and teachers is "grace, grace, grace," and seldom about the battle for the kingdom--somehow we don't train to fight for the kingdom of God like a high school boy will train to gain a paltry medal or trophy. Paul put it this way:

Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last forever. Therefore I do not run like a man running aimlessly; I do not fight like a man beating the air. No, I beat my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize. (1 Corinthians 9:24-27)

I want to be a mighty man. I want to fight for Jesus like he fought for me. I want to train to run, and run to win. I want to carry the banner of the Kingdom into battle. And I want you to come along with me. I want you to join the battle, so here's how to enlist:

Call the lady who runs the nursery during the church service. **Tell her you're reporting for duty.**

Begin right there. God wants you to be in that number, when his mighty men come marching in.