

Chapter 10: The Unsung Heroes of Our Nation

Life Application Verses:

Colossians 3:23-24. Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve.

What does it take to be a hero today?—courage maybe or a willingness to sacrifice self to save others in times of danger or how about just doing what is normal. Quite possibly we think of heroes as those in the military who leap on a grenade to save fellow soldiers or a police officer who jumps in the path of a bullet to save a citizen in the city in which they serve. Our heroes may have names we know when we hear them or see them in print (George Patton, George Marshall, Douglas McArthur, Audie Murphy...) and we salute them for their sacrifice to others. This present discussion is not targeted to those heroes we know (although they have earned and deserve our accolades), but to those millions of unsung heroes in our nation. Who are these unknown heroes that live among us every day?

First, though, let me define ‘unsung’ in the context of what we are discussing for both the Christian and those who do not believe in Christ Jesus. As Christians, our desire for the lost should mirror the desire of our God: “The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance” (2 Peter 3: 9). With that said, we must not forget the lost or that the unsaved are among the unsung heroes in our communities, cities, counties, states, and the nation. The difference—in this context—is that the unsung heroes of which I speak are those who have made a profession in Jesus Christ and their lives reflect this Eternal event in their daily lives.

So, what is an ‘unsung hero?’ These are the people that you don’t know by name. They attend Church regularly, tithe, take care of parents and children, perform community service, help their neighbors, they work hard to earn a living, and so forth. They are unsung in the eyes of our globally, secular world of political correctness and pedestals, yet, as it is given to us in Scripture, Colossians 3: 23-24, they are not forgotten by our God in Christ Jesus: “Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve.” They live this

truth. Sure, they stumble, fall, repent, and seek forgiveness—but, they get up and go the distance for God every single day. God knows their names, faces, addresses, and their quirks and He recognizes them as *The Unsung Heroes of Our Nation*. Why? Because they seek His face to do His will in a land of ever increasing tension, troubles, and anti-Christianity.

As you read this, think about the discussion and see if **you** fit the mold of these unsung heroes. For example, the unsung heroes I am referring to are the Heavenly Minded, so that they might be busy doing Earthly Good. Let's start with the mothers and fathers who live and work in our communities, cities, counties, states, and the nation. What does it take for these mothers and fathers to be heroes? Well, think about it this way: if they (or you) have small or youth-aged children, these Gifts from God need food, shelter, clothing, discipline, love, fun, your time, help with homework, help finding those lost shoes or socks, clean clothes, someone to play games with, supervised computer time, medicines, life guidance, visits to the doctor or dentist, transportation to dance or ball practice, the routine of a standard or set bedtime to get sufficient rest, Bible readings and prayer, visits to family members, lots and lots of hugs and verbal messages of 'I love you', everyday discussions about God and Jesus, Church and Bible Study, Vacation Bible School, and this list is potentially and perpetually endless! We call this list of 'activities' normal—why 'normal' I do not know! It might not feel normal at the end of the week when they/you (and me) are tired and run down from all these 'normal activities.'

When you consider the list above, are you doing any or all of them? When your own children, who may be adults today, were young and growing up, I can imagine that you had a few days when you experienced the adage of just-one-foot-in-front-of-the-other was not a saying at all, but a reality as you were living it. In the Life Application Verses, the unsung heroes of our nation don't get the headlines or medals of our well known heroes. Yet, these unsung heroes get up every day and every day they earn their Congressional Medal of Honor for Ordinary Life Heroism. The question that rises to the forefront of this discussion is for whom do these recipients look for their accolades? They do their work, care for the family, and make a difference in their communities because they do what they do for service to God. These unsung heroes believe in the Word of God, which is worth repeating again here: "Whatever you do, do

your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve.”

Look at the first three words of these verses: ‘whatever you do.’ That word ‘whatever’ today is one of the vernacular anecdotes to flippant conversation pieces. For example, at times, you may talk to your son or daughter about important issues, and the response is: “Whatever!” I don’t think God meant that kind of ‘whatever’; I think He meant it to instill in us a Heavenly Minded approach to life’s routines, such that as we go through life—sometimes just-one-foot-in-front-of-the-other—we will remember his admonition and apply His Truths to our Earthly Good outcomes. ‘Whatever you do’ includes all of life, does it not? Therefore, in all that we do, we should do our work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men. Sometimes, I admit that this is a difficult prospect. Do you find yourself in that situation? Like, I have been told at times one thing only to discover that my efforts and long hours were done for the benefit of my organization and the reward was not what I expected or was promised.

I was disappointed, to say the least, until I remembered that my work is not for men, but for God. I needed to remember that my work, effort, and really long hours afforded me a paycheck, but my remuneration is in knowing that: “Whatever you [I] do, do your [my] work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men, knowing that from the Lord you [I] will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you [I] serve.” You see how this works? And if you see how it works, this world may not sing you accolades at all; oh, sure, you might receive an award that has the inscription, ‘Academic Teacher of the Year’, ‘Best Fundraiser for the Heart Association’, ‘Community Service Accommodation’, ‘Graduate of Leadership Montgomery’, and there’s insufficient space to list every single one in existence. These awards are worthy of the effort, okay; but, think of all that we do in life. When was the last time someone stopped you and gave you a plaque that read, ‘Exceptional Play-Time-Buddy with Your Granddaughter’ (or grandson, daughter, or son)? That is an unsung hero! So are all the parents, police officers, firemen, street sweepers, politicians (yes, even them), doctors, shoe repairmen, etc., that actively live Colossians 3: 23-24.

These unsung heroes don’t need A National Anthem played for them so that they are motivated to do their jobs. When they hear this noble song, they stand and salute; but, they

are who they are because they are Heavenly Minded to do their Earthly Good best in all things as unto God. They give to Caesar far more than he deserves, in time, talents, and taxes. They give willingly and without much grumbling. Oh, some proper grumbling is okay I guess, as I even do some myself until I recall the Life Application Verses. We want to grumble sometimes and God gives us reason not to. We get past the utterances of ‘hard knocks’ and we get back to the business of Rendering to God. That’s what unsung heroes are all about! They just go and do for the Lord, giving and doing their best, picking up those toys and teaching their children what it means to pick up the toys, and helping their co-workers time-after-time even when they haven’t received what was promised. No song, no ticker-tape parade, no fanfare—just another day at the office or doing domestic engineering. Oh, and replace grumbling with Prayer!!!

God sees it all, my brothers and sisters in Christ! His 20/20 vision is not blurred by our failed efforts, our hopeful outcomes, and our intents-of-the-heart. While we may not hear the Songs of Unsung Heroes, He hears them for us. When we intentionally go the extra-mile to expend what little energy we may have to get in the floor and play with our children or sit at the table and talk to our teenager about God or issues that they face, I believe that God’s Angels sing the Song of Unsung Heroes to us—and for us before God’s Throne. We might not hear it as we perceive hearing a song in this Earthly life, but it is sung nevertheless.

We are unsung heroes, yet it’s not about boasting that we desire. Our hearts are directed towards Heavenly Minded goals so that our work is Earthly Good for service to our God. From the smallest event in our lives to the most demanding expectation, our desire is to serve God. While the world will not sing us praises, our children will reap the benefit of our service. Our family will bond in love and our friends will know that we serve a risen Savior. *Our employers will wonder at how we can be such good employees, always faithful in service and giving our very best to support our organization.* Our Criminal Justice System will marvel at our missing ‘rap sheet’ because we obey ALL the laws that protect us and others. Someone will one day arrive in Heaven because of our witness. The kisses and hugs we receive from our **precious** little children as they grow up are Songs of Unsung Heroes and we will cherish them for the full time we have on this Earth. Our parents will know that we Honor them as our own unsung heroes for the sacrifices they made for us. God give us the wisdom to completely understand.

There are so many other things that could be discussed here, but I think that you see what being an unsung hero truly is. Earlier, I asked if **you** fit the mold of these unsung heroes. I would imagine at this point that you do. The thing to remember is that we cannot give up, give in, or drop-stop out. To reiterate this point, I have included the lyrics of the song, *Cinderella*, by Steven Curtis Chapman. As you read these lyrics, take a few moments to deeply read them, but from the perspective of the life-application of The Unsung Heroes of Our Nation. What is the father in the song doing? What is he **really** doing for his daughter? Is he grudgingly responding to the request from his daughter? Does he have conflict in his life in terms of a busy schedule? Yet, with all of the concerns that he has, what does he do?

He gives of himself. He sees that one day his daughter will be gone as she marries and begins a family. His life will change, but he does not walk away from the request for a dance. It takes time from his busy life, but what a glorious transformation in his life and in the life of his daughter. He is truly one of The Unsung Heroes of Our Nation because of what he gives of himself to make a difference. *And God saw it all as the Angels sing the Song of Unsung Heroes.*

A Question of Curiosity:

When you look in the mirror tomorrow morning, will you see a hero that is serving a God for His Glory or do you see a hero who wants the accolades of men? If you serve God as in Colossians 3: 23-24, you never know when God will grant you the accolades of men as a reward for service to Him—on this side of Heaven. Post the Life Application Verses someplace that reminds you each day of its Truth: *“Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve.”*

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“Hero: A person who makes a substantive yet unrecognized contribution; a person whose bravery is unknown or unacknowledged.”

~ Dictionary.com ~

“Missions Organization Seeking Unsung Heroes Nominations: Epoch 2013 honors those in the mission field who are persistently challenging and creatively solving the problems our world faces in areas such as discipleship, poverty, water advocacy, HIV/AIDS, sex trafficking, homelessness, church planting, and more. Awards totaling \$50,000 will be given to individuals who are restoring places, creating projects, and touching the lives of people, while intentionally honoring the role of Jesus Christ in their work.”

~ Epoch Awards ~

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"Cinderella"¹
Steven Curtis Chapman (2009)
(Used with permission)

She spins and she sways to whatever song plays
Without a care in the world
And I'm sitting here wearing the weight of the world on my shoulders
It's been a long day and there's still work to do
She's pulling at me saying "Dad I need you!
There's a ball at the castle and I've been invited
and I need to practice my dancin'
Oh please, Daddy, please?"

So I will dance with Cinderella
While she is here in my arms
'Cause I know something the prince never knew
Oh I will dance with Cinderella
I don't want to miss even one song
'Cause all too soon the clock will strike midnight
And she'll be gone.

She says he's a nice guy and I'd be impressed
She wants to know if I approve of the dress
She says, "Dad, the prom is just one week away
And I need to practice my dancin'
Oh please, Daddy, please?"

So I will dance with Cinderella
While she is here in my arms
'Cause I know something the prince never knew
Ohh oh ohh oh I will dance with Cinderella
I don't want to miss even one song
'Cause all too soon the clock will strike midnight
And she'll be gone, She will be gone.

But she came home today with a ring on her hand
Just glowing and telling us all they had planned
She says, "Dad, the wedding's still six months away but I need to practice my dancin'
Oh please, Daddy, please!"

So I will dance with Cinderella
While she is here in my arms
'Cause I know something the prince never knew
Ohh oh ohh oh I will dance with Cinderella
I don't want to miss even one song
'Cause all too soon the clock will strike midnight
And she'll be gone.

¹ Dedicated to Maria Sue Chapman, 2003 – 2008.

My Prayer For You:

Father God, how tired I feel at times. How undervalued I feel at work and that my work is never noticed except when it is considered inadequate. I pray O Lord that if the reader of this prayer is struggling with these and other feelings, that You will give this individual a renewed sense of purpose at work, home, in life, and to press upon him or her that You are the foundation upon which we base our existence. I pray that as they read this prayer they will be reminded of the power in Love whether that love is between family, husband and wife, father or mother and son or daughter, or between themselves and You God. May they understand that as an unsung hero of this nation, their service is not for man, but for You. May they understand that the reward they seek is not from their jobs or their communities or even from family, but from You. If they serve You as You desire in Colossians 3: 23-24, their relationships between themselves and family and others will be returned tenfold. Those times with children will be the Precious Songs of Unsung Heroes, a hug from a husband or wife will be the Love Songs of Unsung Heroes, and service to you God will be the Ultimate Song of Unsung Heroes. I humbly and boldly pray for these individuals who give so much as they serve You, that You will grant them Blessings of Peace, Joy, and Comfort. In the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, I bring these petitions to the Throne of Grace and Mercy. A Special Prayer: God Bless the Little Angels You Give Us! For they are the Heart of You in the lives they share with us—they are the Little Unsung Heroes that walk through our lives and give us unspeakable joy! Amen.

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Consider the story below and then multiply this man’s Heart for God by the millions of unsung heroes in our world. Knowing their name is not important, although it is worthy to know of them. What matters is that God knows who these people are! Are you one of them in whatever capacity you serve God in Christ Jesus!



Pastor Lee Jong-rak

Jong-rak is a pastor in South Korea, who created a “baby box”. He attached the box to the side of his house, to allow parents to deposit their mentally handicapped or unwanted babies, to stop them being abandoned on the side of the road.

Have you ever heard of Noah, Abraham, Jacob, Mordecai, Joseph of Nazareth, John the Baptist, Stephen, working moms, working dads, dedicated grandparents, and the list is endless...God Grant These Unsung Heroes of Today Grace, Mercy, and Love That Surpasses Understanding...

