

Heroism
FAIRVIEW TEXAS CHURCH OF GOD
February 28, 2009

We recently have heard of the heroism of “Sully” – Chesley B. Sullenberger III - the pilot who landed his airplane in the Hudson River. Not one of the 155 passengers aboard US Airways Flight 1549 died and there were no serious injuries. You know the story, and have most likely seen TV footage of the crash. The term “hero” is frequently used rather lightly these days, but not in his case.

I think it is safe to identify many of the firefighters and police officers involved in the 9/11 attack as heroes, also.

But we need to be careful who we hold in such high esteem.

Recently, a great many people were mesmerized by the Oscars and the “Red-Carpet” interviews and pictures. We have had many actors, actresses, sports figures and others our idols and heroes in today’s society.

Some of you younger people may have not even heard of these 'old movie stars'. They gave up their wealth, position and fame to become service men & women, many as simple "enlisted men". From this group of only 18 men came over 70 medals in honor of their valor, spanning from Bronze Stars, Silver Stars, Distinguish Service Cross', Purple Hearts and one Congressional Medal of Honor.

Most of these men have since passed on.

- 1. Alec Guinness (Star Wars) operated a British Royal Navy landing craft on D-Day.**
- 2. James Doohan ("Scotty" on Star Trek) landed in Normandy with the U. S. Army on D-Day.**
- 3. Donald Pleasance (The Great Escape) really was an R. A. F. pilot who was shot down, held prisoner and tortured by the Germans.**
- 4. David Niven was a Lt. Colonel of the British Commandos in Normandy .**
- 5. James Stewart entered the Army Air Force as a private and worked his way to the rank of Colonel. During World War II, Stewart served as a bomber pilot, his service record crediting him with leading more than 20 missions over Germany, and taking part in hundreds of air strikes during his tour of duty. Stewart earned the Air Medal, the Distinguished Flying Cross, France 'S Croix de Guerre, and 7 Battle Stars during World War II. In peace time, Stewart continued to be an active member of the Air Force as a reservist, reaching the rank of Brigadier General before retiring in the late 1950s.**
- 6. Clark Gable (Mega-Movie Star when war broke out) Although he was beyond the draft age at the time the U.S. entered WW II, Clark Gable enlisted as a private in the AAF on Aug. 12, 1942 at Los Angeles . He attended the Officers' Candidate School at Miami Beach, Fla. and graduated**

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as a second lieutenant on Oct. 28, 1942. He then attended aerial gunnery school and in Feb. 1943 he was assigned to the 351st Bomb Group at Polebrook where flew operational missions over Europe in B-17s. Capt. Gable returned to the U.S. in Oct. 1943 and was relieved from active duty as a major on Jun. 12, 1944 at his own request, since he was over-age for combat.

7. **Charlton Heston was an Army Air Corps Sergeant in Kodiak.**
8. **Ernest Borgnine was a U. S. Navy Gunners Mate 1935-1945. (Maybe that's why he starred in "McHale's Navy")**
9. **Charles Durning was a U. S. Army Ranger at Normandy earning a Silver Star and awarded the Purple Heart.**
10. **Charles Bronson was a tail gunner in the Army Air Corps, more specifically on B-29's in the 20th Air Force out of Guam, Tinian, and Saipan**
11. **George C. Scott was a decorated U. S. Marine.**
12. **Eddie Albert (Green Acres TV) was awarded a Bronze Star for his heroic action as a U. S. Naval officer aiding Marines at the horrific battle on the island of Tarawa in the Pacific Nov. 1943.**
13. **Brian Keith served as a US Marine rear gunner in several actions against the Japanese on Rabal in the Pacific.**
14. **Lee Marvin was a U.S. Marine on Saipan during the Marianas campaign when he was wounded earning the Purple Heart.**
15. **John Russell In 1942, he enlisted in the Marine Corps where he received a battlefield commission and was wounded and highly decorated for valor at Guadalcanal**
16. **Robert Ryan was a U. S. Marine who served with the O. S. S. in Yugoslavia .**
17. **Tyrone Power (an established movie star when Pearl Harbor was bombed) joined the U.S. Marines, was a pilot flying supplies into, and wounded Marines out of, Iwo Jima and Okinawa.**
18. **Audie Murphy, little 5'5" tall 110 pound guy from Farmersville, Texas who played cowboy parts: Most Decorated serviceman of WWII and earned: Medal of Honor, Distinguished Service Cross, 2 Silver Star Medals, Legion of Merit, 2 Bronze Star Medals with "V", 2 Purple Hearts, U.S. Army Outstanding Civilian Service Medal, Good Conduct Medal, 2 Distinguished Unit Emblems, American Campaign Medal, European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign Medal with One Silver Star, Four Bronze Service Stars (representing nine campaigns) and one Bronze Arrowhead (representing assault landing at Sicily and Southern France) World War II Victory Medal Army of Occupation Medal with Germany Clasp, Armed Forces Reserve Medal, Combat Infantry Badge, Marksman Badge with Rifle Bar, Expert Badge with Bayonet Bar, French Fourragere in Colors of the Croix de Guerre, French Legion of Honor, Grade of Chevalier, French Croix de Guerre With Silver Star, French Croix de Guerre with Palm, Medal of Liberated France, Belgian Croix de Guerre 1940 Palm.**

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Judges 7

- 1 Then Jerubbaal, who is Gideon, and all the people that were with him, rose up early, and pitched beside the well of Harod: so that the host of the Midianites were on the north side of them, by the hill of Moreh, in the valley.
 - Gideon was from the tribe of Manasseh
- 2 And the LORD said unto Gideon, The people that are with thee are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hands, lest Israel vaunt themselves against me, saying, Mine own hand hath saved me.
 - God had shown Gideon the victory, and Gideon had asked for a sign.
- 3 Now therefore go to, proclaim in the ears of the people, saying, Whosoever is fearful and afraid, let him return and depart early from mount Gilead. And there returned of the people twenty and two thousand; and there remained ten thousand.
 - 22,000 people were afraid
 - But 10,000 remained ready to fight
- 4 And the LORD said unto Gideon, **The people are yet too many**; bring them down unto the water, and I will try them for thee there: and it shall be, that of whom I say unto thee, This shall go with thee, the same shall go with thee; and of whomsoever I say unto thee, This shall not go with thee, the same shall not go.
- 5 So he brought down the people unto the water: and the LORD said unto Gideon, Every one that lappeth of the water with his tongue, as a dog lappeth, him shalt thou set by himself; likewise every one that boweth down upon his knees to drink.
- 6 And the number of them that lapped, putting their hand to their mouth, were three hundred men: but all the rest of the people bowed down upon their knees to drink water.
 - 300 held the water in their hands
- 7 And the LORD said unto Gideon, By the three hundred men that lapped will I save you, and deliver the Midianites into thine hand: and let all the other people go every man unto his place.
 - Over 9,000 people were sent home
- 8 So the people took victuals in their hand, and their trumpets: and he sent all the rest of Israel every man unto his tent, and retained those three hundred men: and the host of Midian was beneath him in the valley.
- 9 And it came to pass the same night, that the LORD said unto him, Arise, get thee down unto the host; for I have delivered it into thine hand.
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- 16 And he divided the three hundred men into three companies, and he put a trumpet in every man's hand, with empty pitchers, and lamps within the pitchers.

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- 17 And he said unto them, Look on me, and do likewise: and, behold, when I come to the outside of the camp, it shall be that, as I do, so shall ye do.
- 18 When I blow with a trumpet, I and all that are with me, then blow ye the trumpets also on every side of all the camp, and say, The sword of the LORD, and of Gideon.
- 19 So Gideon, and the hundred men that were with him, came unto the outside of the camp in the beginning of the middle watch; and they had but newly set the watch: and they blew the trumpets, and brake the pitchers that were in their hands.
- 20 And the three companies blew the trumpets, and brake the pitchers, and held the lamps in their left hands, and the trumpets in their right hands to blow withal: and they cried, The sword of the LORD, and of Gideon.
- 21 And they stood every man in his place round about the camp: and all the host ran, and cried, and fled.
- 22 And the three hundred blew the trumpets, and the LORD set every man's sword against his fellow, even throughout all the host: and the host fled to Bethshittah in Zererath, and to the border of Abelmeholah, unto Tabbath.

The Israelites regarded Gideon as a hero and tried to make him their king.

1 Samuel 14

- 1 Now it came to pass upon a day, that Jonathan the son of Saul said unto the young man that bare his armour, Come, and let us go over to the Philistines' garrison, that is on the other side. But he told not his father.
- 2 And Saul tarried in the uttermost part of Gibeah under a pomegranate tree which is in Migron: and the people that were with him were about six hundred men;
- 3 And Ahiah, the son of Ahitub, Ichabod's brother, the son of Phinehas, the son of Eli, the LORD'S priest in Shiloh, wearing an ephod. And the people knew not that Jonathan was gone.
- 4 And between the passages, by which Jonathan sought to go over unto the Philistines' garrison, there was a sharp rock on the one side, and a sharp rock on the other side: and the name of the one was Bozez, and the name of the other Seneh.
- 5 The forefront of the one was situate northward over against Michmash, and the other southward over against Gibeah.
- 6 And Jonathan said to the young man that bare his armour, Come, and let us go over unto the garrison of these uncircumcised: it may be that the LORD will work for us: for there is no restraint to the LORD to save by many or by few.

Jonathan pointed out that the LORD can get His will accomplished with an army, or with only a few.

1 Samuel 17:45

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- 40 And he took his staff in his hand, and chose him five smooth stones out of the brook, and put them in a shepherd's bag which he had, even in a scrip; and his sling was in his hand: and he drew near to the Philistine.
- 41 And the Philistine came on and drew near unto David; and the man that bare the shield went before him.
- 42 And when the Philistine looked about, and saw David, he disdained him: for he was but a youth, and ruddy, and of a fair countenance.
- 43 And the Philistine said unto David, Am I a dog, that thou comest to me with staves? And the Philistine cursed David by his gods.
- 44 And the Philistine said to David, Come to me, and I will give thy flesh unto the fowls of the air, and to the beasts of the field.
- 45 Then said David to the Philistine, Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied.
- 46 This day will the LORD deliver thee into mine hand; and I will smite thee, and take thine head from thee; and I will give the carcasses of the host of the Philistines this day unto the fowls of the air, and to the wild beasts of the earth; that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel.
- 47 And all this assembly shall know that the LORD saveth not with sword and spear: for the battle is the LORD'S, and he will give you into our hands.

David slew Goliath – but he gave the credit to God.

Hebrews 11

- 30 By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days.
- 31 By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace.
- 32 And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gedeon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthae; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets:
- 33 Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions,
- 34 Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.

The writer of Hebrews is making it clear that any time a person appears to be a hero; it is really their faith that enabled them to perform. They were simply a tool of God's will.

Revelation 12

- 7 And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels,
- 8 And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven.

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- 9 And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.
- 10 And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.
- 11 And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.

The final war will be won and the heroes will be Michael and his angels.

John 15:

- 12 This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.
- 13 Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.
- 14 Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.

John 14:

- 8 Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us.
- 9 Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?
- 10 Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.

1 Corinthians 11:

- 1 Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ.

We need to choose our idols and heroes very carefully.