

How Significant Are You?

Exodus 4:12

(You Are Somebody)

(Be All You Can Be)

William Allen Zulker

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If each and every Christian in the church of Jesus Christ would realize his/her significance and the power within (that they really are *somebody*) there is no limit to what could be done for the glory of God and the good of all humanity. The Biblical truth is this - God wants us to see ourselves as He sees us.

Today I want you to see yourself as a very vital, significant, and powerful person in the eyes of God. He not only loves you and cares for you, He wants to use you for His glory!.

I want you, no matter who you are, or whatever you possess, to sense your significance in the fulfillment of the plan and purpose of God.

It seems that most of our disappointments, frustrations, and failures stem from the false and destructive idea that who we are doesn't matter, that what we say won't make a difference, that what we do is not important and doesn't really count; and that we don't really have any power, significance, or importance.

James Baldwin, the famous black author, expressed this idea in the title of his book Nobody Knows My Name. Too many people have the same feeling. Nobody knows my name; who cares what I say? What difference does it make?

So they sit back and wait for someone else - somebody important- to come by and do something. But he never comes, and time passes on.

.Charlie Brown says to Lucy "I hate being a nothing! I refuse to go through the rest of my life my life as a zero!" Lucy says; "What would you like to be, Charlie Brown, A five? Or how about a twenty-six? Or a par seventy-two? I know what you could be, Charlie Brown...a square root! I think you'd make a great square root Charlie Brown."

He replies, "I can't stand it!"

AND NEITHER CAN WE!

What we really need to know is that God has a divine purpose for each of us. As Jesus said; "You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you that ye should go and bring forth fruit."- John 15:16

I. Do you remember the story of Esther in the Old Testament?

She became the queen in the palace of King Ahasuerus, the Persian king - over 127 provinces. Esther became the Queen, taking the place of Queen Vashti. You recall that the King was having a great feast and which he wanted to show off the beauty of his wife Queen Vashti. He ordered her to come and dance before the guests. But Queen Vashti refused. Imagine that! She refused to obey her husband, the king, Someone has humorously said that Queen Vashti was probably the chairperson of the Women's Liberation Committee of Persia. Be that as it may, the King didn't like her refusal to

dance when he said, “dance!” So his next move was to put someone else in her place, and that someone was Esther.

Although Esther was a Jew, not a Persian, she was chosen by the Persian King because she was fair and beautiful. But God had a distinct purpose for her there, which was soon revealed in a very unusual way.

Haman, the wicked servant of the king, hated the Jews. He sought to destroy all the Jews, to eliminate them, to annihilate them. He convinced the Persian King that the Jews were a threat to his Kingdom. So we read in the book of Esther, chapter 3 verse 13 – “Letters were sent into all the kings provinces, to destroy, to kill and to cause to perish all Jews, both young and old, little children and women.”

The Bible says -

“The city of Shushan was perplexed” – (3:15)

Mordecai, -the servant of God, tore his clothes and put on sackcloth with ashes and went into the midst of the city and cried with a loud and bitter cry. – (4:1)

There was great mourning among the Jews. - (4:3)

Fasting, weeping, wailing, and many lay in sackcloth and ashes.

I wonder if we today can appreciate the gravity of the situation. Suppose that in our day a law were passed ordering the annihilation of all Christians. Churches would be opened twenty-four hours a day. Church bells would toll as a call to prayer. Christians everywhere would fall on their knees and ask God to intervene. It would be a sad day.

And so it was in that day.

When the word reached Queen Esther, she realized that this meant death for all her kinfolk and the people of God. She was deeply grieved! At the same time she received a message from Mordecai, who was her cousin. He knew of her position in the King’s palace and sought to impress upon her the responsibility she had to speak to the King in behalf of the Jews. (4:8)

But Esther said, “If I go into the Kings inner court without his summons I may die, it may cost me my life.” (4:11)

Mordecai replied, “Who knows whether you have come to the Kingdom for such a time as this.” (4:14)

In other words, he was saying, “Esther, be all you can be. Don’t you realize how significant you are at this moment in time?”

How those words must have lingered in Esther’s mind. “For such a time as this; for such a time as this.” (4:14)

God has placed you where you are at this particular time for a purpose. It may simply be a little word that you can speak unto the King for your people. But a little word of concern becomes a proclamation of deliverance when God is in it. God makes the difference between death and life for the Hebrews.

So Esther spoke that word! And the decree of the king was changed! The Jews were saved from the evil scheme. And verse 16 of chapter 8 says, “The Jews had light and gladness, joy and honor.” They had life instead of death.

Esther came to the realization of her significance in life when she became a vessel through whom God could speak and work.

Little is much when God is in it!

Now, let me turn your attention to another passage.

II. In the first book of Samuel, Chapter 17, we find Israel in battle against the army of the Philistines. Out of the camp of the Philistines came a champion named Goliath - 9 feet tall. Bigger than Arnold Schwarzenegger; meaner than Mike Tyson; stronger than Larry Holmes; tougher than Sylvester Stallone. He would have looked down upon Reggie White.

The Bible describes his armor which was complete in every detail. Without question he was one mighty man, well equipped, well trained and greatly feared by the Israelites. For forty days Goliath challenged any man of Israel to fight him. No one would meet him. He even said that whoever became the victor would have the other army as his servants

What a challenge that was. Suppose Saddam Hussein and President George Bush had reached a similar agreement? Suppose modern day conflicts could be settled by a two man duel. I am sure there would be many who would be willing to fight. But the fact that not one of the Israelites would face him for forty days shows the fearsomeness of the foe. What a great giant and soldier he was.

But the story changed when a shepherd boy, by the name of David, appeared on the scene. David had gone to the battlefield with food and provisions for his brothers. As he talked with them he heard the voice of Goliath and surprised everyone by accepting the challenge and offering to meet Goliath in conflict.

From an ordinary human view point he was attempting the impossible! But the Bible is filled with stories of the impossible, accomplished by people of God.

David was no match for Goliath. He was small compared to the giant. He was not trained as a soldier, whereas Goliath was a man of war from his youth. David did not have armor, not even a shield of his own. The only implement he could use in his offensive attack was his sling with five smooth stones out of the nearby brook.

But he said something to King Saul and to the soldiers of Israel that explains the confidence he had as he undertook the impossible (chap. 17 vs. 37). "The Lord God that delivered me out of the paw of the lion and out of the paw of the bear will deliver me out of the hand of the Philistine." In other words, he was saying, "I know that my victories in the past were not because of my might or my strength or my power, but rather because of God. And just as He delivered me in the past, so He will deliver me now." (vs. 47)

So; "David, go ahead, be all you can be. Perform the wonders of God."

And once again we will see that "little is much when God is in it!" For God can make the difference between defeat and victory.

Now this witness to the power of God, David also declared to his enemy; Goliath. He said "I come to you in the name of the Lord of Hosts, The God of Israel. This day the Lord will deliver you into my hand and all shall know the Lord saves not with sword and spear (Vs. 45-46).

David sensed his significance as he went forth surrendering himself as an instrument in the hand of God, saying “The battle is the Lords!” And as we read in verse 50, “David prevailed.” He took up those stones from the brook and hurling one forth, he killed the giant. And Goliath fell to the ground.

Someone put it this way: “He Rocked Goliath to Sleep.”

III. Now, today, you, my friend, may be thinking just like the little boy we find in the Gospel According to John, Chapter 6.

As he joined the crowd that had gathered to hear Jesus preach, Maybe he said:

“I wish I could sense my significance in the world today.”

“I long for the power of God in my life.”

“I’m not a resident in the King’s Palace, not a Queen nor a Prince.”

“I don’t have the courage of David the Shepherd.”

“I’ve simply come to hear the words of Jesus. The people have been speaking so much about him and here I am, just a boy, joining the crowd, I want to hear what he has to say.”

I can picture the boy looking up into the face of a man coming his way and asking the question: “Sir, is that Jesus over there?”

And the man answering, “Yes, that is Jesus, and I am Andrew, one of his disciples. I’ve come with a message from the master. He wants to feed this hungry crowd of people. Young lad, do you want to see him perform the wonders of God? Will you give him your lunch?”

“My lunch, Sir? why it is hardly enough for me! How could Jesus ever feed a crowd like this with my little lunch? But yes, sir, yes sir, I’ll be glad to give it to Jesus.” (Yes sir, I’ll be all I can be, all I can be sir, yes, I will.”

And in that moment, a little unknown and unnamed, boy became a significant person in order that the wonders of God could be performed by the power within him. And he gave what little he had to the miracle working Savior. Once again, the truth was declared: little is much when God is in it! There is no limit to what God can do! God can make the difference between famine and feast.

Today, I wanted to say something that would help prepare this Church for the beginning of the fall season in service for Christ. And my message is simply this: you my friends, are extremely important in the plan and purpose of God. There is a significant role for you in life, just as there was for Esther, David, and that young lad with his lunch. I don’t know what the role is, that’s between you and the Lord. But I hope you will be ready to fulfill it when the Lord calls. Next Sunday, your pastor will return to this pulpit; he will need good health and strength, and God will provide it. But he will also need your help, your encouragement, your prayers, your giving, and with it there is no limit to what God can do in this church.

It was but a little word with Esther, a little stone with David, a little lunch from a little boy. But with those things, they each found how significant they were in the sight of God. You too can find significance no matter how little your talent, how small your gift, or how limited your time, as you yield and surrender yourself to Christ.

Conclusion

Now my friends, what about it? Here you are today, in this church. I don't know why you came, or what your burden is, but it may be that God wants you to know, that you are very important to Him. And there is a plan and purpose He has for your life. You, too, can find your significance as you yield your life to Him. Jesus said "I am come that you may have life and that you might have it abundantly." Have you yielded your life to Him? You can do it today, right where you are, here and now.

Let me tell you the story of my father. He was not like my mother who taught a Sunday school class, played the piano in church, was a soloist in the choir and often led in public prayers. Dad did none of those things. To my knowledge, he never taught a Bible class, he never prayed publicly though he never missed saying grace at all of our meals, he did not sing in the choir and those who heard him sing may have understood why. But my dad wanted to serve the Lord. As we moved from town to town, dad always became the janitor of the church where we attended. He kept it spotlessly clean and he kept it warm during winter months. I remember how he would go to the church on Saturday evening to start the coal-burning furnace. And then on Sunday morning, he was up early, and went to the church before our breakfast, making sure the church would be warm by the time of the service. My two brothers and I were pressed into helping him in various ways. I had the job of sweeping the back stairway to the second floor Sunday school classrooms. When I got all done, dad would inspect it, and say, "That was a fine job, son. Now go back and do the corners of the steps, for this is the house of the Lord and it must be kept clean".

When it snowed, my two brothers and I were given snow shovels to clean the sidewalk of the church. We would often argue over who would get the smallest shovel, and when we got finished dad would inspect our work. He would then say "Fine job sons, but go back and clean the snow right to the edge of the sidewalk. I don't want people bringing snow into the church. For this is the house of the Lord and it must be kept clean."

Dad didn't often quote scripture. But his favorite verse was Psalm 84:10 "I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness."

That was the way that my father showed how significant he was in the eyes of the Lord.

What is it that makes a person significant? Is it education? or academic degrees? Is it popularity? Is it money or wealth? Is it power?

The answer may be in the words of this song:

"Does the place you're called to labor,
Seem so small and little known?
It is great if God is in it,
And He'll not forget his own.
Little is much when God is in it.
Labor not for wealth or fame.
There's a crown and you can win it
If you go in Jesus name.

A proclamation of death, disappointment, and despair, as with the Jewish people we read about in Persia, can be nullified by your spoken witness and word of encouragement, such as Esther gave..

Any giant enemy, like Goliath, can be defeated as David did, by the victory that is yours when you draw your battle arms from the streams of God's mercy.

And the need of the world to be fed by the hand of God, as he did with the little boy's lunch, can be accomplished as you take the provisions with which God has blessed you and share it!

So we say, Lead on O King Eternal? Yes Lord, I'll be all I can be,
And never forget this truth: Little is much when God is in it.
Amen.