

Reader's Digest Story: Airline crash, stewardess saves 11 lives from burning plane and dies trying to unfasten a passenger's seatbelt.

I've always been kind of thrilled by this kind of story because in it we see what I would like to call tonight a hero. To me, a hero is someone who overcomes great obstacles to achieve their goals even when it means sacrifice to themselves.

Whenever I read this kind of story I wonder what I might do in a similar situation. Would I be a "hero", or would I run to save myself? I was thinking along this line one day when I realized that every Christian is tested for heroism every day. Every day Satan tries to bring us down to his level of sin, and every day we must fight with him and work to overcome him. Just listen as Paul describes his fight on several occasions; first in 2 Cor 6:4-5, "Rather, as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: in great endurance; in troubles, hardships and distresses; in beatings, imprisonments and riots; in hard work, sleepless nights and hunger..." then 2 Cor 22:23, "Are they servants of Christ? (I am out of my mind to talk like this.) I am more. I have worked much harder, been in prison more frequently, been flogged more severely, and been exposed to death again and again. Five times I received from the Jews the forty lashes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, I spent a night and a day in the open sea, I have been constantly on the move. I have been in danger from rivers, in danger from bandits, in danger from my own countrymen, in danger from Gentiles; in danger in the city, in danger in the country, in danger at sea; and in danger from false brothers. I have labored and toiled and have often gone without sleep; I have known hunger and thirst and have often gone without food; I have been cold and naked. Besides everything else, I face daily the pressure of my concern for all the churches."

Think about a baby who is just learning how to walk. He gets up and falls down, gets up and falls down until he eventually falls down only very rarely. Each time the baby falls down, however, he must pick himself up with an effort and begin again, using the knowledge he has gained in an attempt to keep from falling again. But he must try again or he will never learn to walk.

So it is that when a Christian fails, he reaches a critical point, where he can either give up or continue on. If he gives up, he must remember that although God forgives mistakes, he only forgives us if we are trying to serve him.

But when he fails, and he prays to God for forgiveness and strength, and he determine right there to keep serving God and he does this all his life, then God will say to him, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant."

The kind of hero God wants us to be is, as he himself said, a faithful servant; in other words, he wants someone who keeps serving and imitating Christ in the face of any kind of hardships, someone who will never give up the struggle. And for a few years of struggling he has promised us an eternity of peace.

If you have given up on the Lord before you have started and you haven't obeyed him in baptism, and you are willing to be a hero for God, then won't you come as we sing...