

3-13-2022, COTR Texarkana

Title: Doing Right Isn't Always Easy

Purpose: Provoke people to do what's right even though it may be costly or difficult.

Truth for Today: It's not always easy to do what's right; do right anyway.

Text: 2 Timothy 3:16, Daniel 3:8-30, Genesis 39:6-23

Topic: Mentor, Persecution, Right, Suffering, Morals, Reward

Series Title: Mentor Me

Series Purpose: Provoke people to learn and apply life lessons, good and bad, from Biblical characters.

Doing Right Isn't Always Easy

I. Introduction

- A. Review series: Mentor Me. It's about learning life lessons from Biblical mentors.
- B. Def. mentor: a trusted counselor, guide, tutor or coach. Historical characters in the Bible are some of the most reliable guides for mentoring we can find. They show us what to do and what not to do from God's perspective. Last week King Uzziah mentored us about success. We learned that humble people who seek the Lord find lasting success; proud people experience a crash landing.
- C. Today we'll be mentored by several people, SMA will teach us about having courage to do the right thing when our Christian faith is challenged, and Joseph will teach us have courage to do the right thing when our Biblical morals are challenged.
- D. Title: Doing Right Isn't Always Easy
- E. Truth for Today: It's not always easy to do what's right; do right anyway.

II. How do we know what's the right thing to do in life?

- A. We know by obeying the Bible, the Holy Spirit, and our conscience.
- B. The Bible is the standard of truth, [2 Tim. 3:16 (NLT) All Scripture is **inspired by God** and is useful to teach us what is **true**...It corrects us when we are **wrong** and teaches us to do what is **right**.
 - 1. Secular culture's beliefs often collide with the Bible, e.g., marriage, gender, abortion. Their response is often violent. [John 15:18-19 (NCV) "If the world **hates you**, remember that it hated me first. 19 **If you**

belonged to the world, it would love you as it loves its own. But I have chosen you out of the world, so **you don't belong to it. That is why the world hates you.**] Sadly, diversity and tolerance of opposing beliefs don't count for Christians.

- C. Listen to the Holy Spirit, [Acts 8:29 (NLT) **The Holy Spirit said** to Philip, "Go over and walk along beside the carriage."] The HS lives inside believers and communicate
- D. Follow your conscience, [1 Timothy 1:19 (NLT) Cling to your faith in Christ, and **keep your conscience clear**. For some people have deliberately **violated their consciences**; as a result, **their faith has been shipwrecked.**]
 - 1. Our conscience is an internal voice of right and wrong approving or condemning what we do. Though our conscience can be hardened and untrustworthy due to sin, for the believer who walks with God it can be trusted.

III. Doing the right thing when our Christian faith is challenged isn't easy

- A. Interview: Giving to persecuted Christians in the Middle East. Online/ No pics
 - 1. How are the Christians in the persecuted church in the Middle East doing?
 - 2. E.g., 99% of the people in Turkey are Muslim and .1% are Christian². What's it like being a Christian in a Muslim nation?
 - 3. Have you ever been persecuted for believing in Jesus?
 - 4. How can we help Christians in the Middle East?
- B. Mentor me SMA about doing the right thing when our Christian faith is challenged, [Dan. 3:8–30 (NLT) the astrologers...9...said to King Nebuchadnezzar ...10 You issued a decree requiring all the people to **bow down and worship** the gold statue when they hear the sound of...musical instruments. 11...those who refuse to obey must be thrown into a **blazing furnace**. 12 But...Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego...pay no attention to you...They...do not worship the gold statue...]
 - 1. Why wouldn't they bow? They believed it was wrong because it violated the 1st and 2nd commandments. [Exodus 20:3–5 (NLT) "**You must not have any other god but me.** 4 "You must not make for yourself an idol...5 **You must not bow down to them** or worship them...]

2. It would have been easy to go along to get along, but they were willing to pay a price to do what's right. What happened is a mentoring moment.
- C. [Vs. 13 Then Nebuchadnezzar flew into a rage ...15 I will give you one more chance ...But if you refuse, you will be thrown immediately into the blazing furnace. ...16 ...“O Nebuchadnezzar...17 If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, **the God whom we serve is able to save us. He will rescue us from your power...18** But even if he doesn't, we want to make it clear to you, **Your Majesty**, that **we will never serve your gods or worship the gold statue you have set up.**”
1. They had great faith God would help them if they did the right thing, but they were willing to stand for what they believed even if it cost their lives. // us.
- D. [Vs. 19 Nebuchadnezzar was...furious...20...throw them into the blazing furnace... 24 But suddenly, Nebuchadnezzar jumped up...and exclaimed...“Didn't we tie up three men and throw them into the furnace?”... 25...“I see four men, unbound, walking around in the fire unharmed! And the fourth looks like a god!”
1. Christophany or angel. Jesus promised [Mt. 28:20 (NCV) ...I will be with you always, even until the end of this age.”] This is especially true if we are persecuted for our faith, e.g., Stephen, while being stoned, [Acts 7:55 (ESV) he (*Stephen*), gazed into heaven and **saw...Jesus standing** at the right hand of God.
- E. Vs. 28 Then Nebuchadnezzar said, “Praise to the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego...They defied the king's command and were willing to die rather than serve or worship any god except their own God. 29...Then **the king promoted** Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego to even higher positions...
1. If we stand for our faith in America, we could lose friends, lose our job, or face a lawsuit. However, like our mentors SMA: (1) Our actions can become a powerful witness for Christ, (2) God can bless us in spite of those who oppose us, SMA promoted, (3) Jesus promised a Heavenly reward, [Mt. 5:10–12 (NIV) Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for **theirs is the kingdom of heaven.** 11 “Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say

all kinds of evil against you because of me. 12 Rejoice and be glad, because **great is your reward in heaven...**]

- IV. Mentor me Joseph; have courage to do the right thing when our Biblical morals are tested, e.g., sexual boundaries, lying, stealing, cheating
- A. [Genesis 39:6–23 (NLT) ...Joseph was very handsome and well-built...7 and **Potiphar’s wife soon began to look at him lustfully**. “Come and sleep with me,” ... 8 But **Joseph refused**...he told her, “my master trusts me with everything in his entire household. 9...He has held back nothing from me except you...How could I do such a wicked thing? **It would be a great sin against God.**” ...
1. She was pretty. He probably wanted to sleep with her. He didn’t act on his feeling but on God’s will. As a mentor, Joseph is teaching us to respect God’s boundaries
- B. Vs. 11 One day...12 She came and grabbed him...sleep with me! **Joseph tore himself away**, but he left his cloak in her hand as he ran...14 she called...her servants... He came into my room to rape me...15 ...he ran...but he left his cloak behind with me.” 16...her husband came home. 17 Then she told him...“That Hebrew slave...tried to come in and **fool around with me,**”...19 **Potiphar was furious**...20 **So he took Joseph and threw him into the prison...**
1. If we do right, people may lie and talk bad about us; let them! People will make fun of our morality; let them! Doing what’s right may cost us. Do right anyway. We’re living for Jesus with eternity in mind.
 2. Persecuted believers, [1 Peter 4:1–5 (NLT)...since Christ suffered...you must **arm yourselves with the same attitude he had, and be ready to suffer, too...**3 You have had enough in the past of the **evil things that godless people enjoy**—their immorality and lust, their feasting and drunkenness and wild parties...4... your former friends are surprised when you no longer plunge into the flood of wild and destructive things they do. So **they slander you**. 5 But remember that they will have to **face God, who stands ready to judge everyone...**]
- C. Vs. 21 But **the Lord was with Joseph in the prison**...22 Before long, the warden put Joseph in charge of...everything that happened in the prison. 23...**The Lord was with him and caused everything he did to succeed.**

1. God controls our destiny, not people. Doing what's right may cost us now but in the long run God will smile on us. [Mt. 5:10–12 (NIV) **Blessed** are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.]

V. Conclusion

- A. Today we were mentored by several people: (1) SMA taught us about having courage to do the right thing when our Christian faith is challenged, and (2) Joseph taught us to have courage to do the right thing when our Biblical morals are challenged. It's not always easy to do what's right; do right anyway. God will be pleased, and we'll benefit in the end.

VI. Response

- A. Prayer
- B. Souls

VII. Bibliography/ Resources: Logos Bible Software and Library, Platinum Edition, was used to prepare this message.

1. Webster, N. (2006). [*Noah Webster's first edition of An American dictionary of the English language*](#). Anaheim, CA: Foundation for American Christian Education.
2. Wikipedia