

Daily Devotional, April 14, 2021 Give Credit Where Credit is Due

“I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore, be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves. Be on your guard; you will be handed over to the local councils and be flogged in the synagogues.” Matthew 10:16-17 (NIV)

Success is a tricky thing especially when we are involved in it. Our deceiving minds tend to convince us that we made it happen. All the while, we forget that God is the author of any success that we may have obtained. Both Disciples have great successes recorded in the bible. The difference between us and the Disciples is that the Disciples knew where their blessings came from when they had success. This is despite their initial struggling with who Jesus really was.

We can be put in similar circumstances in our lives. We can have a great spiritual and/or life success and then the temptation begins. We start to believe our whole story is about us and not about the One who breathed us into existence. In Matthew chapter 10, we see Christ begin to send out His Disciples (learners) thus making them Apostles (those who are sent). However, Jesus did not give this group in transition a great, emphatic pre-game speech. No instead, Jesus told them that they were going out as sheep into a world inhabited by wolves.

Now, I'm not a wisest person on the planet, but I have seen enough cliché-ridden sports movies to know that this is not how it is supposed to work. From my experience, there ought to be an impassioned speech from a coach that is gifted yet flawed or conflicted about something but somehow gives the speech of his life. This is not what Jesus does before He sends these newly trained Apostles out.

Instead, He refers to them as sheep. I think it is important to know what sheep are and are not. They are slow, dumb, without natural defenses and easily led astray. Keep in mind that Bible verses describe *us* as sheep, so this description may offend us. And to think, this is how Jesus continually describes me! Sheep are not strong, fast, powerful, intelligent, or able to lead themselves out of harm's way whenever they choose. Why would Jesus send his first wave of spiritual “troops” off with such a message? Because Jesus is always drawing our hearts and minds back to Him, the One who is in control and the One who is omniscient, omnipresent and omnipotent.

We must pray that our successes do not cloud our vision of who we are called to be. Any earthly success we have is a gift from the Son so that we are continually to be transformed into to the glory of God. Rather than act like a champion who has it all together and who accomplishes all of their achievements on their own, we need to look outside of ourselves and give credit where credit is due. Let us give God all the glory He so deserves, and be thankful for all we have been given.

Prayer: Thank you, Lord, for the many blessings you have bestowed on my life. You have provided me with more than I could ever have imagined. You have given me family and friends who bless me every day with kind words and actions. With each success and kindness that I receive, I pray that I will keep my eyes focused on you, never forgetting to show my gratitude in prayer and returned acts of kindness. In your holy name, Amen.