

BIBLE MEN ... and their great opportunities
BIBLE MEN ... and their great opportunities

It has been said that "Opportunity knocks once at the door of the human heart. What is done then might decide destiny. " The following studies endorse that claim.

A lost man ... dying

Calvary's hill had become strangely quiet! The crowd that had demanded Christ's death now seemed fascinated as they watched their victim. Even the soldiers were staring hard at the One whose hands they had nailed to the cross. One of the criminals crucified with Jesus had electrified the crowd with a strange request. He had asked for admittance to Paradise; and Jesus, acknowledging the request, had given peace to the suppliant. It was all so strange. How could He possibly do such a thing? Was He not another common criminal? But there was another man whose raucous voice disturbed the silence. He was swearing at everybody. Why did he not keep his mouth shut? He was disturbing everyone; he was a nuisance. A soldier should quiet the fellow! There was no need; death was about to silence him forever. What a shame! His companion had found eternal peace, and that same peace might have filled the soul of the second thief. Alas, he might have become famous, but he lost his opportunity. He was at the very door of heaven, but his stupidity, not the nails, prevented his entrance. (See Luke 23:39.)

A learned man ... delaying

The Supreme Court was hushed! An outstanding Doctor of the Law was about to address the assembly. Those pesky Jewish preachers should be taken to the waiting room; why should their presence defile the chamber? The Honorable Member will now speak. "Then stood there up one in the council, a Pharisee, named Gamaliel, a doctor of the law, had in reputation among all the people, and commanded to put the apostles forth a little space." The man was a genius; his knowledge of historical events was vast and unassailable. The audience listened carefully as he proceeded to explain his philosophy. What a speaker! What a man! He was nearing conclusion. "And now I say unto you, Refrain from these men, and let them alone: for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought: But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God. " Gentlemen, be wise, do nothing. Just wait and see. And, apparently, that is exactly what Gamaliel did for the rest of his life. When the power of the risen Christ turned the world upside down, he remained in the background. He watched the game; he even appreciated some of the players. But he never became a participant; he was too scared of getting hurt. (See Acts 5:34-42.)

A little man ... deciding

The street was crowded with excited people, and the little businessman could not conceal his curiosity. What in the wide world was happening? Zaccheus went out of his office to meet the most wonderful Man he had ever seen. "And he sought to see Jesus who he was! " We cannot help but ask where Zaccheus had been during the amazing three years of Christ's ministry. Surely all people knew who Jesus was! No, the tax-gatherer, so hated by the citizens because he worked for the accursed Romans, had reciprocated; he hated them also. He only saw people; and, because he was so short, they probably appeared to be very tall - and very big hypocrites. But the excitement in the street was irresistible. Something was happening, and suddenly he ceased looking at Jews. He was sick of them anyway. Thank God for making trees; they were perfect grandstands from which to see the show! "And Jesus ... saw him And [Zaccheus] made haste, and came down, and received

BIBLE MEN ... and their great opportunities
him joyfully." And that night they had dinner together. Simon's
mother-in-law would have loved the little tax-gatherer. He seized
his opportunity. (See Luke 19: 1 - 10.)

A liberated man ... declaring
The former demoniac was climbing the hill; he was intensely
grateful, very puzzled, and a little apprehensive. He paused to look
back, and his face reflected a keen disappointment. His Friend, Jesus
of Nazareth, was in that little fishing boat going farther and farther
away. Those stupid people and their swine! They had asked Him
to go away, and He had gone. "Why could I not also be in that
boat?" No, he had a job to do. Jesus had asked him to testify in
the village and he would do it if it killed him! "And he went his
way, and published throughout the whole city how great things Jesus
had done unto him. " (See Luke 8:37-39.) If that man had ever met
Saul of Tarsus, they would have talked for hours! Real opportunities
for service may seem rare, and yet they are all around us - they
are everywhere. (Reprinted in part from the author's commentary,
Mark's Superb Gospel; pp. 44-46.)

This document was created with Win2PDF available at <http://www.daneprairie.com>.
The unregistered version of Win2PDF is for evaluation or non-commercial use only.