

Simon, The Zealot

"The Disciples"



Simon is represented with the fish and Bible because through the power of the Gospel, he became a great fisher of men.

Simon the Zealot is fairly unknown in the Scriptures. Sometimes he is referred to as Simon the Canaanite. He was supposedly older when he decided to follow Jesus. Before that time, he had been a very, very staunch fighter against Christ. He was supposedly a member of the Jewish religious-political faction, known for its fanatical resistance to Roman rule. He became just as staunch a supporter for Jesus as he had been for the Jewish patriots earlier. If he was a member of that group, his political views would have been completely opposite of Matthew who had been a staunch supporter

"And when they were come in, they went up into an upper room, where abode both Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon Zealot, and Judas the brother of James." Acts.1:13 KJV

of the Roman government as a tax collector. Some feel that this choice was very important because it showed that Christ chose people from all viewpoints and all walks of life to be His disciples. He chose the laborers. He chose the common man.

We hear in the Scripture above that Simon was with the other disciples at the gathering of the disciples in the upper room after Christ had been crucified, but we don't hear about his saying anything. We do know that he traveled to tell The Good News, and we know that he was killed because of his convictions, just as most of the other disciples were. According to definitions, a zealot is a supporter, a believer, a devotee, an advocate, and an enthusiast.

There are many Simons in this world. They don't say much, they don't wave the flag, but they are in the background. Like us and like so many other people mentioned in the Bible, we are just the common man chosen by God to be saved for eternity. It is the lady that takes a little something to a neighbor that is in pain or recuperating. The gentleman that makes sure the older neighbor's walk is shoveled in the winter, or the lawn mowed in the summer. The

child that helps another with his homework when the going is tough. The person who sends a card when someone is in the hospital. The person that takes a little time each holiday to say "Hi" to someone in a nursing home, or even the person who is lonely down the street. The person who takes time to volunteer for an organization like the Salvation Army bell ringers, or who hammers nails for Habitat for Humanity. Sometimes, it is just the person that is always called on when something needs done, because he/she has the reputation of always be-

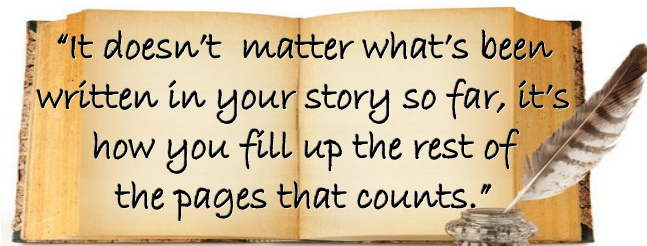
If you sit down at set of sun
And count the acts that you have done,
And, counting, find
One self-denying deed, one word
That eased the heart of him who heard,
One glance most kind
That fell like sunshine where it went
--
Then you may count that day well spent.

But if, through all the livelong day,
You've cheered no heart, by yea or nay --
If, through it all
You've nothing done that you can trace
That brought the sunshine to one face--
No act most small
That helped some soul and nothing cost --
Then count that day as worse than lost.
- George Eliot

ing willing to help. The list goes on and on. We don't hear about them, but they are the core that showers God's grace on others. They are the people that keep the "doers" and "talkers" going. They are always there and very constant in their work. Together, we can make it work. God is willing to work with all people and he has given us the gifts to do His work.

I am reminded of a song called "Reach Out and Touch." We never know when we can brighten some one's day. Can we help someone by just listening? Sometimes, people feel they are a problem to others. Whatever Simon did, he did with his whole heart. He was a real zealot. Do we dare to be a zealot for Christ by doing His work? In so doing we may, as they say, "Touch an angel." We have a group in our church that takes food to those coming home from the hospital or to those in nursing homes. The ones doing the delivery and visitation think they get so much more out of it than the one they are visiting, but the ones being visited say how much they look forward to seeing someone. It is a win/win situation but it takes a commitment to dare to reach out and not knowing exactly what circumstances will arise.

Simon was not always a follower of Jesus, but he became a very important person, willing to change his life to help spread the good news of Salvation. "Hallelujah, What a Savior."



REACH OUT AND TOUCH

*"Reach out and touch a soul that is hungry,
Reach out and touch a spirit in despair;
Reach out and touch a life torn and dirty, a man who is lonely...If you care!
Reach out and touch that neighbor who hates you;
Reach out and touch that stranger who meets you;
Reach out and touch the brother who needs you;
Reach out and let the smile of God touch through you.*

*Reach out and touch a friend who is weary;
Reach out and touch a seeker unaware;
Reach out and touch, though touching means losing a part of your own self...If you dare!*

*Reach out and give your love to the loveless;
Reach out and make a home for the homeless.
Reach out and shed God's light in the darkness.
Reach out and let the smile of God touch through you."*

by Charles F. Brown

**"God wasn't attracted to you and didn't choose you because you were big and important—the fact is, there was almost nothing to you. He did it out of sheer love, keeping the promise he made to your ancestors."
Deuteronomy 7:9 The Message**

Prayer: Dear Lord, You are an amazing God. You have created us in Your image and given us gifts far beyond our expectations or ability to comprehend. Help us to do our job to spread Your word and Your love to others each day in our own unique way. Help us to reach out to those who are often called the unlovely. Amen

1. Are we a Zealot?
2. How can each of us do that little thing that helps the cause even if we don't want to be seen?
3. How can we recognize others that are a part of the "glue" and encourage them to continue to be a zealot? An enthusiast? A believer?
4. Do you dare to be a zealot and follow the road "less traveled by?"

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**Be someone else's
sunshine.
Be the reason
someone smiles
today.**