

Band of Brothers

About 9 years ago, HBO aired an enormously popular series called Band of Brothers. Band of Brothers was a story of young, every day, ordinary guys caught up in the global conflict of WWII. It takes you through their training in 1942. They were known as Easy Company. The series takes this elite rifle company of paratroopers through their service, through the end of WWII, and chronicles the various exploits, the various adventures and casualties that they experienced along the way. They became the stuff of legend.

Ordinary guys, who did **extraordinary** things. Many of them in their late teens or early 20's. What makes the series so compelling is that these were, indeed, **ordinary** guys, but they were so caught up and so believed in their mission that they **took a stand** in the middle of a critical time in the history of the western world. They took a stand against what they **believed to be wrong**. There was no moral ambiguity with them. They believed this was a **question of right or wrong**, and took that stand. Their story, became the 10 part series, Band of Brothers. The way they came together is enormously interesting and entertaining, AS many of you probably know. One young person watching this series said that he envied these young men, because they had a **real, identifiable enemy**, and a **cause** they stood for. He felt that many of us in our western world don't have that kind of cause, don't have that kind of mission today.

Do we? Do you? That's why we're here today.

Statistics from churchformen.com

- The typical U.S. Congregation draws an adult crowd that's 61% female, 39% male. This gender gap shows up in all age categories. Young adult, middle aged, and seniors.
- On any given Sunday there are 13 million more adult women than men in America's churches.
- Midweek activities often draw 70 to 80 % female participants.
- As many as 90 % of the boys who are being raised in church will abandon it by their 20th birthday. Many will never return. Largely because of the poor example set by their dad's.
- Men have been absent from the body of Christ and a significant number of those who do go to church attend out of habit, and are unaffected by what they hear.
- Quite a few men go to church simply to keep their wives/mothers/girlfriends happy.
- The majority of men who attend church do nothing to serve within the body of Christ.

This gender gap is not just a U.S. phenomenon; churches around the world are short on men. No other major religion suffers such a large, chronic shortage of males. In the Islamic world men are openly, publicly, and unashamedly religious. Of the world's major religions, only Christianity has a consistent, nagging shortage of men.

But look in the bible and you'll see that Jesus had no trouble captivating men. Rugged fishermen dropped nets full of fish and left all to follow Him, but **today's church can't convince men** to drop their remote controls for a couple of hours a week.

Where have all the Christian men gone?

Perhaps more important is **why they have left**. The decline has been persistent over the past **fifty (50)** years. During that same time span, America, the only Nation in the world formed as a Christian Nation, by Christians, for Christians, has undergone the most radical changes in its history. How is it possible that this Christian Nation of over 307 million people, with the latest statistics showing that 76.5% of the population profess to be Christians, are ruled by despots? There is a sinister movement are slithering forward to remove all vestiges of God and Jesus Christ from your life.

- It is now forbidden to pray in public. It is forbidden to publicly display the Commandments of God. The United Nations has a resolution brought by The Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC)

“Under the resolutions that have been proposed by the OIC, a Christian pastor who claims Jesus is the only way to salvation could be charged criminally, under a UN human rights resolution, for defaming Islam”.

- Marriage has been made a mockery of. **Churches** are now marrying **same sex** couples.
- Millions of **babies** are butchered each year here in America.
- Your liberty is threatened.
- The Natural rights conferred by God and declared in our Constitution are being eroded and will soon be lost.

How long will God continue to bless this Country when He sees these abominations flourish?

Listen:

“Thou shall not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them, for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generations of them that hate me”. Exodus 20.5

Who is responsible for the iniquities being imposed upon us all? **You, and I, as Christian men are responsible.** We have not met our **duty** or **responsibility** to God and Country. Thomas Jefferson, the author of The Declaration of American Independence once said, *“Timid men prefer the calm of despotism to the tempestuous sea of liberty”.*

Are we as Christian men **timid**? But this isn't the first time this has happened in human history. Not very many people spend their time reading or studying the first nine chapters of **1 Chronicles** because the first nine chapters are **genealogical records** and we often find them boring and irrelevant to our lives. But I believe as we look at the passage in you'll see its relevance. It begins with **1 Chronicles 1:1** with Adam, then goes on to cover 3,500 years of human history of the Jews until the time of their captivity and return to Jerusalem. And in these genealogies we see that God is on His throne, and that He is in control. And it shows us that when God's people obey Him, He will bless them. If they disobey Him, He will chasten them.

1 Chronicles 9:1, “So all Israel were reckoned by genealogies; and, behold, they were written in the book of the kings of Israel and Judah, who were carried away to Babylon for their transgression.”

The vast majority of the men in Israel had turned their backs on God and they were taken as captives because of it. And I believe that same thing is happening today. In fact I'm counseling with a few men that had turned their backs on God to follow society's idea of manhood and they have been taken captive by their drug, alcohol, work, and sexual addictions. And they have destroyed much of their lives, but now they are giving their lives back to Christ, but it's a struggle for them. But there was one group of men that had remained faithful. In **verse 13**, speaking of the priests in Jerusalem the Bible says, **“They were very able men for the work of the service of the house of God.”**

God called able men to serve Him, and that still holds true today. God is calling an able band of brothers to serve Him. The problem is it's getting harder and harder to find men who will take a stand against the cultural norm and say, **"As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."** God is looking for band of brothers to serve Him who will put on the armor of God, take up the sword of the spirit, and fight the good fight of faith. You see we are in a spiritual warfare and God is calling able men to take a stand on the front lines.

But what does this band of brothers look like? Well let's take a look at what the scriptures say:

1. THEY ARE MEN OF AVAILABILITY:

The greatest ability is availability. It doesn't matter what abilities you possess. If you are not available to God you're useless to the cause of Christ. **ISAIAH 6:8, "I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me."** You see Isaiah responded to the call of God. I believe we often look at men like Isaiah, Abraham, Moses, David, Paul and many others as great men with tremendous abilities, but the truth is they were men like you and me. They were ordinary men who made themselves available to the Almighty God and God did amazing things through them. God used them in great ways to impact the lives of thousands and even millions simply because they like Isaiah said, **"Here am I send me."**

Unlike Isaiah, so many today are **not available** to do the Lord's will. Men have put a sign around their life that says, **DO NOT DISTURB**. I'm just too busy right now. I have too many things going on in my life. I just don't have time to serve God. And they're running around like chickens with their heads cut off with no direction in life. Maybe you feel that way much of the time, you have so many irons in the fire and you feel like you just can't catch up, there aren't enough hours in the day to serve God.

But let me remind you of something, Moses was busy with the flocks at Horeb, **Gideon** was threshing wheat by the winepress, **Saul** was mule hunting, **Elisha** was busy plowing, **Nehemiah** was the cupbearer to the King, **James and John** were busy mending nets, and **Matthew** was busy collecting taxes. **BUT THEY ALL RESPONDED TO GOD'S CALL OF SERVICE!**

If you are too busy to be available to God, then you are too busy. You've got your **priorities** all out of whack and your headed for a meltdown. Allow God to rearrange your schedule and use you.

Many refuse to make themselves available to God because He demands so much of them. That's why the scriptures tell us to consider the cost of discipleship. But far too many are exchanging the **eternal** for the **temporary** because they are carnally minded. They are focused on the momentary pleasures rather than their heavenly reward in Christ. But if you want to be **a soldier in the army of God** and stand against the evil forces of our day, you must make yourself available and commit **your all** to God. An able man is an available man...

2. ABLE MEN ARE DEPENDABLE MEN:

1 Corinthians 4:2, "Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful." I don't know about you but I get so irritated with **undependable people**. People who could be a great asset to the cause of Christ and to the church, but you just can't count on them. They waver in everything they do.

Vance Havner once said, “Many saints prefer to be flashy comets instead of faithful stars. They go up like a rocket but come down like a rock.” Maybe you know some people like that. They may be fun to be around but you can’t count on them.

I like it when someone says I’ll be there and they are, when they say **I’ll do it** and they **get it done**. I like dependable people. I can count on them, the church can count on them, and God can count on them. Do you remember in the **parable of the talents**... God gave 5, 2, 1... **Matthew 25:21, “Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.”** When God finds a dependable man He gives that man great responsibilities. To the one with one talent God said, **Vs.26, “Thou wicked and slothful servant” Vs. 28, “Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents.”** God chastises the unfaithful and blesses the faithful. And He does that in your life and mine as well. An able man is a dependable man.

3. **THEY ARE MEN OF MOBILITY:**

MARK 16:1 Jesus said, “Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.” Jesus said go, but the favorite song of many is **I SHALL NOT BE MOVED**. We have got to **stop sitting in our recliners** and go out into the world and share the good news of Christ. I heard someone ask, “What do the first two letters in God spell? What do the first three letters in Satan Spell?” If we want to do God’s work we have got to get up and go. **Moses** was willing to go from Horeb to Egypt, **Amos** was willing to go from the hills of Tekoa to Israel, **David**, was willing to go from the pastures to the palace, **Phillip** was willing to go from the city to the desert, **John the Baptist** was willing to go from the desert to the city. Where are you willing to go? You don’t have to go around the world to share the good news, you could go next door... friends, family, co-workers... fishing tournaments, hunting clubs, golf tournaments, sports centers, block parties, birthday parties, your wife’s jewelry parties, etc. Able men are mobile men.

4. **THEY ARE MEN OF STABILITY:**

Galatians 5:1, “Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.” We are in a spiritual battle and people are falling all around us and unless we stand fast we are going to fall with them. How many Christians have you seen that have been entangled again in the yoke of bondage, overcome by their own human efforts and drowning in sin? Not only should we stand but we need to stand in the right place. **Samson** was in the wrong place when he lost his strength, **David** was in the wrong place when he lusted after Bathsheba, **Jonah** was in the wrong place and wound up in the belly of a great fish, **Peter** was standing in the wrong place at the fire and he denied Jesus. **YOU WON’T ABLE TO STAND FOR THE LORD IF YOU’RE IN THE WRONG PLACE.**

So where should we stand?

1. **Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free.** Our freedom is not in our efforts, works, good deeds, money, **Our freedom is in the grace of God.**
2. **Stand fast in the faith: 1 Corinthians 16:13, “Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong.”** Man up!
3. **In the LORD: 1 Thessalonians 3:8, “For now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord.”** Able men are stable men.

CONCLUSION: Ephesians 6:10-13, “Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.”

God is looking for able men to stand up, to stand firm, to stand for Him. God is looking for a band of brothers who will put on the armor of God, take up the sword of the spirit, and fight the good fight of faith? Are there men in this house who are available, dependable, mobile, and stable, who will band together as brothers, warriors, in Christ, who will take it to Satan and his heinous hoard? Jesus said the gates of hell shall not prevail against the church of the Living God. The church is not a passive church. It is a militant church. Will you take a stand and accept this mission to fight the enemy of the cross. Not with bullets, not with missiles, not with planes, tanks and aircraft carriers. But with a life that has been changed by the blood of Jesus, armed with the Word of God that is quick and powerful and sharper than any two-edge sword, and ignited by the fire of the Holy Spirit!

A **Band** of Brothers...? This is the crux, Guys:

"Iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another." -- Proverbs 27:17 NASB

Now is the time to stand up for Christ, to be sold out, bound together in the love of God, through the power of the Spirit.

Onward, Christian soldiers,
Marching as to war.
With the cross of Jesus
Going on before!
Christ, the royal Master,
Leads against the foe;
Forward into battle,
See His banner go!

At the sign of triumph
Satan's host dost flee;
On, then, Christian soldiers,
On to victory!
Hell's foundations quiver
At the shout of praise;
Brothers, lift your voices,
Loud your anthems raise!

Like a mighty army
Moves the church of God;
Brothers, we are treading
Where the saints have trod;
We are not divided;
All one body we,
One in hope and doctrine,
One in charity.

Onward, then ye people,
Join our happy throng,
Blend with ours your voices
In the triumph song;
Glory, laud, and honor,
Unto Christ the King:
This thro' countless ages
Men and angels sing.

Onward, Christian soldiers,
Marching as to war.
With the cross of Jesus
Going on before.