

“JUST DO IT ANYWAY!”

ACTS 4:8-20; 5:25-29

David P. Nolte

There are things in life that are hard to do, but if they are important enough, and if they are right, we do them anyway. There are sacrifices we are called upon to make that we find inconvenient and excessively costly; but if we are convinced that God is calling for such a sacrifice, we do it anyway. We may be called, as was Abraham, to leave home, family, friends, and security to go where God leads even if we can't see even one step ahead. But by faith, we go anyway.

Thinking about doing it anyway, my dad told about a nephew of his who, at about 5 years old, thought Dad's mother was a very nice lady. He told Dad, "When I'm all grown up, I'm gonna marry grandma!" Dad said, "People can't marry their grandma!" The kid folded his arms and said, "I don't care! I'm gonna marry grandma henyhay!"

Many times in life we need that "I'm gonna do it henyhay!" attitude. Martina McBride wrote, about that, saying:

"God is great, but sometimes life ain't good
When I pray it doesn't always turn out like I think it should
But I do it anyway;
I do it anyway!"

The apostles were a group who, though opposed for preaching Jesus and the resurrection, did it anyway. Peter healed a lame beggar and caused a stir at the Temple. The religious leaders were livid and put him in jail. The text says, "Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, 'Rulers and elders of the people, if we are on trial today for a benefit done to a sick man, as to how this man has been made well, let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead—by this name this man stands here before you in good health. He is the stone which was rejected by you, the builders, but which became the chief corner stone.' and there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved.' Now as they observed the confidence of Peter and John and understood that they were uneducated and untrained men, they were amazed, and began to recognize them as having been with Jesus. And seeing the man who had been healed standing with them, they had nothing to say in reply. But when they had ordered them to leave the Council, they began to confer with one another, saying, 'What shall we do with these men? For the fact that a noteworthy miracle has taken place through them is apparent to all who live in Jerusalem, and we cannot deny it. But so that it will not spread any further among the people, let us warn them to speak no longer to any man in this name.' And when they had summoned them, they commanded

them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John answered and said to them, ‘Whether it is right in the sight of God to give heed to you rather than to God, you be the judge; for we cannot stop speaking about what we have seen and heard.’” Acts 4:8-20 (NASB).

And the apostles preached Jesus anyway, and, someone came and reported to the religious leaders, “‘The men whom you put in prison are standing in the temple and teaching the people!’ Then the captain went along with the officers and proceeded to bring them back without violence (for they were afraid of the people, that they might be stoned). When they had brought them, they stood them before the Council. The high priest questioned them, saying, ‘We gave you strict orders not to continue teaching in this name, and yet, you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and intend to bring this man's blood upon us.’ But Peter and the apostles answered, ‘We must obey God rather than men.’” Acts 5:25-29 (NASB).

The apostles set the bar high. We know that for their courage all but 2 were martyred (the 2 being John and Judas Iscariot). They had an “Anyway” faith. An “Anyway” faith? What does it do in our lives? It will compel you to “Do It Anyway!”

I. IF YOU ARE OPPOSED WHEN YOU DO GOOD, DO IT ANYWAY!

- A. The Apostle Peter had healed the crippled man. Nobody objected to that. Peter did something good.
 - 1. People were glad he wasn't lame anymore nor did he have to continue to beg.
 - 2. He was so overjoyed that he did his happy dance all over the place right at the Temple, “walking and leaping and praising God.”
 - 3. But this kind act had an unkind reaction from the religious leaders who blasted Peter and John for preaching Jesus to the crowd that had gathered to see the healed man.
- B. Why would anyone oppose doing good?”**
 - 1. Sometimes they are envious of the thanks and adulation you receive for it.
 - 2. Sometimes they accuse you of showing off or seeking men's praises.
 - 3. Sometimes they think they were cheated when you did more for someone else than you did for them. Andrew Carnegie, the multimillionaire, left \$1 million for one of his relatives, who in return cursed Carnegie thoroughly because he had left \$365 million to public charities and had cut him off with just one measly million.
 - 4. Sometimes you do good and it isn't enough – they want more and better. Like a homeless man being put up for the night in a motel. He refused the room offered because it didn't have color tv or breakfast!
 - 5. Sometimes, and sometimes they are correct, critics may point out that possibly you are not helping as much as you are hindering by enabling indigence rather than encouraging independence and industry.
- C. It has been said, “No good deed ever goes unpunished.”** If you have been faulted for some good you've done, do it anyway.
- D. Jesus came to do good; to provide the sacrifice God demanded for the purchase of souls and they nailed Him to a cross – should we expect a better treatment or a happier reception?**

- E. **Our motto as Christians ought to be John Wesley’s “Rule of Life,” which is: “Do all the good you can, By all the means you can, In all the ways you can, In all the places you can, At all the times you can, To all the people you can, As long as ever you can.”** And Paul said, “But as for you, brethren, do not grow weary of doing good.” 2 Thessalonians 3:13 (NASB).

Even if you are opposed when you do a good thing for someone, do it anyway!

II. IF YOU SUFFER FOR DOING THE RIGHT THING, DO IT ANYWAY!

- A. Peter and John decided the right thing to do was listen to God more than to man; to value His will ahead of that of people.
- B. **There could be some pain or danger in doing the right thing. Honesty and uprightness make you vulnerable.** Be honest and upright anyway!
1. You may be speaking truth and thereby expose the malfeasance of someone and garner their wrath. Marlene has a cousin who exposed an inside trader who went to prison, so he put out a contract on his life – the guy died in prison and the contract was never fulfilled. Odds are that this is a unique and unlikely outcome of doing the right thing. Do it anyway.
 2. You may lose friends when you won’t just go along in wrong doing. Refuse to go along anyway.
 3. You may have to totally end a friendship that adversely affects your marriage. A woman came to me one day and said, “My boss said he wanted to have an affair and I don’t know what to tell him.” Aghast, I told her, “Of course you know what to tell him! Tell him he has insulted you, insulted your husband, insulted your son, insulted your church and that you can no longer be friends!” If that course of action seems too extreme, do it anyway!
 4. You may be fired for refusing to do something profitable – but illegal. Stand firm anyway.
- C. **If the price you pay for doing the right thing seems too high, do it anyway. The crown we’ll wear is worth the cross we bear!**
- D. **Peter wrote,** “For this finds favor, if for the sake of conscience toward God a person bears up under sorrows when suffering unjustly. For what credit is there if, when you sin and are harshly treated, you endure it with patience? But if when you do what is right and suffer for it you patiently endure it, this finds favor with God.” 1 Peter 2:19-20 (NASB).
- E. **I read an inspiring story of Rob Mouw who played on the soccer team in his senior year at Wheaton Christian High School.** In the final seconds of a big game against favored Waubonsie Valley, with his team behind by one goal, Rob was dribbling the ball in front of him, running at full speed toward the opponent’s goal.

Just before he shot the ball, though, he caught sight of the scoreboard. The clock read 00.00. But like any good athlete, Rob shot the ball anyway, and it went in for a goal. The referee signaled that the goal counted, and the game finished in a tie. The Wheaton fans cheered. The Waubonsie Valley fans cried that time had run out. Bob had a choice to

make. He could say nothing and avoid a loss. After all, it was the referee's job to decide the calls, not his. Or Rob could do what was right.

Rob asked the referee whether the official time was kept on scoreboard or the referee's stopwatch. The referee said the scoreboard time was official and then ran off the field. Rob went to his coaches and explained that just before his kick, he had seen zeros on the scoreboard clock. Since he hadn't heard a whistle, he kept playing. But his goal was late, and he didn't think it should count.

His coaches agreed, and so they went over to the opposing coaches, explained what had happened, and conceded victory to Waubonsie Valley. For doing right Wheaton suffered a loss.

When you suffer for doing the right thing, do it anyway.

III. IF THEY OUTLAW TALKING ABOUT JESUS, DO IT ANYWAY!

- A. "But so that it will not spread any further among the people, let us warn them to speak no longer to any man in this name.' And when they had summoned them, they commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John answered and said to them, 'Whether it is right in the sight of God to give heed to you rather than to God, you be the judge; for we cannot stop speaking about what we have seen and heard.'"
- B. Secular humanists, atheists, agnostics and other enemies of Jesus want to remove all vestiges of the Christian faith.**
 1. They want to get Bibles and prayer out of schools and government.
 2. They want all crosses removed from public places.
 3. They want "In God We Trust" removed from our currency — I think they'd like "In Gold We Trust" instead.
 4. Public displays of the Ten Commandments are taken away.
 5. The greeting, "Merry Christmas" was replaced by "Happy Holidays" — until the past two seasons.
 6. Some try to edit and revise history to exclude religion's part of our nation's basis.
 7. In New London, Connecticut no public Christmas tree decorations with angels. No "Silent Night" allowed. One City official says Santa Claus is the real symbol of Christmas.
- C. If and when:**
 1. They outlaw preaching Christ and the Bible, I'll do it anyway!
 2. They make it a crime to denounce sin for what it is, I'll do it anyway.
 3. They officially remove "under God" from the pledge of allegiance, I'll say it anyway.
- D. And even in many churches Jesus' name is rarely spoken.** I was told about a certain singing group that was scheduled to sing in a large church. When checking on final details the leader of the group was informed that they were not allowed to suggest that Jesus is Lord and the only Savior, or pray in Jesus' name, or quote Scripture or offer an altar call. The group leader said, "Then we will not be singing in your church." But I'd bet that if they did sing, they'd do that anyway."

- E. I'd rather speak up for Jesus now and have Him speak for me at the end than to deny Him now and have Him to deny me then!

When you take into account the Good Jesus did even though opposed, and when you add in that Jesus did the right thing when suffering wrong, and when you know that He speaks up for you to the Father, it is asking very little when He asks us to take up our cross and follow Him.

PRAY / INVITE

If you have not done so, will you today? YOU WILL BOW BEFORE Him someday – why not today? If you have done so, take a tighter grip on it as we stand and sing: “Take My Life And Let It Be Consecrated Lord To Thee.