

GLORY

You probably remember that we use to occasionally watch “Glory” - a movie about the first black Union regiment in the Civil War. Although having some graphic scenes and language, the movie was highly recommended as a resource to teaching children about honor and integrity among other character qualities. It is the personal stories of the main characters that I found so intriguing; their quest for “glory” travel different paths but ultimately end up on the same battle field.



One pivotal moment in the movie occurs when the recently promoted Sergeant Major Rollins disciplines the “hate-filled” private, Trip. In the conflict of that moment, Trip takes account of why he is fighting and whom he is fighting. Though admitting that he want “carry the flag” into battle (as an accommodation for his bravery), the private becomes increasingly aware that fighting (and dying) remains a necessary course for freedom. On this understanding, he commits himself in to battle on Fort Wagner and indeed bears the colors to his death along side Colonel Shaw.

Glory is fame or honor; but can also be an expression to give praise or recognition to the Lord. For example, Colonel Shaw uses the expression “Glory, Alleluia” on finding the entire regiment in formation following the Confederacy’s announced policy on punishment of captured, black soldiers.

Believers seek to obey the Lord and, by that, to give glory to the Lord. History bears-out that much personal suffering has occurred because obedience to the Lord contradicts human nature – the way of the world. Though certain to encounter suffering and possible death, a believer is supernaturally empowered to serve the Lord having been set free from the bondage of sin through Jesus’ death and resurrection. Inspiring scriptures include Joshua’s, *but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord*; and Paul’s, *to live is Christ, to die is gain*.

In the gospel of Luke, the angels’ announcement of Christ’s birth occurred in the presence of God’s glory. This glory, that brought fear to the shepherds, may have been in the form of a bright light or energy of some kind; but introduced the announcement long waited by the Hebrews – the Savior has come. In the moment of fear, God’s glory brought the good news of freedom for Jew and Gentile alike...for all man.

To draw a parallel to the believer, perhaps Trip (and the entire regiment) had decided that personal freedom, as it were, was not enough; but their purpose was to fight that all may be free, that all may one day meet in Glory.

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