

There Is Someone in the Bible Like You

by Russell DeLong

The Bible is a record of men in all possible human situations, and there is someone in the Bible just like you, with the power to choose your destiny by choosing Christ and right or Satan and wrong.

Scripture: Joshua 24:15, John 1:12, Romans 6:23, 2 Corinthians 5:17, Hebrews 11:23

Topics: "Biblical Characters", "Spiritual Transformation"

Description

Russell DeLong emphasizes the diverse array of authors in the Bible, representing various backgrounds and human experiences, making it relatable to all individuals. The Bible portrays its characters realistically, showcasing both their triumphs and failures without glorifying or distorting them. Each individual in the Bible had the power of choice, determining their destiny based on their decisions. DeLong highlights the transformative power of Jesus, who can change individuals like Peter, Saul, and Mary Magdalene, turning them into noble figures. The sermon concludes with an invitation to choose Christ and righteousness over Satan and wrongdoing, echoing the message of coming to Jesus just as we are.

Transcript

Scripture: Hebrews 11:23-26

The Bible is the world's greatest literary masterpiece. It is composed of sixty-six books

written by forty different authors over a period of sixteen hundred years. These inspired writers represent all classes, stations, and offices of men from kings to peasants, priests to laymen, prophets to fishermen, poets and philosophers, musicians and shepherds, tentmakers and tax collectors, men and women, old and young, rich and poor, prime ministers and ordinary citizens, educated and illiterate, lawmakers and mystics.

Because of this widespread array of authors, all points of view, all races, colors, languages, and economic conditions are included.

One might catalogue all the emotions, instincts, appetites, desires, and ambitions of

mankind as a whole and then find some person in some specific situation illustrative of each of them. The Bible is a record of men in all possible human situations. There is someone just like you in just the kind of situation you are now in. If you can locate that person in your situation, you can get help to make you a

victor, or you can get a warning from his unsuccessful meeting of the situation.

One of the strong arguments for the divine origin of the Bible is that it does not protect and glamorize its heroes and blacken and distort its villains. It paints the picture as it is with all the reality of raw, stark human passions.

God loved David, but did not cover or approve his lustful licentiousness.

God anointed Saul, but did not withhold judgment when he willfully disobeyed His command.

Samson had great favor and power from God, but was not spared when he sinned.

Adam was God's perfect creature, but was not protected and coddled when he violated God's law.

Ananias and Sapphira were in the circle of the Early Church, but were stricken when they lied to the Holy Spirit.

On the other hand, Peter was a rough, raw, cursing, sinful fisherman; but he was called by Jesus. He vacillated, forsook his Lord -- was heartbroken, repentant, and was forgiven.

Paul was a zealous and bigoted member of the Sanhedrin. He persecuted the Early Church; but he was converted and he himself was persecuted and finally was murdered for the gospel's sake.

Demas loved the world and forsook the circle of believers.

Judas loved gold, betrayed his Lord, committed suicide.

Jacob was a slick, crafty, selfish, deceptive son. He would even double-cross his father.

Cain tried to get by with an offering of vegetables in place of a blood sacrifice demanded by God.

Solomon loved money, wine, and women. He had 700 wives and 300 concubines.

Job was a multimillionaire but hit a super-financial crash.

Haman tried to rig conditions for his own selfish ambitions. He built a gallows for another and hung from it himself.

Achan thought he could get by and hide some treasure, but he was found out and slain.

Lot chose selfishly and lost, while Abraham took the rocky hill country and became rich.

The rich man treated Lazarus like a dog. Both died. Lazarus became a spiritual millionaire in eternity, while Dives was crying for one drop of cool water.

Pilate tried to play neutral; he faced duty and refused to follow right.

The thief on the cross in his last hour repented and received eternal life.

The rich young ruler wanted eternal life but would not pay the full price. He lacked only one thing, but he went away sorrowfully; he missed it.

Nicodemus was a good, clean, moral man, a ruler. Jesus told him that he must be born again, of the Spirit.

Look at these Biblical characters:

Cain -- the first murderer

Noah -- laughed at and mocked

Joseph -- tempted but true

Moses -- highly educated but loyal to God and his people

Delilah -- the seductress

Salome -- the fickle, wicked dancer

Ruth and Esther, Mary and Martha -- women of noble spiritual royalty

Elijah and Elisha -- true men of God

Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel -- inspired messengers of Jehovah

Stephen -- the first martyr

Timothy -- an ideal young minister

What an array! Some good, some bad, some victors, some victims!

Characters of all descriptions -- loyal and true, tricky and deceptive, lustful and sensuous,

selfish and self-seeking, proud and haughty, murderers and martyrs, suicides and saints, pure and chaste, seductive and voluptuous, moral and upright, cursing and denying, repentant and contrite, arrogant and defiant, intriguing and designing, loyal and true, hateful and revengeful, loving and dependable.

This gamut of human personalities playing significant parts in the Biblical drama were not pawns of fate nor predetermined creatures of destiny. They were what they were because they chose to be. Every one of them could have been different. The rich young ruler might have become another St. Paul, and Paul could have been an apostate suicide.

One's choice determines one's destiny.

There is somebody in the Bible just like you. You, too, have possibilities for great good or terrible evil. All men are sinners. To continue in sin is to proceed toward greater evil and ultimately hell.

Jesus can change you. He took a Peter and made a saint; he took a Saul and made a Paul; he took a Magdalene and made a noble woman.

You -- with your instincts, appetites, desires, and habits-can become a person like one of the Biblical tragedies, or you can become as one of the Biblical triumphs.

It depends on your choice for Christ and right or Satan and wrong.

While the choir sings the classic of Charlotte Elliott, will you come to your Saviour.

Just as I am, without one plea

But that Thy blood was shed for me,

And that Thou bid'st me come to Thee,

O Lamb of God, I come, I come!

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