**#JESUSISMYHERO**

***Join The Movement***

***“Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.”***  (I John 3:2)

Black Bart was a professional thief whose very name struck fear as he terrorized the Wells Fargo stage line. His real name was Charles Earl Bowles. As a boy he read the dime-novels that glamorized the men of the west. He read one that had *Black Bart* as its stagecoach robber and adopted the name, and the legend. From San Francisco to New York, his name became synonymous with the danger of the frontier. Between 1875 and 1883 he robbed 29 different stagecoaches of Wells Fargo. Fostering a bitter hatred from how they had once mistreated him, he sought revenge, and got it. Amazingly, Bart did it all without firing a shot. Because a hood hid his face, no victim ever saw it to identify him. He never took a hostage, instead “Black Bart” used fear to paralyze his victims. After the 29th robbery he was finally wounded, then later caught, and spent four years in San Quentin Prison.

As a kid I grew up reading the genre of books called “Westerns” while also watching them on TV. Roy Rogers, The Lone Ranger, The Cisco Kid, The Rifleman, Gunsmoke, Bonanza, and Wyatt Earp. Good guys vs Bad guys. It was all a boy’s fantasy to become a hero and save a town or a damsel in distress. To be honest, I never owned a gun or even wore cowboy boots and certainly never saved a town or a girl in distress (but I’ll admit Benita has saved me a few times). While Charles Bowles became like his hero Black Bart, let me now tell you who I now want to be.

John the apostle said, “*Now we are children of God; and* *it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed,* ***we shall be like Him***!” (I Jn. 3:2). We are now adults and must think like adults. Remember what Paul said, *“When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things”* (I Cor. 13:11). As a child I wanted to be like my heroes. Now, as an adult, I still want to be like my hero, but I have moved from fantasy to reality. I could never be like those western cowboys, or like those TV action figures, but as an adult I can become someone far, far greater than any of them. I can become like Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Savior of the world!

When John said “*when He* (Jesus) *is revealed, we shall be like Him*” he changed my world. This is not a childhood dream written by Hollywood or Disney, it is written with the finger of God and signed as a promise with the blood of Christ. While at this moment I am made lower than the angels, there will come a day that I will be made greater than the angels for I will become “*an heir of God and joint heir with Christ*” (Rom. 8:17). I will not only be made greater than Michael the archangel, or Gabriel the great heavenly messenger, but, as John said, “*it has not yet been revealed what we shall be.”* Based on reading the life, resurrection, ascension and glory of Christ, God left it to our imagination what is in store for us!

Saul (aka Paul) once likely dreamed of becoming like his mentor Gamaliel, the famous rabbi who owned a school in Jerusalem. His Pharisee father sent him from his home in Tarsus all the way to Jerusalem to sit at this great man’s feet. He was deeply inspired by this man and must have aspired to become just like him. He almost did. Just read his resume at the time he was a young adult in Philippians 2:5-6,

1) circumcised the eighth day 🗹

2) of the stock of Israel 🗹

3) of the tribe of Benjamin 🗹

4) a Hebrew of Hebrews 🗹

5) concerning the Law - a Pharisee 🗹

6) concerning zeal – a Persecutor of the church 🗹

7) concerning righteousness of the Law – blameless 🗹

But something changed his childhood dream. He met Jesus Christ. His world was turned upside down and inside out. One day he was caught up into Paradise, into the third heaven, and “*heard inexpressible words which it is not lawful for a man to utter*” (2 Cor. 12:4). He left it to our imagination what he saw and heard. But I do know this, after both his Damascus Road Experience, and then his Paradise Experience, we read of his new hero and his new fantasy with these words:

7 But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. 8 Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ 9 and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; 10 that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, 11 if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.

– Philippians 2:7-11

Many today have joined the hashtag world of social media, using the # symbol to reference what it is they want to emphasize. For example, in 2006 Tarana Burke began the *#MeToo* movement to empower women who had endured sexual violence to know they were not alone, that other women had suffered the same experience. It caught on and millions joined that *#MeToo* crusade, eventually exposing many sexual predators due to the courage of a few to speak out.

If Paul were living today he might start a movement on his Facebook, Twitter or Instagram page asking all his readers to join his ***#JesusIsMyHero*** movement. I seriously doubt it would get the same traction as *#MeToo* because Christianity (and by that I mean true discipleship of Christ as seen in Luke 14:25-33) is now a curse word in social media circles. But I, for one, would join that movement. In fact, I have already proudly joined it! And I am asking you to join it too.

Jesus not only saved a town and a damsel in distress, He saved a world from eternal ruin. And He has asked me, a puny nobody who never did a courageous thing, to join Him in His crusade to save the world. One day, maybe very soon, I will be just like Him. I can hardly wait.

*#JesusIsMyHero*. Now that’s a movement I can endorse. Will you join me? – Rick