

Warrior Pillar

Those of us who spend a lot of time on the road building the kingdom talk about being a road-warrior, or standing in the gap for truth, justice, and the American Way. What we mean is that we want to be part of a team. We want others to be able to count on us, especially our family. We want to conquer our fears so we can achieve victory and the prize of freedom that goes along with it. We want to enter into battle with a stout heart, and have legendary songs written about our exploits. That's part of why we tell the tale of what we and others are doing - it's the equivalent of sitting around the campfire at night re-living the day's skirmishes and giving honor to those who fought the good fight. It's inspirational. It's exemplary. We create heroes that way. And heroes lead others to dig deep to discover their own courage and strength when it counts.

But in my role as warrior, Stu Weber warns me that I have a tendency as a man to let the testosterone flow too freely, to stray into blood-lust. And so he advises me to be the tender warrior. Last night my daughter was looking for the Friend, for a shoulder to cry on. She felt hurt and neglected and unappreciated, and I felt the warrior welling up in me - I wanted to come to her defense against anyone who would hurt her, even someone she loves, by bludgeoning the guy to death... well, in a manner of speaking. Not what she needed. So I had to call her this morning to give her that Friend she couldn't find last night. Better late than never, right?

Stu says there are a number of things which characterize a tender warrior. His spirit is assertive and aggressive, so the warrior must be disciplined to inject itself into situations only when necessary - see, I hadn't read that yet when my daughter called, or I would have known that. The only effective and discerning Christian warrior is a man of the Word. Based on Scriptural guidance, he will know when to act. That means I've got to know the content of Scripture BEFORE the event so I can know how to respond DURING the event: the Boy Scout Code of being prepared.

If discipline is doing the right thing, at the right time, in the right way, for the right reason (John Ortberg, *The Life You've Always Wanted*) then I've got to know what the right thing is to do, and what the right time is to do it. That's where I look to Scripture for examples of people in similar situations and apply the principles I find there - the example may be positive, or it may be negative. So if I see a naked lady bathing on the deck below, I don't do what David did with Bathsheba. I do the opposite, because I know that God was displeased with what he actually did.

Stu goes on to point out that the true warrior is characterized by self-denial. He is not afraid of death. He understands what he is dying for, and willingly does so when necessary. The warrior is a destroyer - not of things that are good, but of things that are evil: dishonesty, corruption, tyranny, injustice, pornography, child abuse, oppression, racism, etc. He demolishes arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and he takes captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ (2Cor 10:3-5). And the warrior is a protector, keeping out of his family's life anything that will keep Christ out of their heart. He needs passion. He needs challenge and risk. He needs to be pushed to his limit. That's what happens when he accepts a warrior's code. "Life is fired at us like a bullet, and there is no escaping it short of death." Wow!

While I'm sitting here thinking, it occurs to me that I don't want to *become* a warrior. I *am* one. I was *born* one. I need to put on the armor and get into battle instead of sitting under some shade tree watching everybody else have all the fun. I've got people depending on me. I've been AWOL. I need to get back to the front lines and stand in the gap with my fellow warriors, today. Now, where did I put that sword? I'll see you guys at the front!