

The Undivided Man

Ronald L. Dart's broadcast notes

Do you suppose God would ever call a man to be a lawyer? Or perhaps, a Governor? No, I am not about to tell a lawyer joke, or talk about Arnold Schwarznegger, who is commonly called the governor.

There is a funny thing about Christian thinking when it comes to a divine calling. We tend to think of God's calling solely having to do with church work, or ministry. But is that the right view of the matter? There are two men in the Bible who cause me to think otherwise. They weren't called to be lawyers, but they were nonetheless called to a surprising vocation. Let me tell you their stories:

Once upon a time, there was a man named Jacob who had 12 sons. The last was born of the wife that Jacob loved. He was named Joseph, which means, *added*, because he was added beyond the expected family. Because he was the son of Jacob's old age and of his most loved wife, he was a favorite son.

When the lad was a mere 17 years old, he was bringing performance reports to his father that did nothing to endear him to his brothers. When his brothers saw the favoritism, and beyond that, when they came to see him as a snitch, they hated him and couldn't bring themselves to speak to him with any civility. And then, something happened that could only make things worse.

Joseph had a dream, and he had the poor judgment to tell it to

his brothers. I say poor judgment, but it will turn out to be very important that he *did* tell the dream. Genesis 37 has the record of Joseph's dreams. "And Joseph dreamed a dream, and he told it his brethren: and they hated him yet the more. And he said unto them, Hear, I pray you, this dream which I have dreamed: For, behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and, lo, my sheaf arose, and also stood upright; and, behold, your sheaves stood round about, and made obeisance to my sheaf. And his brethren said to him, Shalt thou indeed reign over us? or shalt thou indeed have dominion over us? And they hated him yet the more for his dreams, and for his words" (Genesis 37:5-8).

Joseph's second dream was like this: "And he dreamed yet another dream, and told it his brethren, and said, Behold, I have dreamed a dream more; and, behold, the sun and the moon and the eleven stars made obeisance to

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me. And he told it to his father, and to his brethren: and his father rebuked him, and said unto him, What is this dream that thou hast dreamed? Shall I and thy mother and thy brethren indeed come to bow ourselves to thee to the earth? And his brethren envied him, but his father took note of the saying" (Genesis 37:9-11).

God had a calling for Joseph. You should notice this. Historically, Christian people think of the gifts and calling of God only for ministry

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Count Your Blessings. . .

There is no way we can out-give God. Take a minute to look back over the past year and count your blessings. What a Wonderful God we have who daily showers us with blessings. What is it worth to you to have a job? You have a house to live in, food on your table, probably more clothes in your closet than you wear for months at a time. God's blessings go on and on.

"He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver" (2 Corinthians 9:6, 7).

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or service to the church. We have been taught for centuries that our spiritual life is apart from our vocation, our job, our work in the world. A kind of dualism has so shaped and formed our thinking that we are completely unaware of it. What happened to Joseph is going to prove a major correction to that idea.

At age 17, Joseph was called by God and notified of that calling in a dream. He wasn't told the precise nature of the calling or the work to be done. Only that there *was* a calling, and that it would have the results he had seen in a dream. Joseph, being the youngest, serves as an example of another proclivity of God. The last shall be first, and the first last.

Without a doubt, Joseph was a little cocky about this, but that was soon to be corrected. What follows is one of the great stories of the Bible, and the chances are, you already know it. The longer term plan here is very complicated, and a lot of bad things had to happen to get to the purpose of the plan, and to finally reveal Joseph's calling.

Someone wrote that to be discontent is to covet against God. Joseph had every reason to think that God had deserted him, but that was emphatically not the case. There was a purpose in all that happened to him. Let's pick up the story in Genesis 39. "And Joseph was brought down to Egypt; and Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, captain of the guard, an Egyptian, bought him of the hands of the Ishmeelites, which had brought him down thither. And the LORD was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian. And his master saw that the LORD was with him, and that the LORD made all that he did to prosper in his hand" (Genesis 39:1-3).

Now this is crucial. His master

saw that God was with Joseph. We are talking, now, not about spiritual things. We are talking about managing the affairs of the captain of Pharaoh's guard. This would involve logistics, personnel, economics—military issues all. Why would God call a man to manage such matters? What would his objective be?

Well, we do know that Joseph went way beyond this to manage an entire country, but the road from here to there is a rough one. Joseph's master left all that he had in Joseph's hands, to manage. Let's pick up the story again.

"And Joseph was a goodly person, and well favored [handsome]. And it came to pass after these things, that his master's wife cast her eyes upon Joseph; and she said, Lie with me. But he refused, and said unto his master's wife, Behold, my master wotteth not what is with me in the house, and he hath committed all that he hath to my hand; There is none greater in this house than I; neither hath he kept back any thing from me but thee, because thou art his wife: how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" (Genesis 39:6-9).

Joseph's faith involved the whole man, all the time. His life was not divided into the moral and the secular, the spiritual and the material. Joseph stuck to his guns and never broke faith with God, even under the greatest temptation. "And it came to pass, as she spake to Joseph day by day, that he hearkened not unto her, to lie by her, or to be with her. And it came to pass about this time, that Joseph went into the house to do his business; and there was none of the men of the house there within. And she caught him by his garment, saying, Lie with me: and he left his garment in her hand, and fled, and got him out. And it came to pass,

when she saw that he had left his garment in her hand, and was fled forth, That she called unto the men of her house, and spake unto them, saying, See, he hath brought in an Hebrew unto us to mock us; he came in unto me to lie with me, and I cried with a loud voice: And it came to pass, when he heard that I lifted up my voice and cried, that he left his garment with me, and fled, and got him out. And she laid up his garment by her, until his lord came home. And she spake unto him according to these words, saying, The Hebrew servant, which thou hast brought unto us, came in unto me to mock me: And it came to pass, as I lifted up my voice and cried, that he left his garment with me, and fled out. And it came to pass, when his master heard the words of his wife, which she spake unto him, saying, After this manner did thy servant to me; that his wrath was kindled. And Joseph's master took him, and put him into the prison, a place where the king's prisoners were bound: and he was there in the prison" (Genesis 39:10-20).

Once again, there was a chance to break faith with God, to covet against God. Joseph did not. He continued to be a man of God in all his affairs. The next thing we know, Joseph was running the prison. And, through a series of strange dreams, Joseph was brought out of prison, when at last he arrived at his calling. But even Joseph had no idea of the consequences of this calling.

The pattern of Joseph's life was unchanged. He rose to be in charge. Pharaoh made him viceroy of all Egypt. Egypt was totally pagan. It was the greatest power in the world at that time. And there is not a hint of evangelism in anything Joseph does. He doesn't preach to the Egyptians, and if anyone was converted to God, it isn't significant

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When Kings Go to War

by Lenny Cacchio

In the spring, at the time when kings go off to war, David sent Joab out with the king's men and the whole Israelite army. They destroyed the Ammonites and besieged Rabah. But David remained in Jerusalem (2 Samuel 11:1 NIV).

I have some questions about this verse: 1. Was David a king? 2. What did kings do at that time of year? 3. If David was a king, what was he doing in Jerusalem instead of joining his men in the field?

David stumbled, and these questions point to a reason why. David failed to do the work of a king. The nation was at war, but David stayed in Jerusalem where he could enjoy his perks of office, rest comfortably in his own bed, eat the best foods, and have others fulfill his every whim. If he had been doing the work of a king, he would not have been in his palace ogling down on the wife of one of his trusted aids and sending a servant to fetch her for an afternoon tryst.

I wonder how often we Christians are content to keep our religion in our palaces while ignoring the duties that God sets before us. Instead of going off to fight in spiritual warfare, we want to stay back in our safe places and live a life of ease and comfort. When we do that—when we abandon the post that God expects us to guard—we risk getting too close to the edge of the wall and falling into the distraction of temptation. This

famous story of David and Bathsheba continues with David's failed attempt to cover up his crime and David's backhanded murder of Bathsheba's husband in the field of battle. Under David's orders the more honorable Uriah approached too close to the enemy's wall, and that innocent man died.

This disgusting episode in the life of one of the most revered figures of the Bible is punctuated in Matthew's genealogy of Christ. Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Matthew refuses to use Bathsheba's name or to call her David's wife, instead referencing her as "her that had been the wife of Uriah" (Matthew 1:6). It sounds like the stench was still in God's nostrils over the betrayal and murder of a good man.

Keep fighting the good fight instead of seeking the creature comforts of the gilded palace where there lurks the lust of the flesh and the pride of life. Stay in the fray of the battle and those temptations won't be as tempting.

enough to tell the story. That's not why Joseph was there.

Now, who was the other man I was talking about? His name was Daniel. Daniel was also carried away captive, and sorely tempted to compromise. "And the king spake unto Ashpenaz the master of his eunuchs, that he should bring certain of the children of Israel, and of the king's seed, and of the princes; Children in whom was no blemish, but well favoured, and skilful in all wisdom, and cunning in knowledge, and understanding science, and such as had ability in them to stand in the king's palace, and whom they might teach the learning and the tongue of the Chaldeans. . . . But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank: therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself. Now God had brought Daniel into favour and tender love with the prince of the eunuchs" (Daniel 1:3-9).

Once again through a series of dreams, something similar to what happened to Joseph happens to Daniel. Like Joseph, Daniel ended up running a country. And not just any country. The most powerful empire of the time, and a pagan one at that. Once again, his role was not that of an evangelist. He was a governor.

This kind of thing happened because of the kind of men they were. The kind of men they were was shaped by a sense of calling and destiny. They never coveted



Radio Update

Sious Falls, SD
KELO 1320 AM
8:30 a.m. Sunday

Born to Win Website All New!

By Paula Hughes

You've been waiting for it, and now it's here! The new website design for *Born to Win* and Christian Educational Ministries is complete, up and running. While the address is still the same (www.borntowin.net), the look and feel of the site are completely different. We hope you enjoy the changes and upgrades.

The sleek, modern design is the first thing you will notice when you visit the site. Navigation is quicker and easier with tabs at the top of the home page to direct you to the information you want. Right on the home page, there is a wealth of information to access at the click of a mouse. A new Events Calendar lets you keep up with upcoming CEM events and CEM news.

Completely new is a blog, or essay archive, featuring over 70 of Ron Dart's essays. You'll see you can access guest essays, too. The home page displays the most current title. A click will display an introduction to the current title, and a scroll through the page displays all previous titles and introductions. When you access a specific article, you can post the link to your Facebook or other social networking page, where the essay title and introduction will display. This new feature helps you make the *Born to Win* materials easily accessible by your friends—with no pressure!

Another new feature is found under the "Learning Center" tab, which contains archives of the *Living to Win* newsletters, the first

of the month letters, and the *Teaching to Win* newsletters. It's a great resource to refresh your memory about an article you read, find help teaching your children about Christ, or read that article you missed. Don't forget to download free sample lessons for children and teens under the "Youth" tab, and download free fun activities from the "YEA! Let's R.E.A.C.H." tab.

The podcast feature is improved, now including the past two weeks of *Born to Win* radio programs. Keep up-to-date with the *Born to Win* radio broadcast on your computer, iPod, or other mp3 player and listen any time! It is *FREE* to download.

The new home page clearly displays the daily radio broadcast and the most recent CEM sermon. You can listen to either with a click of the mouse. A library of over 300 CEM sermons can be accessed at the "Audio" tab, and you can listen and download them at no charge. The same can be done for the radio programs—there are more than 700 programs available right now.

Visit the CEM Bookstore and see how much we've improved your access to the material you are looking for! You will find the *Born to Win* audio series and radio specials; so much material under the CEM tab that we can't include it in this article; and all of the YEA materials, which includes the curriculum books for students and teachers, as well as music.

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against God. They were humble and repentant for what they had done wrong, but they never complained about their lot. People came to know about God, not through the preaching or the arguments of these two men, but by their example, by a life lived before God.

Learn more about this life changing philosophy as Ronald Dart shows you from the Scriptures the tremendous impact to be had when religious conviction informs everyday conduct. The CD is *FREE*. Just check the box on the enclosed card for *The Undivided Man*.

In Memory

CEM acknowledges with grateful appreciation a donation received in memory of Lee Randall of North Dakota, who passed away on October 25, 2010. Lee lived near Minot and is survived by his mother, Sherry Trett, and his father, Rick Randall, both of Minot, North Dakota.

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*That the man of God may be proficient
and equipped for every good work.*