

September 2007: “No Brag—Just Fact!”

When I was a kid, there was a Western TV series called The Guns of Will Sonnett. Walter Brennan (also Grampa McCoy) played the lead. It chronicled the ongoing saga of Will Sonnett and his grandson Jeff traveling the Old West trying to find Will’s son James. Will was a gunslinger, as was his boy and grandson—all three generations were “good-guy gunfighters.” Every episode—when the chips were down—they would come through with a fast draw combined with a sterling example of unswerving cowboy integrity. The Lord was specifically and frequently mentioned, and each episode ended in a prayer of appreciation and dependence. Will was also a philosopher of sorts: “*No, boy, the hurtin’s not gone, but love tells it to never mind.*”

Observations on his lightening speed, campfire cooking skills, philosophical level-headedness, or moral certainty were met with Will’s modest and simple statement, “No Brag—Just fact.” He wasn’t a proud man, yet he knew he was something special. (I’m not remembering all of this from my early teen years—I recently bought the series on DVD.)

I have long encouraged Christians to Biblically discover their true standing in Christ. And then . . . be themselves under transformation! It’s a matter of balance: for certain we need to understand “but by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain . . .” (1 Cor 15:10).

While we may not be the fastest gun in the West spiritually, in Christ our spiritual position and potential *is noteworthy!* I find it tragic that many times Christians cultivate a “barely get by” mentality concerning our spiritual resources—directly affecting our ability to serve!

Let’s make sure that our view of self is firmly rooted in the truth of God’s word and our obedience to it. With that in mind, how should I view myself in my relationships, ministry opportunities, and problems? Let’s see what God says about us:

Rom. 8:37—In all things, I am more than a conqueror.

1 Cor. 15:57—He gives me the victory through my Lord Jesus Christ.

John 15:5—In Him, I’m expected to bring much fruit, without Him: nothing.

2 Peter 1:3-4—He has given me all things that are relevant to godly living . . . He has called me to glory and virtue . . . I am the legitimate possessor of great and precious promises that are beyond my wildest expectations . . . I am a partaker of His divine nature . . . I have escaped the corruption that is in the world.

1 John 1:4—I have fullness of joy.

Rom 5:5 I have all the love I need in dealing with difficult people and circumstances

2 Cor. 12:9—Because His grace is sufficient for me . . . and His strength is made perfect in my weakness . . . I will glory in my infirmities, and Christ's power will rest on me

1 Cor. 15:58—I anticipate that I will be steadfast, unmovable, and always thriving in the work of the Lord . . . in doing so, my labor is not in vain in the Lord

1 John 4:4—Greater is He that is in me, than he that is in the world

Dear Missionaries, since Jesus Christ really did secure the victory, appropriate these precious truths as we evaluate our view of ministry capabilities and potential. In Him, we are thoroughly furnished (2Tim 3:17) and complete (Col 2:10)! As we remain true to Him and His word, we are something special and ought to be able to handle whatever temptation, task, burden or ministry opportunity He sends our way.

No Brag—Just Fact!

Bill