



Shiloh Messenger

July 2007

“Refuse To Be Almost”

“A good name is more desirable than great riches: to be esteemed is better than silver or gold.” Proverbs 22:1

I never have given much thought about the varied aspects of my job description and the many hats I wear as a Pastor at Shiloh Ministries. I get up every day knowing I have been called by God. I have been given the assignment to protect and nurture the people God sends to Shiloh. This is the main objective of a Pastor to protect and nurture the people we are given to shepherd. Protect means to shield from injury and danger. Nurture means to feed, nourish, train, educate. Every day within that same objective I have obligation as to what the students of Shiloh are subjected to. What are they given to view and to listen to? All week long they are filled with sound Biblical teaching. On Friday nights we have entertainment and allow for a movie and popcorn here at Shiloh. So therefore like clock work every Friday, I make my weekly visitations to the video store in the small town of Liberty. I myself search and select an appropriate movie for the students. It is difficult to find clean entertainment! I have placed a language filter guard on our TV's that filters out filthy language. You cannot always go by what others tell you regarding a movie. Many folk excuse and justify what they watch and listen to. Yet I alone am accountable for what these men are allowed to watch during their stay here at Shiloh. So on Friday's I am thrust into the role of movie critic. I am most positive I do not fit the standard criteria of a movie critic in Hollywood. I am looking at the movies I critique with a different value system. It is foreign to the world's view. Recently I selected the historical epic “Apocalypto” by Mel Gibson. It is about ancient Central American civilization and the Mayan culture. I came away with some reminders.....

“Jaguar Paw” is the main character in the film. His tribe is invaded by Mayan warriors. Many of his people are murdered on site. His community has been destroyed. He and some of the select of his tribe are left alive. They are escorted brutally to the great Mayan City to be used to appease “the gods”. Before his capture he is able to secure his wife who is full term in her pregnancy and his small child into a deep pit to protect them. He promises his return. Jaguar Paw witnesses his own father killed in front of his very eyes. His father's last words before his death are, “Do not be afraid my son.” Through out Jaguar Paw's captivity he is taunted by the demeaning jeers of an enemy warrior. This enemy continues to hurl out one word as he mocks Jaguar Paw. That word over and over is “ALMOST”. Jaguar Paw knows his name and what it means. The Jaguar is a common symbol of strength and power associated with royalty and bravery in warfare. He knows his name is not Almost. Jaguar Paw is determined by love for his wife and son to return home. In spite of all odds against him, he keeps an unbroken focus. Jaguar Paw's wife is no wimp herself. The movie depicts her struggles and how she too overcame. Unable to climb out of this deep pit, she protects herself, and young son. She beats to death a wild animal, escapes from drowning and births her newborn in the water un-assisted. She remained strong and determined and would not give up. She and her husband are persistent and focused. It is a suspenseful adrenalin rushing movie of survival and a refusal to be “almost”. What is it that I see in this movie that we can glean from?

1. Do not be afraid. (I am reminded that the enemy of our souls uses fear to destroy us.)
2. Make no allowance for someone else's words to disqualify you. Eleanor Roosevelt is quoted saying, “No one can make you feel inferior without your consent.” Satan will always try to get you to feel inferior and defeated. Know who you are and who you belong to.
3. Keep your focus, No matter what the odds against you to deter you from your objective. I thought about Nehemiah building the wall, and how Sanballat tried several times and gave his best shots to deter Nehemiah from his objective (*Nehemiah 4:1-23 Nehemiah 6:1-14*).
4. Hook up with others who are strong and determined and won't “wimp” out on you (*Caleb in Numbers 13:30 & Joshua in Numbers 14: 6-9*).
5. Refuse to be an “ALMOST”. If you persevere you will not be almost. “Observe the ant.” The great oriental conqueror Tamerlane told his friends in relating a story from his early life, he said, “I once was forced to take shelter from my enemies in a dilapidated building, where I sat alone for many hours. Wishing to divert my mind from my hopeless situation, I fixed my eyes on an ant carrying a kernel of corn larger than itself up a high wall. I counted its attempts to accomplish this feat. The corn fell sixty nine times to the ground, but the insect persevered. The seventieth time it reached the top”. Refuse to be “Almost”.

Rocky Fondren

A Graduates Testimony

Hi, my name is Cliff Brast. I am from Sealy, Texas. I came to Shiloh in June 2006 with a rebellious nature. I had a deep desire in my heart. I wanted change, but my flesh wanted nothing to do with change. My flesh liked the pig pen. I knew deep down in my heart that I was special to God and He wanted to use me in a special way. But to me and my way of thinking, I was nobody. I had been to the top, but still was not fulfilling my life. I needed something else. During my stay at Shiloh, I was faced with many situations. It was a battle between my spirit man and the flesh. My flesh would win, and then my spirit man would win. There was even a time when I lost my visitation with my wife. That was my greatest obstacle, because I had only been married three months before I entered Shiloh. I wanted to quit, but something inside kept telling me quitting is no option. I even called my wife to come get me. She said no. Boy did that hurt! She told me God was not finished with me, and He wanted me to finish the work He had begun. So after a couple of weeks of being mad, and dying to the flesh, my spirit man prevailed. I said, "OK God, if you want to do something with my life here I am." So I crucified my flesh, and surrendered to God. I have allowed God to change me day by day. The Bible says, "*He who begun a good work in me is faithful to perform it until the day of Jesus*" (Phil. 1:6). I am so glad that I did not quit! If I had, I would have been full of regrets. God will give us an expected end according to Jeremiah 29:11. "*We overcome by The Blood of The Lamb and by the word of our testimony*" (Revelation 12:11). "Great Works are performed not by strength but by perseverance" (Samuel Johnson, 1709-1784). Success is failure turned inside out- The silver tint of the clouds of doubt- And you never can tell how close you are- It may be near when it seems afar- so stick to the fight when you're hardest hit- It's when things seem worst that you must not quit (Clinton Howell).



Cliff Brast

Shiloh Ministries gives the LORD honor and praise for lives that have been delivered from a life of slavery. We celebrate Kingdom Life here at Shiloh. All of our supporters make a tremendous contribution towards lives that forever are destined for eternity with God. We ask and encourage everyone to give financially to help with the cost of restoring lives. It cost approximately \$500.00 a month to house one man. The LORDS Ministry at Shiloh is free to the men who seek restoration. It is a walk of faith for our financial needs to be met every month. Would you please consider being a monthly supporter? God always speaks to those He has asked to give. We believe that His people will respond out of a heart of gratitude for what He has done & continues to do for them. Thank you, for your generosity in giving & co-laboring with us in the LORDS Ministry at Shiloh. (Shiloh Ministries is recognized by the IRS as a 501C3 Charitable Organization)

Please be in prayer with us for the following: Interior paneling for ministry buildings, frozen food & can goods for meals.

CONTACT US AT:

Shiloh Ministries

P.O. Box 10226

Liberty, TX 77575

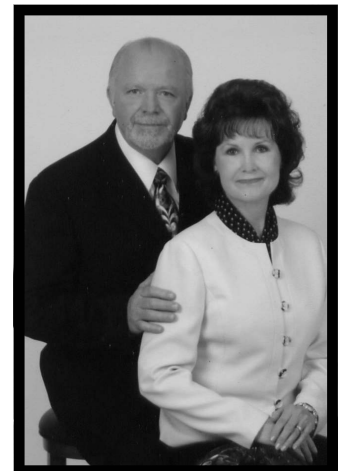
Phone: 936.334.8616

Fax 936.334.0061

E-mail: shilohmin@sbcglobal.net

Visit us on the web at

www.shilohmensministries.com



**Rocky & Debbie Fondren.
Founders of Shiloh Ministries.**