

We Must Work For What We Believe

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Many of you may be unfamiliar with the name, Paul Warfield Tibbets, Jr. I would hazard a guess that most young people have no idea who he is although at one time his name was probably almost as well known as the Beatles had been both here in the United States, and many other countries around the world. To some, his name is only a footnote to the historical event in which he participated. But to many, his name is synonymous with the event, and it either provokes the picture of a hero, or a villain. Much of that depends on which side of the historical event you were literally on philosophically, politically, or morally. Without his singular determined efforts to accomplish his particular set of responsibilities with a group of three other notable men, without hesitation he may have very well changed the course of history.

Paul Tibbets proved himself to be an above average pilot when he was commissioned as a second lieutenant and received his pilot rating at the Army's San Antonio Kelly Field in 1938. After capably following through on other assignments between 1938 and 1940, he was promoted to first lieutenant. In 1940-41 he served as a personal pilot for Brigadier General George S. Patton. Then, he was assigned to MacDill Field in Florida.

On December 7, 1941, during a routine flight out of MacDill, he heard about the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. Initially, he became part of a bomber group that was assigned to protect Tampa Bay in anticipation of German U-boats entering the bay.

He was eventually sent to England as deputy commander of the 97th Bomber Group, and led the first daylight heavy bombing mission over occupied France on August 17, 1942, just eight months after entering the war.

Subsequently, on October 9 he led the first American raid of over 100 bombers in Europe. However, due to poor bombing accuracy, there were

numerous civilian casualties. But the mission was still considered an overall success because it reached its target against heavy, almost overwhelming, enemy attack. Of the 108 bombers, 33 were shot down or had to turn back because of severe mechanical problems, or personal injuries.

The historian Stephen Ambrose wrote about Paul Tibbets, “. . . that by reputation, he was the best flyer in the Army Air Force. During the time leading up to the invasion of North Africa, Tibbets was one of two pilots selected for secret missions that included bearing the Supreme Allied Commander Dwight D. Eisenhower into dangerous areas for secret strategy meetings.”

A biographical account of Paul Tibbets recounts: “After he had flown 25 combat missions against targets in France with the 97th Bomber Group, he was transferred to North Africa as part of Major General Jimmy Doolittle’s 12th Air Force. For Tibbets, the war in North Africa introduced him to the realities of aerial warfare, and he claimed that he saw the real effects of bombing civilians, and losing brothers in arms—both terrible tragedies.”

After flying in over 40 combat missions in North Africa, he was recalled to the United States under orders from the Army Air Force chief of staff General Henry H. “Hap” Arnold who had requested an experienced bombardment pilot to help with the development of the troubled B29 Superfortress Bomber. It was a highly advanced bomber plagued with technical problems that had cost the lives of many test pilots including the chief test pilot of the project. He soon accumulated more flight time in the B29 than anyone else and became a major factor in making the B29 the most formidable bomber to be used in the Pacific because of his courageous tenacity.

Following a number of other assignments that involved training many others to fly the B29, he was chosen over two more senior officers as the one man (his superiors felt) who could solely carry out the responsibility of personnel selection, training, and execution under the most rigorously secret conditions for the delivery of the single most destructive device every created by men to that point—the atomic bomb.

Following all the work of the scientists and engineers of the Manhattan Project who developed the first atomic weapon, it became his sole responsibility to create a whole new bombardment wing—the 509th—of the Army Air Force with the single purpose of becoming experts in the delivery of nuclear weapons on their intended targets. He had been commissioned to autonomously select the site, personnel, and equipment to make sure that he could train the best of the best to accomplish simultaneous bomb attacks on both Europe and Japan while maintaining absolute secrecy of his mission. When ready, it would be his decision alone under the authority of the President to order the time of the attacks based on all the factors of preparation under his command.

Of course, by the time everything that needed to be done had been done, the Germans had capitulated, and the war was over in Europe. But there still remained the war in the Pacific against the Japanese and the unimaginable idea of the invasion of Japan. The invasion had been in the planning stages since 1943. The estimates of casualties ran into the millions. Japan was already preparing accordingly, reinforcing their home front with increased troop strength, training thousands of kamikaze pilots to take out ships, and kamikaze divers to take out landing craft. These kamikaze pilots and divers, the WWII version of today's terrorists suicide bombers, were extremely organized.

Paul Tibbets was well aware of what was at stake and used all of his training and expertise to put together the 509th Bombardment Wing for the definite purpose of delivering nuclear weapons.

As a side note: the 509th is still in existence today and is under the command of his grandson Brigadier General Paul Tibbets IV.

As has been written about Tibbets, we see a man of lofty character and standards, who was clear-minded in the missions he had to do, resting on his own personal convictions. Hold onto that thought.

Paul Tibbets died in 2007 at the age of 92. He had this to say in an interview in 2002 shortly after the World Trade Center attack. When asked if he ever had second thoughts about “the bomb,” he replied to the interviewer,

“Second thoughts? No. Look, number 1—I got into the Air Corps to defend the United States to the best of my ability. That’s what I believe in, and that’s what I worked for. Number 2—I had so much experience with airplanes, I had jobs with no particular direction on how to do it, and then I put this thing together with my own thoughts on how it should be done, because when I got the directive, I was to be self-supporting at all times. On the way to the target I was thinking, ‘I can’t think of any mistakes that I’ve made.’ Maybe I did make a mistake—maybe I was too assured—at 29 years of age, I was so shot full with confidence I didn’t think there was anything I could not do. Of course, that applied to airplanes and people. So I had no problem with it. I knew we did the right thing because even though a lot of people were going to die, we were going to save a lot more lives on both sides in the long run. We won’t have to invade Japan.”

He was finally asked about the terrorists (World Trade Center 2002) and what should be done, to which he replied, “Oh? I wouldn’t hesitate if I had the choice. I would wipe them out. You’re going to kill innocent people at the same time, but we have never fought a war anywhere in the world where it didn’t kill innocent people.”

Brethren, how often do we place ourselves on one side or the other of the untenable solutions of men, and align ourselves with those who may be of carnal lofty character (living according to what maybe noble character traits) still in the slavery of sin?

It is indeed our responsibility to proclaim (just as General Tibbets did), “That’s what I believe, that’s what I work for,” in a system of beliefs bound together in holiness through God’s Holy Spirit to bring us united in submission to His authority and standards of conviction for the job ahead.

Please turn to Micah 4.

Micah 4:1-7 Now it shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the LORD’S house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and peoples shall

flow to it. Many nations shall come and say, "Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob. He will teach us His ways, and we shall walk in His paths." For out of Zion the law shall go forth, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. He shall judge between many peoples, and rebuke strong nations afar off. They shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore. But everyone shall sit under his vine and under his fig tree, and no one shall make them afraid; for the mouth of the LORD of hosts has spoken. For all people walk each in the name of his god, but we will walk in the name of the LORD our God forever and ever. "In that day," says the LORD, "I will assemble the lame, I will gather the outcast and those whom I have afflicted; I will make the lame a remnant, and the outcast a strong nation; so the LORD will reign over them in Mount Zion from now on, even forever.

Now please turn to Obadiah.

Obadiah 17 "But on Mount Zion there shall be deliverance, and there shall be holiness; the house of Jacob shall possess their possessions."

Obadiah 21 Then saviors shall come to Mount Zion to judge the mountains of Esau, and the kingdom shall be the LORD'S.

Now to Isaiah.

Isaiah 30:18-21 Therefore the LORD will wait, that He may be gracious to you; and therefore He will be exalted, that He may have mercy on you. For the LORD is a God of justice; blessed are all those who wait for Him. For the people shall dwell in Zion at Jerusalem; you shall weep no more. He will be very gracious to you at the sound of your cry; when He hears it, He will answer you. And though the Lord gives you the bread of adversity and the water of affliction, yet your teachers will not be moved into a corner anymore, but your eyes shall see your teachers. Your ears shall

hear a word behind you, saying, "This is the way, walk in it," whenever you turn to the right hand or whenever you turn to the left.

Who are these coming in the name of God in Micah 4:5; saviors able to judge as in Obadiah; and those teachers in Isaiah who guide in the right direction? It is only those called (to godly holiness) and chosen (faithful) submissive to God's plan and purpose for each of us. That is what we must believe; that is what we must work for. God's standards alone must be driving our lives right now as we prepare for Jesus Christ's return.

While Colonel Tibbets was driven and preparing to the best of his ability according to his own standards and those of his society, there were people on the ground in Hiroshima that day also preparing to the best of their abilities according to their own standards of their society.

Think about this.

I am going to read a short narrative of that day from someone among those who held a different set of values from Colonel Tibbets.

“On the morning of August 6, 1945, I was a child in Hiroshima having just returned from a far away village where I had been evacuated. We had no idea that the Enola Gay was on its way with its grave mission. When the bomb was let go in the sky over Hiroshima, it unleashed a power so horrific that it defied the language of description. Even those of us who lived through it, we couldn't fathom our own experiences. Some people evaporated at the center. Hundreds of thousands were charred, and naked with physical distinctions no longer recognizable, their arms stretched forward, moving slowly, they fell to the ground; they floated down the rivers. My brother, cousin, and other cousins were among them. We were unable to rescue those buried alive under the collapsed buildings and burned to death. My mother was among them. We didn't know that this was only the beginning; we didn't know that the lethal power of radiation had penetrated to the marrow of our bones, destroying our organs, and changing our DNA. People continued to die suddenly, and strangely, bleeding from the mouth,

and often from any orifices. I nearly died myself while in a semi-conscious state running an extremely high fever for days.”

Brethren, these are the results of sin, and the rationalized standards of men. But after Christ's return, who will be there in the name of God as saviors and teachers to give direction to all those whose minds have been so seared by standards in opposition to God? Who will save them from the lies, teaching them the only way that will lead to life in the truth? It will only be those who have treasured our precious calling, choosing to put away the old man by the grace of God now. It will only be those who are no longer involved in and driven by the affairs of this world, who are living and working to the best of God's ability to prepare us to be kings and priests with Jesus Christ.

Last Sabbath, August 5, was the 72nd anniversary of Paul Tibbets' decision as he waited within striking distance of Japan on the island of Tinian in the Marianas. He alone made the final decision on that day that all was ready for dropping the atomic bomb on Hiroshima the next morning. Last Sabbath, August 5, was also exactly two months till the first day of the Feast of Tabernacles, and God's rehearsal of a critical part of His plan to bring all men to repentance, salvation, and knowledge of the truth. And today, August 12, is exactly two months until we will be considering our part (by the grace of God) in the Last Great Day of His plan as we keep the Eighth Day.

As you have been listening to this message (contrary to what many of you might think), it was not prepared by me with knowledge of this past week's world events, with the saber-rattling going on between the United States and Korea. Though apparently timely, as men set lines in the sand, and draw closer to God's fiery judgment, it was not planned that way by me, but certainly our God works—he always works.

The point is: are we really working for what we believe? Do we truly believe that God has set us apart to be holy as He is holy (like Ronny Graham wrote in today's CGG Weekly) so we can do our job to the best of God's ability in us in service to all who will come after us?

How are you going to work with someone who was incinerated in a horrific explosion by someone else they considered an enemy dog? How are you

going to help a strong-minded person like Paul Tibbets to understand that God's way and Word is the only way—that might does not make right? How are we going to help anybody else if we insist on carrying around the old man that was the product of the circumstances of our former lives—thinking like the world thinks, from the skewed perspective of any mind and spirit apart from God? How can we continue to entangle ourselves in this world's solutions that ultimately only make matters worse, and still expect to become holy as God is holy.

If God is perfecting us in His holiness, and that is what we believe, therefore that is what we must work for with clarity of purpose.

So I would like to suggest that you add to your study, prayers, and meditation, as we prepare for the fall holy days, and especially these Millennial holy days (two months from this past week, which culminate with the Eighth Day two months from this very day, looking forward to the judgment of all men).

Turn to John 17 and Jesus Christ's formal prayer before the Father.

John 17:1-3 Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You, as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him. And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.”

John 17:6-11 “I have manifested Your name to the men whom You have given Me out of the world. They were Yours, You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word. Now they have known that all things which You have given Me are from You. For I have given to them the words which You have given Me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came forth from You; and they have believed that You sent Me. I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours. And all Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine, and I am glorified in them. Now I am no longer in the world, but these are in

the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep through Your name those whom You have given Me, that they may be one as We are.”

John 17:14-22 “I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth. As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth. I do not pray for these alone [up to that point He had been talking about a special group of individuals], but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me. And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one.”

His specific prayer was for those who had been called to be in an intimate relationship with Him for those 3½ years as well as those who would be called after them to be united with the Father and the Son through their word. Keep the pattern in mind. God lays out a certain pattern and gives certain people responsibilities. Keep this pattern in your mind in considering your responsibilities of those saviors and teachers coming in the name of God with whom they have developed an intimate relationship over a period of time. This is that period of time.

Jesus Christ directly taught His apostles. We know Him and believe Him through their word. Will not the same pattern continue into the Millennium? Will the people called, chosen, and faithful spend all their time working for Him (which we heard through their word)?

Also within this first group of teachers we talked about, there seems to be one particular person, one person first among equals, so maybe we should spend a bit more time these next two months meditating about what Christ had to say. We are often hesitant to consider the aspect of Simon Peter’s placement because of the deception foisted on the world. Nevertheless,

because it seems an obvious reality when you put all the scriptures together that point to Peter's position as first among equals, we need to take note about what he has to say. Within his letters are some basic important instructions regarding separation unto holiness that should be the core of what we believe, which we should spend our time on now. It makes a great springboard preparing our minds for the Feast of Tabernacles and the Eighth Day.

First, turn to John 21. I want to draw a tie-in here.

John 21:15-22 So when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me more than these?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He said to him, "Feed My lambs." He said to him again a second time, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He said to him, "Tend My sheep." He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?" Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, "Do you love Me?" And he said to Him, "Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You." Jesus said to him, "Feed My sheep. Most assuredly, I say to you, when you were younger, you girded yourself and walked where you wished; but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will gird you and carry you where you do not wish." This He spoke, signifying by what death he would glorify God. And when He had spoken this, He said to him, "Follow Me." Then Peter, turning around, saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following, who also had leaned on His breast at the supper, and said, "Lord, who is the one who betrays You?" Peter, seeing him, said to Jesus, "But Lord, what about this man?" Jesus said to him, "If I will that he remain till I come, what is that to you? You follow Me."

I Peter 1:2-8 Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace be multiplied. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an

inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ, whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory.

I Peter 1:13-18 Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance; but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, because it is written, "Be holy, for I am holy." And if you call on the Father, who without partiality judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay here in fear; knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers.

In John 21 we see a man like us, who is more concerned with what was going on around him, even after being given specific orders to prepare to be a shepherd to all of Christ's sheep who had been given unto His care. He was so off focus because he was more concerned about the physical situation that he was going to be in, and where John was going to be.

However, in I Peter we see a different man who was driven completely by His love for Jesus Christ—his duty to those entrusted to his care, including you and me. I want to point out a very interesting connection Peter makes for us, alluding to his stumbling so we do not repeat it.

In John 21 Christ told Peter, “When you were young, you girded yourself, and walked where you wanted, but when you are old you will stretch forth

your hands, and another will gird you, and carry you where you do not wish.” Christ was telling Peter exactly how He was going to die. However, let us take a deeper look at this.

When running, the Jews girded their outer garments around them so as to not impede their walking or running. Peter had just done this very thing in John 21, when he girded himself, and jumped into the water and went charging through the water when he realized it was the Lord on the beach. However, now looking ahead in humility, Peter would be girded and led away to die just as Jesus Christ did.

Peter did not (in John 21) see this as an honor as derived from his remarks about John. However, it is this very thing Peter alludes to in I Peter 1:13 where he tells us to gird up the loins of our mind, so that what we believe is our responsibility before God to be holy as He is holy, so we also is what we work for.

The word used here means to prepare oneself for learning and thinking; to get one’s mind ready for action; to be ready to learn; to think; to be alert. How can we do preparation to be saviors and teachers (who come in the name of God) if we are sidetracked by all these other things that are going on around us? Those are not our responsibilities at this time.

Our responsibility now is to be united through God’s Holy Spirit; to be holy as He is holy, even though we could never be united in the flesh coming from so many different and perverted standards of social, ethical, and moral conduct.

We are alive today—together today, preparing today—to serve and teach the truth to people who will have minds so diametrically opposed to one another, they will need saviors and teachers who have spent a determined lifetime learning to be holy as God is holy. This is what we must believe, and this is what we must work for. This is why we will be keeping the Eighth Day (two months from this date) and the millennial Feast of Tabernacles, and those seven days preceding that. It is another opportunity for formal training to be holy as God is holy. And you will find many things to help you gird up the loins of your mind in preparation for that time within the next two months in the instruction from Jesus Christ through His faithful servant Peter.

So, let us continue to make sure that what we believe is what we work for day in and day out.

Turn to our final scripture in II Peter.

II Peter 3:1-18 Beloved, I now write to you this second epistle (in both of which I stir up your pure minds by way of reminder), that you may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us, the apostles of the Lord and Savior, knowing this first: that scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts, and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation."

For this they willfully forget: that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of water and in the water, by which the world that then existed perished, being flooded with water. But the heavens and the earth which are now preserved by the same word, are reserved for fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, without spot and blameless; and consider that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation—as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you, as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which untaught and unstable people twist to their own destruction, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures.

You therefore, beloved, since you know this beforehand, beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked; but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and forever. Amen.

This must be what we believe—this must be what we work for—with all the time that God has given us in this life.