



## WHO IS ON THE LORD'S SIDE? (CONT.)

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bered with Moses on the LORD'S side! Oh that this were always our only concern! What does the LORD require in this particular situation? By discerning first what is right, and being willing to do it without regard to the cost, we align ourselves with men like Moses and the Levites who answered his call.

### **Being on the LORD'S side will require a cost.**

I don't know how many others joined Moses on the LORD'S side besides the Levites (Ex. 32:26). I'd like to think that an overwhelming majority were on God's side, and that only a few "worthless fellows" remained. But what we do know is that three thousand rebels fell at the hands of their brethren that day – three thousand neighbors, friends, and family. I doubt the Levites knew when they chose the LORD'S side what an awful expectation would be required of them, but out of allegiance to the LORD, they complied anyway. I'm thankful to know that no matter how steep the cost is that we may be called upon to pay on the Lord's side, we will never be asked to do something so unbelievably difficult? This being the case, how much greater, then, is our duty to pay whatever cost is necessary when it is called for, in order to remain "on the LORD'S side? The Levites will rise up in judgment if we claim that anything the Lord asks of us is "too hard".

### **Trying to please both sides pleases no one.**

Thankfully, the NFL's kneeling issue seems to have died down, for now. But, in the heat of the controversy, Commissioner Roger Goodell learned this lesson well. His attempt to quell the national anthem protests by stating that he wants – but is not mandating – all players to stand for the anthem backfired drastically! In his mind, it probably seemed like a happy compromise; he hadn't decreed that the players stand during the anthem, but neither had he endorsed what the kneelers were trying to accomplish.

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What he learned was, "If you're not with us, you're against us." (Lk. 11:23) Thus, in an attempt to find a happy medium between the two sides, he made both sides unhappy with him.

We too need to "learn our lesson well". It simply won't work to seek to please men and God. James warned against double-mindedness. The prophet Elijah asked, "How long will you falter between two sides?" (1 Ki. 18:21 – ASV) Being caught in the middle between two sides is no fun at all. I remember what a relief it was for me in high school shortly after I became a Christian, when I finally accepted the fact that being popular and living for Jesus could not coincide. It wasn't until I was willing to let go of my need to be liked by everybody that living for Jesus became possible. At that point, the people who did like me, were the kinds of people I needed to be surrounding myself with anyway.

Let us make it our aim then, as the apostle John has said, to "keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in HIS sight (1 Jn. 3:22). The time may come when we too will have to stand up against seemingly insurmountable odds or an overwhelming pressure to compromise and fight for what is right, regardless of the outcome. Whether they are pressures on the job, at school, in the home, or in the church, may we not faint in the day of adversity!

- Ross Oldenkamp -

### **Do you know your Bible?**

- 1) *Whose betrayal of King David typifies Judas' betrayal of Jesus?*
- 2) *What did John command of the Pharisees who came to be baptized?*

*(Answers on back)*