

WD February 26, 2024

“The Right Person, Right Place, Right Time”

Irena (“Jolanta”) Sendlerowa (1910-2008) was as an infection control nurse and social worker during WWII in Nazi occupied Poland. She became head of the children’s section of the Żegota, the Polish underground Council for Aid to Jews. She is credited with the saving of 2500 Jewish children from the Ghetto in Warsaw 1942-1943. She worked for the Warsaw health department and had permission to enter the Ghetto, which had been created in 1940 to segregate the nearly 400k Jews from the community.

She used various means to smuggle the children out sometimes carrying them in suitcases or toolboxes. She even trained her dog to bark whenever a child started to cry or make any noise while passing the guards. This would cause the guard dogs to bark and provide excellent cover in the chaos. She risked her life each time. Once she rescued them, she would hide them in orphanages, convents, schools, hospitals, and private homes. She provided each child with a new identity, carefully recording in code their original names and placements so that surviving relatives could find them after the war.

In October of 1943 she was arrested and tortured by the Gestapo. Her legs and feet broken she was sentenced to die but the Żegota managed to rescue her before she could be executed. She assumed a new identity and continued working for the group but remained on crutches the remainder of her days. As history looks back upon Irena one can say that she was the right person in the right place at the right time.

Consider a Biblical example that I mentioned last Wednesday night; Obadiah, the palace administrator to King Ahab. Ahab was not an easy man to work for and his wife Jezebel was downright dangerous. Jezebel made it her mission to destroy anything of God. She set out to kill every single prophet of the God of Israel, especially Elijah. Her goal was to fill the land with Baal worship and to replace all the prophets with the false prophets. She would not succeed because God would not be mocked. At Mt. Carmel 450 of her prophets were slaughtered at the command of Elijah by the people of Israel.

In 1 Kings 21 we see on full display the true character of Ahab and Jezebel. When Naboth refused to sell his ancestral vineyard to the king, Ahab whined to Jezebel probably knowing that she would do his dirty work. And she did. She set Naboth up and got him convicted of treason. In the end he was executed and so was his family (2 Kings 9:26). Afterward the king without any remorse went to took possession of the vineyard. This would be the last straw as God pronounced a curse upon them both for their actions.

In the midst of this we have Obadiah who was said to be faithful to the Lord since his youth. That alone put him at great risk amongst this evil pair. It was no doubt a daily exercise of courage, faith, and caution because as Administrator he usually within reach of the king. Thankfully, King Ahab trusted Obadiah and God protected him. Obadiah did not waste his position but when Jezebel was searching out and killing the prophets he bravely hid 100 prophets of God in two caves. He also for a time supplied them with food and water and provisions from the King’s own cupboards, which I am sure was satisfying, but again very dangerous. It must have been hard to distinguish who in the palace may be trusted with such knowledge and who might betray him secret efforts. Obadiah did this at the height of Jezebel’s power and at the height of her slaughter of the prophets. So, when Elijah sent him to the King with the message from Elijah for the King do meet Elijah it was at great risk to his own life. Yet, it Obadiah did as he was commanded by Elijah and the actions only served to solidify a trust from the King. Once again, the right person at the right time at the right place.

Such examples are all over the scriptures. Joseph became the right hand of Pharaoh and was in a position that saved his family. Esther was in a position to go before the king of Persia to expose Haman’s plans to destroy all the Jewish people. Nehemiah was a cupbearer to the King of Persia and was in a position to help rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. Most importantly Jesus Himself we are told in Galatians 4:4 comes in the fullness of time. He alone is the right person to mediate between God and sinful humanity. Only in Him are we preserved in the cross and in His resurrection. He is the right person as the Word made flesh (John 1) and as the Good Shepherd who lays down His life for the sheep (John 10). He is the resurrection and life proven in the raising of Lazarus in John 11. He has risen from the dead and lives and reigns over all things. All who believe in Him will be saved. In Him a great multitude are saved and standing in heaven.

Could it be possible that God has called you to be the right person in the right place and the right time? Perhaps you are not where you are to rescue children from Nazis or prophets from Jezebels but you may be the

very person needed to bring grace to a difficult situation. Could be in the family. Could be in the church. Could be in a number of places.

You may be the one that stabilizes a work environment just by the way you go about things; words and actions. Maybe your work environment is tense. You probably don't particularly enjoy such a situation but perhaps you can bring some relief; an example of a godly way to talk with one another, not behind backs but saying something constructive and encouraging. Maybe you find something to compliment even for the one that isn't easy to be around. Perhaps your work ethic inspires a little more out of one other coworker. Maybe you are the one someone unexpectedly opens up to because you are approachable. Who knows how this may go. Maybe there is a risk that you take in doing something but for you doing the right thing seems impossible to ignore. Where does this courage come from? How did you say just the right things in the right way? God only knows sometimes. As we have seen from history, never underestimate what the Lord may accomplish with the right person in the right place at the right time. That person may be you.

Pastor Matt Woods
John 3:30