

### Setting Lofty Goals

Richard Wilkie wrote a book on the Lord's Prayer. In it, he described how Dr. Albert Schweitzer loved to play Bach on the organ. In fact, even while he was serving as a surgeon in the steamy jungles of Africa, he was still known throughout the world for his musicianship. He loved music, but he loved people more. One evening, as one of the nurses was preparing to leave, he stood at the gang plank preparing to bid her goodbye. As he took her hand he said, "Before you go, I want to recall an incident that happened several months ago. One night, you took a sick baby into your own bedroom so that you could care for it even as you slept. All through the night I heard cries coming from your room. Finally, in the wee hours of the morning, the tone in the baby's cry changed. Immediately I knew that the fever had broken and that the child would get better.

I'm supposed to be something of a musician but I want you to know that was the most beautiful music I've ever heard." Schweitzer sought for excellence as a musician but he also **sought for excellence in loving human beings**. That would be a lofty goal, wouldn't it - to be the most loving human being in our community? To be the most trustworthy? To be the most generous? **The call to follow Christ is the call to set lofty goals.** (by King Duncan from *Collected Sermons*, [www.Sermons.com](http://www.Sermons.com))

### The Buzzard, the Bat, and the Bumblebee

If you put a buzzard in a pen that is 6 feet by 8 feet and is entirely open at the top, the bird, in spite of its ability to fly, will be an absolute prisoner. The reason is that a buzzard always begins a flight from the ground with a run of 10 to 12 feet. Without space to run, as is its habit, it will not even attempt to fly, but will remain a prisoner for life in a small jail with no top. The ordinary bat that flies around at night, a remarkable nimble creature in the air, cannot take off from a level place. If it is placed on the floor or flat ground, all it can do is shuffle about helplessly and, no doubt, painfully, until it reaches some slight elevation from which it can throw itself into the air. Then, at once, it takes off like a flash. A bumblebee, if dropped into an open tumbler, will be there until it dies, unless it is taken out. It never sees the means of escape at the top, but persists in trying to find some way out through the sides near the bottom. It will seek a way where none exists,

until it completely destroys itself. In many ways, we are like the buzzard, the bat, and the bumblebee. We struggle about with all our problems and frustrations, never realizing that all we have to do is look up! That's the answer, the escape route and the solution to any problem! Just look up. (Source Unknown)

### **Believing in Jesus: Erasing Boundaries**

If we believe in Jesus, we know the boundaries are erased inside and out, life's for us all. Fred Craddock tells the story of a missionary sent to preach the gospel in India near the end of World War II. After many months the time came for a furlough back home. His church wired him the money to book passage on a steamer but when he got to the port city he discovered a boatload of Jews had just been allowed to land temporarily.

These were the days when European Jews were sailing all over the world literally looking for a place to live, and these particular Jews were staying in attics and warehouses and basements all over that port city.

It happened to be Christmas, and on Christmas morning, this missionary went to one of the attics where scores of Jews were staying. He walked in and said, "Merry Christmas." The people looked at him like he was crazy and responded, "We're Jews." "I know that," said the missionary, "What would you like for Christmas?"

In utter amazement the Jews responded, "Why we'd like pastries, good pastries like the ones we used to have in Germany." So the missionary went out and used the money for his ticket home to buy pastries for all the Jews he could find staying in the port.

Of course, then he had to wire home asking for more money to book his passage back to the States. As you might expect, his superiors wired back asking what happened to the money they had already sent. He wired that he had used it to buy Christmas pastries for some Jews.

His superiors wired back, "Why did you do that? They don't even believe in Jesus." He wired back: "Yes, but I do." (by David Reynolds from *Crossing Boundaries*)