

Heroes 'for a time such as this...'

By Frank Miele Daily Inter Lake
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What do Mike Huckabee, Ben Carson and Zell Miller all have in common?

If you think they all ran for president, you are two-thirds right. Huckabee and Carson are running for the Republican nomination right now, but Zell Miller never did run for president.

Nor did Tim Tebow, Oliver North or Gen. Jerry Boykin. But they all have something in common, too, along with Huckabee, Carson and Miller.

They've all been participants in the Stillwater Christian School's "For Such a Time as This" speaker series.

This week, I thought it would be timely to talk about some of those speakers, who are so much in the news these days, and at the same time applaud Stillwater Christian for being so perceptive about finding the difference makers in our society and bringing them to Kalispell to share with an eager audience.

Huckabee, Carson and Miller have all followed their conscience despite the jeers of the crowd or the potential for real damage to their own careers. That's why they fit into the theme of "For Such a Time as This" — a phrase that comes from the Book of Esther in the Bible.

Esther, a secret Jew who was selected by the king to be his wife, has to choose between her own safety and the well-being of her people, who are being threatened with extermination by the king's vizier, Haman. She is warned by her cousin Mordecai that she must use her power wisely, or suffer the consequences:

"Do not imagine that you in the king's palace can escape any more than all the Jews. For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance will arise for the Jews from another place and you and your father's house will perish. And who knows whether you have not attained royalty for such a time as this?"

Applied to all of us, that means we each have an obligation to use whatever is in our power to oppose evil, to speak truth and to go with God.

Zell Miller was a Democratic governor and senator from Georgia, who rose to fame in 2004 when he backed President George W. Bush's re-election against his own party's nominee, John Kerry. Miller famously said, "I didn't leave the Democratic Party; it left me." As a result Miller lost his Senate seat, but he gained the respect of a nation.

Neurosurgeon Ben Carson rose to political fame for speaking at the National Prayer Breakfast in 2013 and talking about our nation's moral decline in front of the great and powerful like President Obama and Vice President Biden. He was chided by the nation's progressives for his impudence (how dare he!) but the soft-spoken Carson also became a hero to many in our nation who are looking for a return to the traditions that made our country great. Today he is running second in many polls for the GOP nomination for president.

Huckabee, for his part, was recently scolded by the media elites for saying that President Obama's nuclear deal with Iran would "take the Israelis and march them to the door of the oven." Asked to apologize for his language, the former Arkansas governor politely declined. "It was the Iranians who invoked the imagery and very word holocaust; they have said that they have developed missiles that will deliver Israel to the Holocaust. Those are their words. Israeli officials regularly remind the people of Israel and the people of the world that the Iranians' intent is to wipe Israel off the map."

So, yes, what all three men have in common is that they have hewn to principle at a time when it is easy to surrender to the politically correct culture in order to get ahead.

Of course, the irony is that by following principle instead of conforming to expectations, Huckabee, Carson and Miller all rose to national prominence just as Esther and her cousin Mordecai did in ancient Persia (coincidentally modern-day Iran).

And now for the truly exciting news: Tim Tebow, the former Denver Broncos quarterback who is a hero not just because of his game play but also because of his Christian character, may be back in the NFL this fall after several years on the sidelines as a sportscaster.

ESPN reports that Philadelphia Eagles' coach Chip Kelly has been impressed with Tebow during preseason, and that Tebow looks like a lock to make the team barring something unforeseen happening. That would please a lot of folks who enjoy seeing success come to someone who deserves it, but if he doesn't make the team, you can bet that Tim Tebow will still be the same decent, honorable man he has been all along.

As he said during his "For a Time Such as This" speech in 2012, "I'm not any more special than anybody else. When you're humble, you can be a servant, and when you're a servant, you can be closer to what Christ was."

Tebow and the other speakers brought to Kalispell by Stillwater Christian are role models who teach us to respect honor and decency and demonstrate that standing up for righteousness is never a lost cause.

Frank Miele is managing editor of the Daily Inter Lake. If you don't like his opinion, stop by the office and he will gladly refund your two cents. E-mail responses may be sent to edit@dailyinterlake.com ©Daily Inter Lake. Reprinted with permission. dailyinterlake.com