

**Jeremy Ridd, Eagle Court of Honor  
9/24/2000  
by Mike Baird**

**Stand for Something**

At his farewell Doug Barnett related the story of Joseph F Smith:

In the fall of 1857 Joseph F. Smith, just 19 years of age, left his mission in Hawaii to return home. He came home by way of San Francisco, Los Angeles, and San Bernardino. "In southern California, just after the little train of wagons had traveled only a short distance and made their camp, several anti-'Mormon' toughs rode into the camp on horseback, cursing and swearing and threatening what they would do to the 'Mormons.' Joseph F. was a little distance from the camp gathering wood for the fire, but he saw that the few members of his own party had cautiously gone into the brush down the creek, out of sight. When he saw that, ... the thought came into his mind, 'Shall I run from these fellows? Why should I fear them?' With that he marched up with his arm full of wood to the campfire where one of the ruffians, still with his pistol in his hand, shouting and cursing about the 'Mormons,' in a loud voice said to Joseph F.

" 'Are you a "Mormon"?"

"And the answer came straight, 'Yes, siree; dyed in the wool; true blue, through and through.'

"At that the ruffian grasped him by the hand and said:

" 'Well, you are the ——— ——— pleasantest man I ever met! Shake, young fellow, I am glad to see a man that stands up for his convictions.' "

Columbine story:

## A time to be born, a time to die

**W**hen the Columbine killers finally reached Cassie Bernal, I don't know if the police SWAT teams had arrived. I don't know if the guys in the flak jackets and helmets were in position outside the high school, or if they'd yet run their risk analysis. Perhaps they were almost ready to brave the battle zone.

Up in the library, Cassie, all of 17, didn't have the luxury of a perimeter. She didn't have time to plot a tactical response when one of the gunmen slowly drew a bead on her and asked, "Do you believe in God?"



STEVE  
DUIN

If the police were still confused about what was happening inside Columbine, there was no such mystery in the library. Kids were dying. At the killers' whim. When the

shooters entered the room, they barked, "Who's ready to die?" then demanded that all the jocks stand up: "We're going to kill every one of you."

A few of the athletes huddled under tables or behind chairs immediately doffed those damning baseball hats. They weren't crazy. They might be Rebels, tried and true, but they weren't ready to die for ol' Columbine High.

As the shooters moved through the library, I don't know what betrayed Cassie Bernal as a creature of faith.

Perhaps she was wearing that slender gold cross around her neck or the bracelet inscribed "WWJD": What Would Jesus Do? Perhaps the killers remembered seeing her one morning before school began, standing with a few friends by the flagpole, their heads bowed in prayer.

### *Do you believe in God?*

The survivors of that wretched morning say Cassie paused. I suspect hers was a hesitancy borne of conviction, not confusion. She wasn't searching for the right answer, just the right words.

"Yes, I believe in God," she said, "and you need to follow along God's path."

With those words, he fired. With those words, she died.

I don't know, thankfully, what goes through your head when you fear a bullet is sure to follow. It's probably not a coincidence that the SWAT teams who have such experience, who've stepped through some frightening doors, played it safe at Columbine.

Knowing they were outgunned, they didn't rush to judgment . . . or to the library.

It's difficult to second-guess the cops when you spend most of your life safely parked out of harm's way. As Capt. C.W. Jensen, a former hostage negotiator with the Portland police, noted, "We train with a barricade mentality: You get things shut down, then decide what to do."

**Y**ou don't anticipate teenagers whose monstrous appetite for destruction mocks your indecisiveness. You don't anticipate the 17-year-old girl whose faith might be tested in your absence.

"Now that the unthinkable has happened, our challenge is to think through it," Jensen said. "This has hit a lot of us very deeply. A lot of police officers are now saying, 'We would go in, we would go to the sound of the gunshots, we would hunt these guys down and end it.'"

I don't know where we go from here. I don't know if it can get any worse than Columbine. But I hope the next time the cops face the unknowable, they will proceed with Cassie's faith — that they have found the right path — and with Cassie in mind.

Some people, you see, are still willing to die for their unblinking devotion to a slender, gold cross. While that brings solace to the angels and the saints, it leaves the rest of us gasping at the intersection of their courage and our loss.

These are extreme cases.

- More often it is in our daily lives that we have to stand for something.
  - The invitation to agree to a lie
  - The opportunity to cheat or to steal
  - The opportunity to follow the Savior or Satan occurs daily

Scout Law:

A Scout is trustworthy, loyal, helpful, friendly, courteous, kind, obedient, cheerful, thrifty, brave, clean and reverent.

Note similarity to 13<sup>th</sup> article of faith

Scout Oath

On my honor I will do my best to do my duty to God and my country and to obey the Scout Law; To help other people at all times; To keep myself physically strong, mentally awake, and morally straight.

The Boy Scouts have been attacked because of the language in the oath and the law.

- “Duty to God”

The Boy Scouts have been attacked because of commitment to the oath and law.

- Locally our the United Way is right now determining if \$ will be given to The boy Scouts because of the Boy Scouts ban on membership of avowed Gay people

Satan knows if he can ridicule, mock and tear down all that the Boy Scouts of America stands for, it will serve his cause.

President Hinkley (Standing for Something):

In standing for something there is sometimes loneliness and unpopularity.

Scouting teaches us to stand for something.

When we agree to live by the Scout Oath we agree to stand for something.

- Revere God and do our duty to him and others.

When we agree to live by the Scout law, we agree to stand for something.

- Person of character

Jeremy tonight is being honored tonight for his achievement.

- He worked hard,
- He met requirements
- He will receive recognition.

But more important to me is Jeremy has chosen to stand for something by becoming an Eagle Scout and being the type of person he is.

- I salute him for this.
- As his Scoutmaster and friend when he was a deacon, I am proud of him for this.

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