

Day 34 – Mar. 16

Popular business jargon informs us, “There is no ‘I’ in ‘team’.” Indeed, if one is part of a team, one is part of a community. And the whole community wins or loses, succeeds or fails, together. This is hard for our hyper-individualistic society, but the rule remains in some vestiges of our society. Sports teams, acting ensembles, choirs – everyone knows that the individual is only as good as the team.

In our reading today, we find two times when this idea of community comes into play. First, when David and his men run across an Ethiopian collapsed in a field, they immediately care for him. The Amalekites, the evil bad guys of this story, have abandoned this man, one of their slaves, along the way as soon as he got sick. This is a practical reality for armies in this time, but nonetheless, the example of the Expendable Teammate shines brightly.

In contrast, our heroes (David and company) teach what it is to be a community. When 1/3 of the men are too exhausted to even cross a river, they are left behind, but not abandoned. They are left in their own care to rest up, and when David returns they receive their equal portion of the spoils. The lesson here is that villains abandon their vulnerable and weakened brothers, while heroes maintain the team.

Think of the groups you are part of. In fact, take a minute and list as many as you can. Open another document or grab a sheet of paper, but take a minute to write down all the groups that include you. From classes to work teams, from church to neighborhoods, from nations to species, every one of us is part of a community. Next, consider how those communities treat their weaker, vulnerable members. Each will be different, so take another minute and write down a note or two next to each group you listed before about how they treat their weakest members. Finally, consider how you might shift the group toward a more caring attitude and behavior. Some of us have lots of control over the behavior of a group, and some little. But each of us can shift a group toward love and community. How might you do this today?