

Unlikely Heroes

How many people remember the name Bill Mazerowski? He was a light-hitting second baseman for the Pittsburgh Pirates baseball team in 1960. Although one of the best defensive second basemen of all time, he was anything but a power hitter at the plate. Yet, he is most remembered for hitting the only series-winning walk-off home run in history. His 9th inning home run won the deciding game 7, defeating the powerful Bronx Bombers. The "Goliath-like" Yankees boasted a line-up that included Mickey Mantle, Roger Maris and future hall of famers Bobby Richardson, Tony Kubek and Yogi Berra. Mazerowski was an unlikely batting hero but was eventually inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame, partially because of his dramatic home run. I remember it well. As I hurried out of Rogers Middle School at 3:37 PM I listened to the radio announcer describe the action: "Here's a high fly ball going deep to left. This may do it. Back to the wall goes Berra ... it is ... over the fence, home run, the Pirates win!" It was pegged as the most dramatic World Series game of its time. Who would have anticipated that little Bill Mazerowski would be the star?

God works through unexpected people to do His most important work – to be His stars. Jesus came to earth in the most humble settings and was born into a family headed by a lowly carpenter. So much for royalty and prestige! Of the 11 surviving disciples after the death of Judas, God chose Peter to lead them. He was an unlikely choice. Peter was the guy who denied Jesus three times and hid from the Roman authorities during the arrest and execution of Jesus. Jesus forgave Peter (John 21) and essentially said, "because you were the biggest failure you will become the greatest leader." Many key biblical figures begged God to choose someone else "more worthy" to do the tasks that needed to be done. None of God's biggest stars thought they were worthy. That is why they were chosen.

New York					Pittsburgh				
ab	r	h	rbi		ab	r	h	rbi	
Richardson 2b	5	2	2	0	Virton cf	4	1	2	2
Kubek ss	3	1	0	0	Groat ss	4	1	1	1
DeMaestri ss	0	0	0	0	Skinner lf	2	1	0	0
Long ph	1	0	1	0	Nelson 1b	3	1	1	2
McDougald 3b	0	1	0	0	Clemente rf	4	1	1	1
Maris rf	5	0	0	0	Burgess c	3	0	2	0
Mantle cf	5	1	3	2	Christopher pr	0	0	0	0
Berra lf	4	2	1	4	Smith c	1	1	1	3
Skowron 1b	5	2	2	1	Hoak 3b	3	1	0	0
Blanchard c	4	0	1	1	Mazerowski 2b	4	2	2	1
Boyer 3b-ss	4	0	1	1	Law p	2	0	0	0
Turley p	0	0	0	0	Face p	0	0	0	0
Stafford p	0	0	0	0	Cimoli ph	1	1	1	0
Lopez ph	1	0	1	0	Friend p	0	0	0	0
Shantz p	3	0	1	0	Haddix p	0	0	0	0
Coates p	0	0	0	0					
Terry p	0	0	0	0					
Totals	40	9	13	9	Totals	31	10	11	10

New York 000 014 022 -9
Pittsburgh 220 000 051 -10
E-Maris. DP-New York 3. LOB-New York 6, Pittsburgh 1. 2B-Boyer. HR-Nelson, Skowron, Berra, Smith, Mazerowski. S-Skinner.

New York						Pittsburgh							
ip	h	r	er	bb	k	ip	h	r	er	bb	k		
Turley	1	2	3	3	1	0	Law	5	4	3	3	1	0
Stafford	1	2	1	1	1	0	Face	3	6	4	4	1	0
Shantz	5	4	3	3	1	0	Friend	0	2	2	2	0	0
Coates	2/3	2	2	2	0	0	Haddix, W	1	1	0	0	0	0
Terry, L	1/3	1	1	1	0	0							

T-2:36. A-36,683.

So, why did God choose the weak to be bold? Shouldn't He have chosen the influential, wealthy and accomplished for an easy victory? Instead, God chose humble, faithful people who could be inspired by His Grace to succeed instead of relying on reputation or power. *For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them (Ephesians 2:8-10).* Accomplishing God's tasks doesn't involve flexing our muscles or showing off our exceptional I.Q. Instead, the chosen ones have to rely on God for direction, strength and wisdom. It is not about us, but about what God can do through us. It is about salvation: a gift from God rather than something we personally earn.

What this means for you and me is that there is no reason why we should turn God down when He wants us to do something. If we feel under-qualified we only need to turn to God to help us through a task. Remain humble as He empowers you to accomplish great things in His name. The familiar verse from Philippians says, *"I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength (4:13).* If we are doing something for God – in His name – He will see us through. He will make us successful because we are honoring Him in our service.

Ralph Terry threw the pitch that the diminutive Bill Mazerowski hit over the 405 sign in left field. The Yankee Hall of Fame outfield of Mantle, Maris and Berra could only watch as the ball sailed over their heads into the left field stands at Forbes Field. Ball game over. Mission accomplished! You can be God's version of Bill Mazerowski, accomplishing what no one thought possible or likely. Trust God when He asks you to do something in His name. Our goal is not the Baseball Hall of Fame but living a life for Christ so we will have the possibility of something much better – Salvation.

Question: Are you weak enough for God to use for His purposes?

Scripture: *Consider your own calling, brothers. Not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. Rather, God chose the foolish of the world to shame the wise, and God chose the weak of the world to shame the strong, and God chose the lowly and despised of the world, those who count for nothing, to reduce to nothing those who are something, so that no human being might boast before God (1 Corinthians 1:26-29).*

Prayer: Heavenly Father. We are right to think of ourselves as incapable of accomplishing great things. It is only through you that we are empowered to do anything you desire for us. We trust you to lead us. Amen.