



SHIELD OF FAITH

"Take Up the Shield of Faith" - Paul

Friday October 4, 2019

For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will save it. — Luke 9:24

America's Satanic Lullaby

<https://email.althahosting.com/campaigns/wm938vfowy12f>

I'm 58 years old. I remember ending my teen years carrying a burden of guilt earned by teenage sins. My parents raised me in the neighborhood United Methodist Church. That early introduction to Christianity's system of the world saved me. I was taught right from wrong as a child. Jesus Christ was always right. Mankind was fallen. He is often wrong.

The cognitive dissonance forced into my brain by the communist government run "public" school I attended sought resolution. Popular media reinforced and exacerbated the chaos in my life. God didn't create humans to live in perpetual dissonance. He made us for the true ... the good and the beautiful.

After I deepened my commitment to Jesus Christ in my late teens I read the four gospels; Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. I read the entire New Testament, and much of the Old. Verses like the one above helped me resolve some of the chaos and dissonance that had come to dominate my thinking and actions.

It is heroic.

I was drawn back to the George Lucas movie narrative of Star Wars nine times in a related attempt to resolve the chaos and dissonance in my mind, soul and spirit. Luke Skywalker is heroic. I identified with him. He tapped into something spiritual that the movie made real. The narrative is more eastern than western theologically. The force attracted my distracted soul, however, because it was other, powerful and real in the movie.

When I deepened my commitment to Jesus I tapped into that force, in a sense. One profound difference between Lucas' force and Jesus Christ is that Jesus Christ really is real. He's God, and he's personal. He's so much more than a force.

Christianity is nothing if it isn't historical. At the heart of the faith isn't just a religious system of the world that is practical in terms of helping make people and cultures righteous. At the heart of Christianity is *the* God who became *the* Man in real time. God came into our humanity through a woman. The virgin Mary became miraculously pregnant and gave birth to God.

The devil created the chaos and cognitive dissonance in me. Jesus Christ saved me from all that by tenderly inviting me to lose my life. And he didn't require that I do so in the context of a galactic battle by saving the princess along with the rebel alliance.

Continued on the back

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He did, however, call me to stand with Him no matter what it cost me. Every human needs that relationship with God. From it springs real worship, love and courage. Christian virtues are infused into the believer by this absolute surrender.

We are to take up His Cross every day of our lives. This symbol of cruel torture and suffering is ours to bear, as well as Christ's. Each of us have our own unique Cross that we must bear. Jesus Christ provides the grace and strength by way of His example. And the Holy Spirit is in us to assist.

Luke Skywalker was taught to surrender also. The enhancement of his powers in conflict with evil was provided by the impersonal force with which he communed during periods of surrender. Christianity is so much more ... powerful.

Christianity calls us to the supreme personal surrender of losing our life FOR HIM. Saints aren't martyred for an impersonal force. Christian saints lose their lives for Jesus Christ, the God who is intimately acquainted with our human weaknesses and struggles. Martyrs are made every day. They inspire greatness and nurture salvation in the world.

A friend from Maine emailed me this account the other day.

"Recently I read a story of an Iranian couple that came to America to escape persecution and the wife told her husband, 'We have to go back.' When he said, 'Why?' She responded, 'America is in the grip of a satanic lullaby. They are sleepy. I am growing sleepy here. There we never knew every day we stepped outside our home if we would live or die for our faith. We were always on the alert, always willing to die for our faith. Here we are being lulled into apathy, a threat greater than persecution one of apathy and sleepiness in our walk with God.'"

The greatest thing that ever happened to me was being condemned unanimously by the Senate of Maine in 2004. I poked the political fornicating bear a little too hard. I am still integrating that particular surrender into my soul. That was a kind of martyrdom. It was a spiritual blessing.

God always brings good out of the evils He allows. Christians above all others have the power to know this, and live every moment with this kind of faith.

For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will save it. — Jesus Christ.

Amen.