

Lessons from Molly Pitcher

1 Timothy 6:11-12

Introduction: “On June 28th, 1778, Mary Hays McCauly watched as her husband, John Hays, marched into the battle of Monmouth to help secure America’s freedom. While the other wives hurried to safety, Mary lingered as she heard cries from the battlefield. With the temperature over 100 degrees, Mary saw soldiers falling from dehydration. Abandoning all fear, she ran to a nearby stream, filled a pitcher with water, and began making trip after trip into the heat of battle. Her continued efforts earned her the affectionate nickname, “Moll of the pitcher” or Molly Pitcher.

A “moll” was an old English term meaning girlfriend. It was also a nickname of that time for Mary. Hence, Mary was the best girlfriend any soldier could have in the heat of battle as she came to their aide. But the story doesn’t end there.

“After making many runs, she was on another run when she saw her husband slumped over his cannon. Rushing to his side, she found him unconscious from exhaustion and dehydration. Then to the amazement of all who were nearby, she took the rammer staff from her fallen husband’s hands and hollered, “Load!” Mary served as the regiment’s cannoneer for the rest of the battle.” [Darrell Woodard, “Lessons from Molly Pitcher”]

Molly Pitcher provides an excellent object lesson.

I. Like Molly, we can’t ignore the battle.

A. In the great scheme of things, we might not think our role as a Christian includes being in the battle. After all, I’m not a preacher, teacher or an Elder. Perhaps I’m a new convert, a woman; or just a teenager. Even though our abilities or position in life might be limiting, that does not mean we can not contribute in some small way.

B. Mary saw the battle, saw a need and contributed what she could (Matt. 10:42).

C. We too have opportunities.

II. Like Molly, we can all carry water.

A. The simple tasks of Mary giving water to fallen soldiers and helping to load the cannons overshadowed all the efforts of all the soldiers on the battlefield. Why do we remember Molly Pitcher but fail to remember one soldier’s name that died on the battlefield that day? She distinguished herself because she did what she was **not** expected to do. Jesus would recognize that as a profitable servant (Luke 17:7-10).

B. We don't remember the soldiers because soldiers on the battlefield are expected to endure hardship (2 Tim. 2:3-4).

1. Molly (though not a soldier) didn't concern herself with the affairs of this life. She wasn't concerned if she got shot while she ran pitcher after pitcher of water to the soldiers who needed it. Nor did she concern herself with the fact she could die while serving in the battle as a cannoneer.

2. If we are concerned that we might get hurt in our fight for the Lord, we won't be pleasing to him.

C. We too distinguish ourselves when we do what we were not necessarily expected to do (Matt. 25:31-40).

D. We are expected to consider our brethren's needs (Phil. 2:3-5).

E. If we ignore the obvious needs of our brethren, we will not go unpunished (Matt. 25:41-46).

III. Like Molly, we can take on another's burden.

A. Can you imagine Molly looking at her unconscious husband, taking the ramming rod out of his hand while yelling, "Load!" If Molly didn't take his burden, who would? That would have been one less gun in the battle. But again, she didn't think of herself and did what was needed to be done.

B. We too need to think of the greater good for our fellow brethren (Gal. 6:1-10; Jas. 1:27; 1 Cor. 10:33).

C. Like the example of the Good Samaritan just in a different setting (Lk. 10:30-37).

Conclusion: "In response to her heroics, General George Washington himself issued Molly Pitcher a warrant as a non-commissioned officer. And in 1822, Mary was awarded an honor unprecedented to a female in that era; a military pension for her combat service during the revolutionary war." [Darrell Woodard, "Lessons from Molly Pitcher"]

We too will receive an unprecedented reward for our faith in battle (1 Tim. 6:11-12; 1 Pet. 1:3-9). The reward is the salvation of our souls!