

## WOULD YOU PLEASE STAND UP?

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We usually begin the day by “getting up” or by getting out of bed. Next, we stand up. Then if we have our balance in order, we move out. The older we get the harder it is to climb out of bed and to stand up. Sometimes simply rising up out of a chair becomes quite an ordeal if we are feeling “stove up” that day. There are, however, various reasons why we must, on occasion, stand up. Let us consider briefly a few passages where there were excellent reasons for someone to stand up.

**Psalm 35:1, 2.** “Plead my cause, O Lord, with them that strive with me: fight against them that fight against me. Take hold of shield and buckler, and stand up for mine help.” The psalmist continues to plead for divine assistance against his enemies. In spite of the fact that the psalmist had treated others well, he asserts that “They rewarded me evil for good to the bereaving of my soul” (v. 12). Because of the horrible treatment he is receiving from his enemies, he calls on God to “keep not silence” (v. 22) and to “Stir up thyself, and awake to my judgment, even unto my cause, my God and my Lord” (v. 23). There are times when, like the psalmist, we approach the throne of God beseeching his marvelous, marvelous help in situations where that help is all that can do us good.

**Acts 3:6, 7.** Peter and John had no silver or gold to give the lame man who was daily carried to the door of the temple in Jerusalem. But Peter told him that they would give him what they had. “In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth walk. And he took him by the right hand, and raised him up: and immediately his feet and his ankle-bones received strength.” It was by the faith of Peter and John in the name of Jesus that power was made available to strengthen the feet and ankle-bones of the lame man. When the lame man stood up, there was clear indication that divine power had been received. Later when Paul and Barnabas came to the idolatrous town of Lystra, they found a certain cripple, a man “impotent in his feet” who had been that way from birth. This man heard Paul speaking and came to believe what Paul was saying. Paul, noting the arrival of faith, said, “Stand upright on thy feet. And he leaped up and walked” (v. 10). This time, the faith was in the man who needed to be and who desired to be healed as well as in Paul whereas in Acts 3, the faith was in the preachers alone who healed the lame man. But in both cases divine power arrived for the healing. And men stood up. There was clear proof that a miracle had been performed.

**Acts 10:25, 26.** The Gentile soldier in Caesarea, Cornelius by name, was waiting on the arrival of someone by the name of Simon Peter. An angel of God in a vision had told Cornelius to send for Peter, and Cornelius did just that. As time approached for Peter’s arrival, Cornelius gathered together his kinsmen and his near friends. “And when it came to pass that Peter entered, Cornelius met him, and fell down at his feet, and worshipped him. But Peter raised him up, saying, Stand up; I myself also am a man” (v. 25, 26). Evidently, Cornelius meant no harm. He was trying to show proper respect, but went too far. Let us not be too hard on Cornelius for his mistake, however. He had already been visited in a vision by “an angel of God” who is also referred to as “a holy angel” (vs. 3, 22), and he was expecting someone who would come

and bring him and his associates information from the Lord (v. 33). So, when Peter showed up, he thought it proper to fall down before this man sent to him from God. However, Peter thought it an extreme reaction, and regardless of his good intention, said to Cornelius, "Stand up; I myself also am a man" (v. 26). Regardless the credentials of any man, even a man sent by God, a man is just a man. All men are still just men. We risk eternity and may well risk our good fortunes on earth when we as men forget that humbling fact (cf. Acts 12:20-23).

**Revelation 19:10.** After being assured that Rome would fall, that the blood of brethren was going to be divinely avenged, and after hearing praise being given to God, being then told to write down some important material, John falls down before the angel. "And he saith unto me, See thou do it not: I am a fellow-servant with thee and with thy brethren that hold the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy" (Rev. 19:10). Later, following the angelic delivery of more information to John, John again falls down before the feet of this angel. "And he saith unto me, See thou do it not: I am a fellow-servant with thee and with thy brethren the prophets, and with them that keep the words of this book: worship God" (22:9). Certainly in rank men are below angels (Heb. 2:7), and angels are just angels; they are not God. We are to worship God, and God alone (cf. Ex. 20:3). 📖