

# Neutral, We Cannot Be

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There are times and circumstances in our lives when we want to avoid disagreements, refuse to get involved or fail to take a stand. There are situations where being neutral seems to be a safe place.

Tom C. McKenney's book titled *Jack Henson's One-Man War* tells the story of a man who lived near Dover, Tennessee, who tried to be neutral during the Civil War. Jack opposed Tennessee seceding from the Union and he did not want to get involved in the War, so he chose to be friendly to both sides. During the early stages of the war he befriended both General Grant and the Confederates. One day a Union patrol found his two young sons hunting near their home and they proceeded to kill both of them and mutilate their bodies. Jack Henson would remain neutral no longer and he began a one-man war against the Union forces, killing over one hundred Union officers and enlisted men.

How does this story apply to us today? We are not in the mist of a civil war nor do we have to make similar choices that affect our physical being. But are there not times in our daily interactions with people when we appear "neutral" and do not respond appropriately to comments by friends and neighbors about God, Jesus, and the Bible? Do we choose not to talk about our faith in order to avoid disagreements and the possibility of being offensive? Are there opportunities to share our faith and "the reason for the hope in us" but we remain silent and choose to quietly sit on the sidelines?

Jack discovered, at great cost, a biblical principle that one cannot always safely sit on the sidelines. Sometimes we must make clear choices. Following occupation of the Promised Land, Joshua told the Israelites *to choose this day whom you will serve* (Josh. 24:15). Jesus said you cannot serve two masters (Matt. 6:24a). We cannot be neutral and be a disciple of our Lord.

Obviously, there are inappropriate times to discuss religion but I dare say we have more opportunities to share the hope that is in us than the number of times we shouldn't.

Dear God, give us courage to take advantage of these opportunities.

For the elders,  
Don Denton