

FOURTH QUARTER STRATEGIES - March 12, 2016

Do you have true grit? Grit is standing up for what you know is right. It requires a certain resolve and perseverance. One of my favorite movie characters of all times is Marshal Rooster Cogburn played by John Wayne in the original production of *TRUE GRIT*. This may well have been John Wayne's best ever performance capping a 50-year movie career. What I remember is simply the tenacious attitude he portrayed as he tracked down Mattie Ross's father's killer with Mattie and Texas Ranger Le Bouef by his side. Casting John Wayne in this role was simply genius!

Enough about the movie. Now let's take a hard look at grit itself and just how it applies to all of our lives today. We need to take a stand for what we know is right and I can't think of a more important banner to carry than the banner of Christ! Once I accepted Christ as my Savior and Lord in 1984 I quickly realized how much my past actions were displeasing to Him. Over the past three decades and more, I continually strived to be more in His will. It's been an ongoing process that's been filled with God's disciplining me again and again. I'm so glad He cares about me enough to take me out to the wood shed and help me to better see His will for my life. Through it all I believe I'm developing true grit.

Recently, the Christian life seems to have become more challenging than ever to live. There are so many ideas floating around and everyone claims to have their own truth. Information runs rampant through the internet and many take what they read and hear to be the gospel! What they have done is bought into the hype of false hope found on the premise of someone's ideals. Real hope only lies in one place and I'm so glad I was introduced to the person of Christ when I was forty years old. Yes, I did my research and realized that the Bible was true and it provided me with all the answers I needed to life's most difficult questions.

True grit requires the Truth! Without Truth it's possible to easily fall for the lies of this world. The Truth accompanied with our personal grit enables us to persevere in accomplishing goals despite obstacles that will certainly cross our paths. We can do this with passion, knowing that we are in God's will and He will be pleased with our direction in life. And, one day we'll certainly hear Him say to us, "Well done good and faithful servant." That's finishing well!

The Rooster Cogburn's of this world are seldom understood. They are chided for not fitting in to the ways of this world. They are seen as peculiar people, yet unique and focused on what they know they must do in life. The world does not have to understand who they are and why they do what they do. And for those who follow Christ, all that matters is that we are in God's perfect will for our lives. I trust you find His will for your life through prayer and reflection and experience the joy that will certainly follow from that day forward.

Here to serve,

Jim Langley, CLU

Passages to Ponder: Psalm 119:160; John 1:14; Romans 1: 21-25; Romans 2: 5-7; Romans 15:4

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Psalm 119:160 New King James Version (NKJV)

¹⁶⁰The entirety of Your word *is* truth,
And every one of Your righteous judgments *endures* forever.

John 1:14 New King James Version (NKJV)

The Word Becomes Flesh

¹⁴And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

Romans 1:21-25 New King James Version (NKJV)

²¹because, although they knew God, they did not glorify *Him* as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. ²²Professing to be wise, they became fools,²³ and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man—and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things.

²⁴Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves, ²⁵who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.

Romans 2:5-7 New King James Version (NKJV)

⁵But in accordance with your hardness and your impenitent heart you are treasuring up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, ⁶who “will render to each one according to his deeds”: ⁷eternal life to those who by patient continuance in doing good seek for glory, honor, and immortality;

Romans 15:4 New King James Version (NKJV)

⁴For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.