

The Statesman is willing to take risks (political risks) in order to do the right thing and achieve his/her vision

When the Statesman gains an understanding that our Creator has a plan that is knowable by His creation and that we may participate in, it provides a confidence that gives the strength to act boldly and decisively. The Statesman is driven by hope resulting from understanding God's plan. Behind the clear visionary leadership is a confidence in the future based upon a conviction there is a force for good — Yahweh, Jehovah, God — superintending the world and our lives, and that His plan is good, knowable and achievable. He has instructed us:

*Those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.*¹

The best source of hope is complete confidence in Almighty God. Then, our hope is based upon the confidence that there is a good God working on our behalf to accomplish His plan.

Hope leads us to take action.

*Therefore, since we have such a hope, we are very **bold**.*²

*The people who know their God will **display strength and take action**.*³

Two of the great displays of statesmanlike behaviour were the issuing of the Emancipation Proclamation by President Abraham Lincoln on 22 September 1862, freeing all slaves in areas that were still in rebellion against the Union; and the passage by the House of Representatives on 31 January 1865 of the Thirteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, abolishing slavery in the United States.

President Lincoln expended great political capital in both cases. In the case of the Emancipation Proclamation, he was certain that by taking such a bold position, he would not be re-elected in the upcoming 1864 Presidential election. And yet, he was confident he was doing the right thing in issuing the Emancipation Proclamation. He was willing to take the risk because he knew it was the correct thing to do, even though this action would likely work against his continuing in office. To him, using the authority of office to correct this injustice was more important than holding this high position.

In the case of the Thirteenth Amendment, the U.S. Senate had already passed the resolution the previous year, but it had failed in the House of Representatives over the issue of states' rights. Again, he expended immense political capital to gain the passage of the Thirteenth Amendment 119-56. The requirement for a two-thirds majority in order to proceed to the states for ratification mandated that the passage of the resolution have bipartisan support. Hence, the focus of Lincoln's energy was on those from the opposition, drawing many to support the resolution who had voted against it along party lines the year before.

I am convinced that recognizing that there is Creator operating according to His plan for good, which we as human beings may know and participate in implementing, is a tremendous motivation for moving ahead aggressively. Although the risks we take may be political, insofar as we know His mind, we may be confident we are doing the right thing.

It is with this foundation in mind that I am inspired by the remarks of President Theodore Roosevelt:

It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat.⁴

References

1. *Bible*, Isaiah 40:31.
2. *Ibid.*, 2 Corinthians 3:12.
3. *Ibid.*, Daniel 11:32.
4. Excerpt from the speech "Citizenship In A Republic" delivered at the Sorbonne, in Paris, France on 23 April, 1910.