

Star Trek

A Man of Two Worlds

In the 2009 movie, *Star Trek*, Spock struggles with having parents of two very different worlds. His mother is human, his father Vulcan. Those two cultures have substantial differences in their values – most notably humans value emotion and feeling, whereas Vulcans value reason to the exclusion of emotions. (Does this remind anyone of our own history? Think Renaissance and Enlightenment.) Spock's struggle to choose between his two heritages has obvious implications for our current world as we fluctuate between giving higher value to emotion and reason alternatively. I am sure it is no coincidence that his father represented the logical, reasoning side while his mother represented the emotional, feeling side. You don't have to have a Vulcan father and human mother to have that same heritage. Almost any book on male/female relationships will mention the tendency of our genders toward emphasizing one side or the other.

There is another more important connection that the Christian may draw from Spock's struggle, however. Spock's father tells him, "You will always be a child of two worlds, and fully capable of deciding your own destiny. The question you face is: which path will you choose?" Christians too have to choose between the two worlds they find themselves caught between: the earthly and the heavenly. Once they know Christ, they belong to a heavenly kingdom, but must live in the earthly kingdom for a time. The earthly kingdom has values which are often diabolically opposed to the heavenly kingdom. Just as Spock, they are continually faced with which path they will choose. Only in Spock's case, there is not a right or wrong answer to the question. For Christians the answer is critical.

Legacy of a Hero

James T. Kirk is a playboy who has done nothing significant with his life until he receives a challenge from an officer. The officer, Christopher Pike, says, "Your father was captain for twelve minutes and in that time saved 800 lives including you and your mother – I dare you to do better." This is the turning point for James Kirk. Previously he thought that twelve minutes as captain was a waste of his father's life. But in a new light, he realizes that it only took twelve minutes for his father to be a hero. He wants to be a hero like his Dad. There is something in all of us that longs to be great, that longs to be a hero. And it is the life of a hero which inspires others to do the same.

The example of Jim Kirk's father, George Kirk, who laid down his life for his family and 800 others, is more significant than a simple call to live the life of a hero. It's a reminder of the life of Christ. Christ too had a short life. He only spent 3 years in ministry, yet in that small time he changed the world and his death offered salvation to all humanity. And his example has inspired countless numbers of people to change their lives as they follow him.

Questions for Discussion:

- Do you ever feel you were made for something greater, something more, a higher calling?
- Do you think George Pike was a kind of Christ figure in the movie? Why/Why not? What is your response to his character's actions? What is your response to Christ's actions?
- Do you ever feel the tension between reason and feeling? To which do you tend to lean?
- In what ways do you think you have had to answer the question "which path will you choose?"
- Do you feel you have had to choose between heaven and earth or Christ and the world?