

# The Praying Seminole

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Four men stood gazing toward a field which at any other time would be the most peaceful of conditions. Today was different. These men feared to cross the three plus acres of open expanse because snipers were positioned to kill anyone traversing the area. You see, these four were soldiers who had been separated from their platoon earlier that morning during heavy fighting.

“So, does anyone have a suggestion as to how we can cross this pasture without being made a target?” one man asked.

The leader of the group was a second lieutenant with little combat experience, but he made up for this lack with character. His men trusted him when he spoke saying, “we desperately need some type of distraction to divert the enemy from our crossing.”

With a sarcastic tone a soldier responded. “Are you nuts? That pasture is more than a hundred yards across. What type of distraction can we initiate that will last long enough to get us across?”

The Lieutenant was angered by the uncontrolled response. However, he understood why the man felt as he did. “I know it looks insurmountable, but it is not. I will think of something.”

Leaning to address the man who had blurted the earlier response the Lieutenant explained that he should never again show disrespect to him in front of the others. If he did he would take physical action and the soldier would not enjoy the action taken. The message sent by the Lieutenant was clear and seemed to be what the man needed. Their leader was not panicking and took charge actively looking for ways of escape. Backtracking into the forest was impossible because the enemy was quickly advancing on their location. Something would have to be done now or the four would be taken prisoner.

Through all that was happening one soldier never said a word. He was a Seminole Indian standing six feet four inches tall with jet-black hair complimenting his dark complexion. The other soldiers called him ‘Church’ because he was a Christian and seemed to be praying all the time.

“What do you think, Church?” one soldier asked.

“I have been thinking about what to do,” Church responded. “I believe I will pray and ask God.”

“Yeah,” one soldier sneered to the others, “why don’t you do that? A lot of good that’ll do.”

“Hey, shut up and leave Church alone,” the Lieutenant said. “We can use all the help we can get. Church, you pray. If God has any ideas I’m interested in hearing them.”

Church walked a few paces from the three kneeling to pray as the others brain stormed.

“Lord,” Church said, “these men mock you. They believe that my faith in you is juvenile. I ask you to reveal yourself in a strong way. Deliver them, Lord. Deliver them so they can see your glory.”

Hey, Lieutenant!” one soldier yells. “Do you see that?”

A mist had begun blanketing the area. It rolled across the field like water running down a stream. Church looked to see what was happening and with a smile stretching from ear to ear he said, “Thank you, Lord.”

From the depths of his being Church knew the answer to what he had asked for lay within the mist. Rising to his feet and exposing his titanic smile Church took steps into the clearing.

The three paid little attention not realizing that Church had stepped onto the field in plain view of the enemy guns. What was drawing him was inner compulsion to enter the mist. It was as though the mist was calling to him.

“Hey Church, what in the world are you doing?” the Second Lieutenant yelled.

Church gave no indications that he had heard his commanding officer. He continued walking. The other three wanted to rush onto the field and retrieve him, but the Lieutenant would not allow it.

The enemy guns watched, allowing Church to move deeper and deeper into the field sure that he could not escape.

“Lieutenant, what does he think he’s doing?” one soldier asked.

“I do not know. It is as if he’s lost his mind, walking into the enemy’s line of fire like this.”

The mist rushed over Church covering him on all sides. This unusual action forced the enemy commander to order his men to fire.

“No Church, no!” the three yelled. It was too late, the enemy guns were finding their mark.

All watched as Church’s body jerked as each round struck him. As hopelessness forced the three to look away, a glittery substance filled the mist. The enemy, being frightened by this, increased their assault. Church’s hands raised in what looked to those observing to be surrender.

“Jesus!” Church shouted.

In harmonious syncopation, fire filled the air and burned within the mist. The enemy kept firing while the three gazed in amazement. The fire separated forming a canal through the center of the field.

“He’s done it!” the Lieutenant shouted. His prayer has done it.”

“What are you talking about?” the other asked, bewildered.

“God has provided us a way of escape.”

Upon the order of their commander the three ran through the canal unseen to the other side. Each man looked at Church, his body having fallen from his feet to his knees then face down onto the ground. They knew he was dead.

The enemy became so troubled by what was happening that they stopped firing and fled into the forest fearing some new weapon had been deployed against them. The fire flickered until all that remained was the floating glitter which existed before the fire. The mist was sucked from the field as by a vacuum and was gone.

Church lay motionless in the center of the field.

“Sir,” the soldiers said, “we can’t just leave him lying in the field. After all, he gave his life for ours.”

Still numb from what they had experienced the three ventured forward having seen the enemy retreat and walked to Church.

“I do not believe it,” the Lieutenant said. “Church is alive.”

The three stood encircling Church’s body. His clothes were riddled with holes, but there was no evidence of blood at all. Church’s eyes twitched, then opened.

“Did you see Him?” Church said.

“See who?” the three asked.

“Jesus! Did you see the Lord?”

“No Church, we did not see Him.” the Lieutenant said. “All we saw was you walking into the field and being shot.”

“I was not shot,” Church responded.

“We saw you jerk in all directions as the bullets hit your body. We saw you raise your hands, fall to your knees, then collapse face down.”

“I never felt a thing,” Church told them. “I raised my hands, but it was a gesture of praise

in seeing the King. As I came nearer my knees grew weak until I fell upon them. The Lord walked to me and placed His hand on my shoulder saying, 'Your prayer is answered'. When He did I fell on my face."

Church looked at his uniform. There must have been fifty holes in it.

"Is everyone alright?" Church asked.

"Yes, Church," the three said. "God answered your prayer and saved us.

Church began to cry and praised God for the lives of his fellow soldiers. He understood that the Lord had drawn him into the field as a diversion allowing the three to escape. The mist had been the manifestation of God's presence and protected Church as he praised.

The three fell to the ground hugging and crying having realizing that God was more than some person found in pages of the Bible. He was real and one who answered prayer. The three now shared a bond, that in the space of two days allowed Church to lead them to receive Jesus as their Savior. All this happened because God heard the prayer of the Seminole.