

# If Not You, Then Who? by Ron White

It was a little after midnight some time ago and I was heading home after having dinner with a friend. One hand was checking my text messages on my cell phone and the other steering my direction. One eye glanced at my phone—in retrospect an unsafe move—and the other monitored the road and my path. In the next instant, I witnessed the life of a middle-aged woman I had never met change before my eyes.

One moment her minivan was steady in front of me and the next second she was bouncing off cars, jerking back and forth, then slamming into a concrete barrier. It was, without question, the most violent and horrific accident I have ever watched unfold. Perhaps she was checking her cell phone, had too much to drink or simply misjudged her distance between cars. Regardless, her life transformed from enjoying her ride and possibly singing along with her favorite tune on the radio to ending in a mangled wreck as cars continued to pass.

I pulled over and for a brief second stood in horror at the destruction that lay before me. Others pulled over as well and we all froze like statues as we looked at the mess. No one rushed to the car. Would it explode? The engine was running at a high idle and smoke was everywhere. When I realized no one was rushing to the car, I asked myself, “If not you, then who?” I darted to the car and at the last minute couldn't bring myself to do it. I couldn't bring myself to open the car door. What would I see? Would it be a twisted and bloody body? Would it be a body of a deceased driver? Would it be a baby thrown from a car seat? I have never been so scared to open a car door as I was that night.

I knocked on the window, hoping beyond hope that the driver would open the door.

Knock, knock... no answer. Knock, knock... no answer....

I peered in the window to see if I could see someone, still not wanting to open the door. I saw no driver and thus knew they must be slumped down in the seat. I was scared to death and slowly opened the door and as I took in one of the deepest breaths of my life....

It was a middle-aged woman with a body twisted and contorted in the most unnatural position. Blood came from her mouth and her body bore the marks of a brutal fight with an automobile.

“What is your name?” I asked.

“Laurie,” was the barely audible reply.

“Well, Laurie you are okay, you are going to be fine; help is on the way. They will be here in a minute....”

I placed my hand on Laurie's side and looked at the only part of her body not harmed by the accident. That was her eyes. We looked each other straight in the eye for what seemed like an eternity. With all that I was, I wanted her to see in my eyes that she was safe and going to be okay, although I believed neither. Her grateful eyes replied without speaking that she was hurting and scared to death.

Soon other travelers made it to the car, not really to help Laurie but just to get a look at her. I guess an eagerness to witness destruction is the dark side of human nature and why everyone hollers hooray at fights in a hockey game. Within minutes paramedic help had arrived and I stepped back from the car and wanted to get out of there as fast as I could. I did not want to talk to the police, bystanders or paramedics. I just wanted to leave and leave now. I did just that as I sprinted to my truck. I slammed my door and sped away as I wondered how she would be. I will never know....

Yet, what I do know is that a dozen people could have held Laurie's hand that night and comforted her with their words and eyes, but human nature often doesn't implore us to do that. Human nature too often spurs us to wait and let someone else get involved, let someone else take action and simply let someone else live life.

Are you standing on the sidelines of life? Or are you diving in with the 'If not you, then who?' attitude?

In regard to:

Making a million dollars—If not you, then who?

Making a difference in your community—If not you, then who?

Building a successful business—If not you, then who?

Achieving your dreams—If not you, then who?

You can live life watching others take action. Or you can watch others live life and watch from the sidelines. That is often the safe move, yet never the move of someone destined for success on the wheels of living.

Someone will make a million dollars, someone will make a difference in your community, someone will build a successful business and someone will achieve their dreams. Who will it be? It will be the person who steps off the sidelines and moves toward action when others are paralyzed with fear. Overcome your fears and run toward what stands before you. Will you still be scared? Most likely, yes. But just take a deep breath and open the door....