

Story of Von Zieten's Courage

Frederick the Great [1712-1786, King of Prussia] once called all his generals together. One of them, Hans Von Zieten [1699-1786, Calvary general in Prussian Army], had duties to perform at his church that night and a Communion to participate in, so he refused to come. Later he was again invited to dine with all the generals and Frederick the Great. On that occasion they all made light of him and joked about his religious duties and about the Lord's Supper. Von Zieten stood and said to his intimidating ruler, "My lord, there is a greater king than you, a king to whom I have sworn allegiance, even unto death. I am a Christian man, and I cannot sit quietly as the Lord's name is dishonored, his character belittled, and his cause subjected to ridicule. With your permission I shall withdraw." There was silence because the generals knew such a daring act could mean death. But Frederick the Great was so struck by Von Zieten's courage that he begged him to stay and promised him he would never again demean those sacred things. Long live the tribe of Hans Von Zieten!¹

¹R. Kent Hughes, *Acts : The Church Afire*, Preaching the Word (Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway Books, 1996), 63.