

For Or Against – There Is No Neutral Ground

Luke 11:23 [Phillips Translation] *“Anyone who is not with me is against me, and the man who does not gather with me is really scattering.”*

Luke 11:23 [The Living Bible] *“Anyone who is not for me is against me, if he isn’t helping me, he is hurting my cause.”*

Luke 11:23 [Amplified Bible] *“He who is not with Me, siding and believing with Me, is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me, engage in My interest, scatters.”*

This is a very piercing statement made by our Saviour Jesus Christ.

In life there is no neutral ground, we are either actively working with and for Jesus Christ or we are automatically working for the antichrist, that is the devil.

This statement made by Jesus Christ was in the context of the Pharisees accusing Him of working for the devil.

Ephesians 6:10-13 [NIV] *“Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armour of God so that you can take your stand against the devil’s schemes. For **our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.** Therefore put on the full armour of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand.”*

All Christians are in a war situation, and in any war there is **no** neutral ground.

By withholding our help in this conflict against evil in this world we are automatically assisting the forces of evil.

Only if we are actively overcoming evil in this world are we going to receive a reward from Jesus Christ at His return.

Revelation 2:7, 11, 17, 26 [NIV] *“He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. **To him who overcomes,** I will give the right to eat from the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.” ... “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. **He who overcomes** will not be hurt at all by the second death.” ... “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. **To him who overcomes,** I will give some of the hidden manna. I will also give him a white stone with a new name written on it, known only to him who receives it.” ... **“To him who overcomes and does my will to the end, I will give authority over the nations,”***

Revelation 3:5, 12, 21 [NIV] *“**He who overcomes** will, like them, be dressed in white. I will never blot out his name from the book of life, but will acknowledge his name before my Father and his angels.” ... **“Him who overcomes** I will make a pillar in the temple of my God. Never again will he leave it. I will write on him the name of my God and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which is coming down out of heaven from my God; and I will also write on him my new name.” ... **“To him who overcomes,** I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I overcame and sat down with my Father on his throne.”*

The same message is given to each of the churches.

What is this overcoming?

Let the scriptures tell us.

Revelation 12:9, 11 [NIV] *“The great dragon was hurled down, that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him.” ... “They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death.”*

The overcoming that Jesus Christ is referring to in His revelation to the apostle John, is our actively overcoming the evil, deceiving influence of Satan over the minds and lives of the vast majority of human beings.

The instruments Christians use is the cleansing power of the blood sacrifice of our only Saviour Jesus Christ, and the example of the loving sacrifice of their own lives to be vehicles of God’s love for all humanity.

There are three major things in our human life that will try to avoid making the decision of who’s side we will be actively working.

Instead seeking to stay in the impossible position of thinking we can remain neutral.

1. The natural inertia that we all have in our human nature, to any change

We automatically shrink from anything which is disturbing in our lives.

Yet we find that to be called by God at this time is the most disturbing thing that can happen to us.

We were warned by Jesus Christ as to this upheaval His calling will make to our lives.

Matthew 10:34-39 [NIV] *“Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to turn “a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law, a man’s enemies will be the members of his own household.” “Anyone who loves his father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves his son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; and anyone who does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.”*

What can be more disturbing than such a result of answering the call of God.

Luke 14:25-30, 33 [NIV] *“Large crowds were travelling with Jesus, and turning to them he said: “If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters, yes, even his own life, he cannot be my disciple. And anyone who does not carry his cross and follow me cannot be my disciple. “Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Will he not first sit down and estimate the cost to see if he has enough money to complete it? For if he lays the foundation and is not able to finish it, everyone who sees it will ridicule him, saying, ‘This fellow began to build and was not able to finish.’” ... “In the same way, any of you who does not give up everything he has cannot be my disciple.”*

Following Jesus Christ is **not** a one day a week commitment, but the total commitment of our whole life.

Romans 12:1-2 [NIV] *“Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God, this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is, his good, pleasing and perfect will.”*

When we accept the mercy of God, that is Jesus Christ as our only Saviour, the least we can and should do is to offer our whole life as a “*living sacrifice*” and allow God, through the work of the Holy Spirit in us, to transform our way of thinking.

That is massively disturbing to any human being, a total change of direction in our lives.

2. The natural cowardice that is built into our human nature

Humans do **not** like to stand out in a crowd because of their religious beliefs.

Luke 12:4-5 [NIV] *“I tell you, my friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body and after that can do no more. But I will show you whom you should fear: Fear him who, after the killing of the body, has power to throw you into hell. Yes, I tell you, fear him.”*

Our neighbours or our enemies can cause us physical pain and suffering, even death but only the Creator God can obliterate our life altogether.

Luke 12:6-7 [NIV] *“Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? Yet not one of them is forgotten by God. Indeed, the very hairs of your head are all numbered. **Don’t be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.**”*

Our heavenly father has great care and concern for our physical welfare, but He expects something from us in return.

Luke 12:8-9 [Amplified Bible] *“And I [Jesus Christ] tell you, **whoever declares openly, speaking out freely and confesses that he is My worshipper and acknowledges Me before men, the Son of Man also will declare, confess and acknowledge him before the angels of God. But he who disowns and denies and rejects and refuses to acknowledge Me before men will be disowned and denied and rejected and refused acknowledgement in the presence of the angels of God.**”*

What Jesus Christ our Saviour expects is total loyalty to Him and His cause.

3. The flabbiness of human nature

Most human beings prefer security than risky adventure.

As we get older we begin to consider *“is this worth all the effort needed to accomplish our allotted task?”*

Do we seek the comfort of selfish inaction rather than the hard work of being a witness for Jesus Christ?

In many Western countries the deceptive effect of the welfare state can rub off on us.

Many sit around and expect *“the state”* and other human beings to:-

- a) Give them a job to do
- b) House them
- c) Feed, clothe and nurse them

This is **not** God’s way of life. This is a product of Satan to destroy any chance of human beings developing righteous, godlike character.

2 Thessalonians 3:10-13 [NIV] *“For even when we were with you, we gave you this rule: **“If a man will not work, he shall not eat.”** We hear that some among you are idle. They are not busy; they are*

busybodies. Such people we command and urge in the Lord Jesus Christ to settle down and earn the bread they eat. And as for you, brothers, never tire of doing what is right.”

This is God’s commanded way of life.

If there is no paid work, then every human being should find ways to help others in need without direct payment.

Acts 20:35 [NIV] *“In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’”*

God wants all humans to learn this godlike give way of life.

Luke 6:35 [NIV] *“But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked.”*

God continues to give to those who do **not** even acknowledge Him or thank Him.

1 Thessalonians 4:11-12 [NIV] *“Make it your ambition to lead a quiet life, to mind your own business and to work with your hands, just as we told you, so that your daily life may win the respect of outsiders and so that you will not be dependent on anybody.”*

Hard work in itself is a light to others as to God’s way of life.

1 Timothy 5:8 [NIV] *“If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for his immediate family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.”*

This is in the context of providing help for real widows in need.

Love and charity is **not** something that the “state” distributes, but the work of sacrificial love that all Christians should be a part of.

If we are **not** seeking to live God’s way of love for others then we are automatically choosing Satan’s way of selfishness which in the end is doomed.