

The True Active Christian Must Attack Evil As Well As Defend The Truth

Ephesians 6:10-12 [King James] *“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.”*

When a speaker or writer uses the word “finally” you are about to receive the most important teaching or warning that all that went before was leading you to accept.

What are these important things we need to understand?

We will only succeed if we are empowered by the Holy Spirit.

Philippians 4:13 [King James] *“I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.”*

Paul is presenting the positive approach to the words of Jesus Christ.

John 15:4-5 [King James] *“Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.”*

Why is this?

We have to realise what Paul told the Church in Ephesus.

We face an enemy, the devil, who has far more power to deceive and corrupt than we have to defend ourselves against on our own.

The devil is also aided by a vast number of human beings and spiritual beings [demons – fallen angels] who he has deceived into rebellion against the Creator God and to attack Christians, God’s potential created children.

Satan the devil [**Revelation 12:9**] being a spirit being attacks us at the speed of thought, planting sinful ideas into our very mind.

Ephesians 6:13-17 [King James] *“Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:”*

Each part of this armour is a defence against a frontal attack, if we turn our back on this warfare and run from it we lose all our defence.

[For a full explanation of this armour please download and study the article on this website ‘The Armour of God’ listed under sub-heading ‘Satan’].

Notice that the last part of this armour is the sword, which is for active attack as well as defence.

2 Corinthians 10:3-6 [NIV] *“For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine*

power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ. And we will be ready to punish every act of disobedience, once your obedience is complete.”

God’s spiritual weapons are available to us when we fight against Satan’s “strongholds.” The power he has over human beings by his blinding them to the reason why we exist as human beings, and what God has done for all human beings through the life, death and resurrection of His Son Jesus Christ.

2 Corinthians 4:4 [NIV] *“The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.”*

This is the gospel message that Jesus Christ brought from God the Father at His first coming.

How do we “punish every act of disobedience” once we are completely obedient to Jesus Christ [2 Corinthians 10:6]?

The reward that was to be given to the seven churches of Revelation was to those who “overcome” [Revelation 2:7, 11, 17, 26; Revelation 3:5, 12, 21].

What does this mean?

We have to allow the scriptures to interpret themselves.

Revelation 12:11 [King James] *“They, [Christians v10] overcame him [Satan v9] by the blood of the Lamb [the sacrifice of Jesus Christ] and by the word of their testimony [Matthew 5:13-16; 1 Peter 3:15] and they loved not their lives unto the death.”*

Romans 12:1 [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.”*

Every true Christian becomes a “living sacrifice” daily we are to lay aside our own desires to follow Jesus Christ, putting all our energy and resources at His disposal and trusting Him to guide us.

We do this out of gratitude that our sins have been forgiven and we are freed from eternal death.

Romans 12:2 [NIV] *“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.”*

Our **not** conforming to this world’s pattern of life is part of our “testimony” that will overcome the effect of Satan’s influence on all non-Christians.

Matthew 5:14-16 [NIV] *“You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.”*

The “good deeds” are acts of love, compassion and faithfulness that are the result of an active Holy Spirit flowing in and out of our lives to influence other lives, [John 7:38-39].

For this change of direction in our lives, our minds, have to be re-educated by the Holy Spirit opening up the depth of meaning in the Words of God, as recorded in the Christian Bible, [John 16:13].

Romans 8:5-9 [NIV] *“Those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds set on what that nature desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace; the sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God’s law, nor can it do so. Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God. You, however, are controlled not by the sinful nature but by*

the Spirit, if the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ.”

This re-educated mind and a new direction in life is proof that we are disciples of Jesus Christ, that is Christians.

1 Timothy 6:3-12 [NIV] *“If anyone teaches false doctrines and does not agree to the sound instruction of our Lord Jesus Christ and to godly teaching, he is conceited and understands nothing. He has an unhealthy interest in controversies and quarrels about words that result in envy, strife, malicious talk, evil suspicions and constant friction between men of corrupt mind, who have been robbed of the truth and who think that godliness is a means to financial gain. But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that. People who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs. But you, man of God, flee from all this, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness. Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses.”*

Part of the fight we have as a Christian is to counter the wrong goal in life of seeking personal wealth and possessions.

Despite overwhelming evidence to the contrary, most people still believe that money brings happiness.

The truth is that this love of wealth can lead to many evil practices and even cause Christians to stray from their faith.

Hebrews 10:32-39 [NIV] *“Remember those earlier days after you had received the light, when you stood your ground in a great contest in the face of suffering. Sometimes you were publicly exposed to insult and persecution; at other times you stood side by side with those who were so treated. You sympathised with those in prison and joyfully accepted the confiscation of your property, because you knew that you yourselves had better and lasting possessions. So do not throw away your confidence; it will be richly rewarded. You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised. For in just a very little while, ‘He who is coming will come and will not delay. But my righteous one will live by faith. And if he shrinks back, I will not be pleased with him.’ But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who believe and are saved.”*

This different lifestyle is bound to bring persecution but when we understand where it will lead we can be greatly encouraged.

We don't usually think that suffering is good for us, but it can build our character and our patience.

2 Timothy 4:6-8 [NIV] *“For I am already being poured out like a drink offering, and the time has come for my departure. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day, and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing.”*

Paul, as he neared the end of his life, could confidently say that he had been faithful to his Saviour and Master, Jesus Christ. Thus he faced death calmly, knowing that he would be rewarded by Jesus Christ.

Is your life preparing you for death?

Do you share Paul's confident expectation of meeting Jesus Christ, [2 Corinthians 5:10]?

The good news is that the reward we receive at the Second Coming of Jesus Christ is not only for giants of the faith like Paul but “*all who have longed for His appearing.*”

Paul gave these words of encouragement to Timothy and all true Christians, that no matter how difficult the fight against evil is, we must keep fighting it.