

# The Enemy Within

**Revelation 3:11-12** [NIV] *“I am coming soon. Hold on to what you have, so that no-one will take your crown. 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.”*

Two words are used in this passage of scripture that are important to our Christian life.

**“Overcome”** – what are we to overcome? It is important enough that each of the seven churches were told to overcome.

**Revelation 12:11** [NIV] *“They [Christians] **overcame** him [Satan **v9**] by the blood of the Lamb [Jesus Christ **John 1:29, 35-36**] and by the word of their testimony [**Matthew 5:14-16** non-verbal; **1 Peter 3:15** verbal]; they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death.”*

**“Pillars”** – a pillar is a person who supports those whom they serve just as a physical pillar supports all that is above it, and is of service to all that are about it.

This message from Jesus Christ was to the Church in Philadelphia who had been given a key to a door that no-one could open or shut.

The context shows that this was a door to preach Jesus Christ as the Saviour of all humanity, [**Revelation 3:7-9**].

What then are the qualities of a pillar that we must have to support the work of salvation that Jesus Christ is doing on earth now through us, [**Matthew 28:18-20**]?

**A pillar always remains upright –**

**Revelation 19:7-8** [NIV] *“Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready. Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear. (Fine linen stands for the righteous acts of the saints.)”*

The members of the Christian Church that is to marry Jesus Christ at His return, are full of righteous acts.

The Greek word used is “*dikaiōma*” meaning worked out righteousness as opposed to “*dikaiōs*” which is imputed or credited righteousness, [**Romans 4:13, 16, 18-24**].

**A pillar is impervious –**

Whatever this world may throw at it will not change what it is doing.

**Philippians 4:11-13** [NIV] *“I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. **I can do everything through him who gives me strength.**”*

**Paul was unchanged in his purpose and goal whatever the outward conditions he had to endure.**

**Galatians 5:22** [NIV] *“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,”*

Joy is a “*spiritual fruit*” of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, that is impervious to whatever conditions the person within whom He dwells has to face in life.

**A pillar is strong and supportive –**

**Galatians 6:1-2** [NIV] “*Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted. Carry each other’s burdens, and in this way you will fulfil the law of Christ.*”

**We are to be supportive of all we meet with, Christian and non-Christian alike.**

**A pillar is firmly fixed to the building’s foundation –**

**Matthew 7:24-25** [NIV] “*Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock.*”

**The rock on which we firmly stand is Jesus Christ, [1 Corinthians 3:11; 1 Corinthians 10:4].**

The Milbank Tower in London stands on a number of pillars above the ground so you can walk under the building. I watched it being built in the early 1960s, a deep hole was dug right through the London clay down to the bedrock underneath. Shuttering, steel rods and poured concrete formed the giant pillars that were to support the multi-storey building as it reached into the sky.

**Ephesians 2:19-22** [NIV] “*Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow-citizens with God’s people and members of God’s household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.*”

The foundation we must have are the words of the apostles and prophets and Jesus Christ the cornerstone that holds the whole structure together.

**We need all this strength and support because the enemy we have within us, our human nature.**

**This enemy within does not fight according to the rules, does not want to be exposed, [just as some cracks in a pillar are not always visible outside.]**

**This enemy within fights a guerrilla war determined to resist, harass and even expel the occupying Power the Holy Spirit, Jesus Christ in us, [John 14:15-18].**

**These guerrilla forces who are out to destroy us must be taken captive, but you do not take prisoners fighting a defensive war.**

**We must take the battle to the enemy, seek him out and destroy him.**

**Romans 7:18-23** [Amplified Bible] “*For I know that nothing good dwells within me, that is in my flesh. I can will what is right, but cannot perform it, I have the intention and urge to do right, but no power to carry it out. For I fail to practice the good deeds I desire to do, but the evil deeds that I do not desire to do are what I am ever doing. Now if I do what I do not desire to do, it is no longer I doing it, it is not myself that acts, but the sin principle which dwells within me, fixed and operating in my soul [body]. So I find it to be a law of my being that when I want to do what is right and good, evil is ever present within me and I am subject to its insistent demands. For I endorse and delight in the law of God in my inmost self with my new nature. But I discern in my bodily members, in the sensitive appetites and wills of the flesh a different law, rule of action at war against the law of my mind, my reason and making me a prisoner to the law of sin that dwells in my bodily organs, in the sensitive appetites and wills of the flesh.*”

Paul in these verses personifies his human nature as an enemy, an enemy who uses terrorist tactics, striking when least expected, and going for the “*soft targets*,” our personal weaknesses as a human being.

**This human nature tries to masquerade as a friend.**

We often defend our human nature as a friend, justify and cover up for what we do as we give in to its influence, **not** realising that it is our enemy.

**Until we come to recognise our human nature as an enemy within, we will never win this battle we are in.**

**Ephesians 4:22-23** [Amplified Bible] *“Strip yourselves of your former nature, put off and discard your old unrenewed self, which characterised your previous manner of life that became corrupt through lusts and desires that spring from delusion, and be constantly renewed in the spirit of your mind, having a fresh mental and spiritual attitude.”*

**How do we do this to foil the attack of our “*enemy without*,” Satan, who attacks us through the weaknesses of our human nature, our “*enemy within*”?**

**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.”*

**Once we make this first step of surrendering our whole body, mind and human spirit [Job 32:8] to God, the Holy Spirit now active in us will start to re-educate our mind.**

**Romans 7:24-25** [Amplified Bible] *“O unhappy and pitiable and wretched man that I am! Who will release and deliver me from the shackles of this body of death? O thank God! He will! Through Jesus Christ, the Anointed One, our Lord! So then indeed I of myself with my mind and heart serve the law of God, but with the flesh of the law of sin.”*

**Only by submission to the will of Jesus Christ can this victory be attained over the “*enemy within*.”**

**Ephesians 4:24** [Amplified Bible] *“And put on the new nature, the regenerate self, created in God’s likeness in true imputed righteousness and holiness.”*

This “*enemy within*” **must** be identified and battle lines drawn up if Jesus Christ in us is to be victorious.

Remember every time we lose a battle against the “*enemy within*” our human nature we create a crack in our pillar!

**Jeremiah 17:9** [NIV] *“The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?”*

**The heart is the driving force of our lives and we can be deceived into thinking that what it made us do was for our own good.**

**Proverbs 16:2** [Amplified Bible] *“All the ways of a man are pure in his own eyes, but the Lord weighs the spirits, the thoughts and intents of the heart.”*

**How does God and how can we weigh what we are doing to see if it is in harmony with the Creator God’s will?**

**Hebrews 4:12** [NIV] *“For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.”*

Within the Word of God, the Christian Bible, we can find all we need to recognise how our human nature is deceiving us, prompted by Satan, [**Revelation 12:9**].

**We all need to be on a “search and destroy mission” as far as our human nature is concerned.**

While being trained as a pilot in Lincolnshire, I was the **object** of a “search and destroy mission” as part of our escape training if we were shot down in enemy territory.

My goal was to reach a “clock house” which was situated in open countryside, where I would be safe.

In this search and destroy mission certain lines of attack were put into operation.

- a) First line of attack was the use of aircraft from my own airfield. In our attack on our human nature, help from above is essential.
- b) All possible human help was mobilised, the police, RAF regiment, RAF aircrew, even my own flight and roommates. We also need all the human help of friends to attack our human nature by constructive criticism.
- c) The same method and personal were used time and time again. The attack on our human nature must be an “ongoing” thing.
- d) The search and destroy mission was a 24-hour operation, **no** respite even at night.

Our attack on our human nature must be constant, **not** something we do now and again.

**2 Corinthians 13:5** [King James] *“Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?”*

It is up to us to examine ourselves and identify what the “enemy within” is doing.

God would rather have us correct ourselves than He force us to action by some personal trial.

**1 Corinthians 11:31-32** [NIV] *“But if we judged ourselves, we would not come under judgment. When we are judged by the Lord, we are being disciplined so that we will not be condemned with the world.”*

If we judge ourselves God will not have to discipline us harshly.

**Proverbs 4:26-27** [King James] *“Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established. Turn not to the right hand nor to the left: remove thy foot from evil.”*

Do **not** turn aside from a planned course of action to resist the influence of our human nature in our lives.

**A constant check on ourselves must be part of our way of life.**

**God’s Word, the Christian Bible, shows us how we should do this constant health check, yet most of us have not been following His advice constantly.**

**Psalms 119:59-62** [NIV] *“I have considered my ways and have turned my steps to your statutes. I will hasten and not delay to obey your commands. Though the wicked bind me with ropes, I will not forget your law. At midnight I rise to give you thanks for your righteous laws.”*

Just a degree off course will take us on a trajectory away from our goal, perfection for God's way of life is one of seeking perfection, [**Matthew 5:48**].

How then do we begin to identify the "*enemy within*"?

The human nature that victimises us, that remains loyal to Satan and is determined to undermine and destroy the real new us, that is Christ in us.

**Human nature is so sneaky and deceitful that it is impossible, without God's help, to spot it and bring it into the open where we can attack it.**

**Psalms 139:23-24** [NIV] "*Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.*"

It takes courage to pray this way, but we **cannot** fight an enemy we cannot see.

Come out of the defensive attitude, take the offensive to the enemy, go on the attack.

Remember the "*search and destroy mission*" I experienced in Lincolnshire.

I didn't make it to the clock house, I had to surrender, **search and destroy does work.**

Our "*enemy within*" will also have to surrender and we will win our fight against human nature and be ready to take on God's nature, His character, the very reason we exist as human beings.