

Jeremiah 48:10 *“A curse on him who is lax in doing the Lord’s work! A curse on him who keeps his sword from bloodshed!”* (NIV)

*“Cursed is he who does the work of the Lord deceitfully, and cursed is he who keeps back his sword from blood”* (NKJV)

### THE BIRKENHEAD

On 14 July 1852, one of the worst naval disasters occurred off the coast of South Africa. Her Majesty’s Ship **Birkenhead** struck a rockshelf and began to sink rapidly. The Birkenhead was carrying the 78<sup>th</sup> Highlanders Regiment. These were Scottish warriors who had distinguished themselves in every conflict from the Napoleonic Wars to the Crimea. Also on board with these troops were their wives and children. It became apparent that the foundering ship was going to sink. There were very few lifeboats aboard. Nevertheless, calm prevailed.

Orders were given to place all the women and children into the few precious lifeboats. There was just enough room for the women and children. The men lined up in perfect military formation on the deck as their piper band played. Singing Christian hymns these Scottish stalwarts went down with the Birkenhead into the shark infested waters of the South Atlantic. No man attempted to swim to the heavily laden lifeboats, as they realised that any attempt to do so could destabilise and swamp these boats and risk the lives of the women and children. The Birkenhead sank within 20 minutes. Not one woman or child was lost. Not one man was saved.

The soldiers and sailors of the Birkenhead exercised Christian chivalry – that in times of crisis men must give their lives that women and children may live. The discipline and self-sacrificing courage of the men of the Birkenhead inspired poet Rudyard Kipling to write *“So they stood and was still to the Birkenhead drill; soldier and sailor too.”* The phrase *“Birkenhead drill”* came to be synonymous with courage, discipline and self-sacrificing chivalry.

### GOD DESERVES OUR VERY BEST

As Christians, we are called to wholehearted, sacrificial service. *“Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as though you were working for the Lord and not for men.”* Colossians 3:23

The greatest Commandment is to love the Lord our God with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our mind, and with all our strength (Mark 12:30). It follows then that the greatest sin would be to fail to love the Lord our God with all of our heart, with all of our soul, with all of our mind and with all of our strength.

*“You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honour and power, for You created all things, and by Your will they were created and have their being.”* Revelation 4:11

*“And they sang a new song: You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because You were slain, and with Your blood You purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation. You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth.”*

Revelation 5:9-10

*“Then I hear every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea and all that is in them, singing: To Him Who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honour and glory and power for ever and ever!”* Revelation 5:13

Our great God, loving Creator and merciful Redeemer deserves all our praise and honour and faithfulness and zeal and dedication. It is a terrible sin to be lax in doing the Lord's work.

## SLACKNESS IN GOD'S SERVICE IS A SIN

*"Woe to you who are complacent in Zion..." Amos 6:1*

2 Chronicles 24:5 reports that *"the Levites did not act at once"*; Nehemiah 3:5 records: *"...but their nobles would not put their shoulders into the work..."*

Our Lord Jesus taught: *"But everyone who hears these words of Mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand."* Matthew 7:26

*"That servant who knows his masters will and does not get ready or does not do what his master wants will be beaten with many blows."* Luke 12:47

***"Anyone, then, who knows the good he ought to do and doesn't do it, sins."*** James 4:17

## KING SAUL'S PARTIAL OBEDIENCE WAS ACTUALLY REBELLION

Israel's first king, Saul, knew what God has commanded, but failed to fulfil his Divine instructions. *"This is what the Lord Almighty says: 'I will punish the Amalekites...now go attack the Amalekites and totally destroy everything that belongs to them. Do not spare them..."* 1 Samuel 15:2-3

The Scripture records: *"but Saul and the army spared Agag and the best of the sheep and cattle...everything that was good. These they were unwilling to destroy completely, but everything that was despised and weak they totally destroyed. Then the Word of the Lord came to Samuel: 'I am grieved that I have made Saul king, because he has turned away from Me and has not carried out My instructions. Samuel was troubled, and he cried out to the Lord all that night."* 1 Samuel 5:9-11

When the prophet Samuel went to meet king Saul he was told *"Saul has gone to Carmel. There he has set up a monument in his own honour..."* 1 Samuel 15:12

*"When Samuel reached him, Saul said, 'The Lord bless you! I have carried out the Lord's instructions'. But Samuel said, 'What then is this bleating of sheep in my ears? What is this lowing of cattle that I hear?' Saul answered, 'The soldiers brought them from the Amalekites; they spared the best of the sheep and cattle to sacrifice to the Lord your God, but we totally destroyed the rest.' 'Stop!' Samuel said to Saul. 'Let me tell you what the Lord said to me last night.' 'Tell me', Saul replied. Samuel said, 'Although you were once small in your own eyes, did you not become the head of the tribes of Israel? The Lord anointed you king of Israel. And He sent you on a mission, saying, go and completely destroy these wicked people, the Amalekites; make war on them until you have wiped them out. Why did you not obey the Lord? Why did you pounce on the plunder and do evil in the eyes of the Lord?...Does the Lord delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obeying the voice of the Lord? To obey is better than sacrifice, and to head is better than the fat of rams. For rebellion is like the sin of divination, and arrogance like the evil of idolatry. Because you have rejected the Word of the Lord He has rejected you as king...You have rejected the Word of the Lord, and the Lord has rejected you as the king over Israel!...The Lord has torn the kingdom of Israel from you today and has given it to one of your neighbours – to one better than you."* 1 Samuel 15:14-28

Although king Saul thought his partial obedience good enough, the Lord utterly rejected him. God's Word describes king Saul's partial obedience as: *"rebellion...arrogance...idolatry."*

## THE WICKEDNESS OF THE SON'S OF ELI AND THE WEAKNESS OF ELI

The book of 1 Samuel also records another example of the Lord judging those who were lax in doing His work. *“Eli’s sons were wicked men; they had no regard for the Lord...This sin of the young men was very great in the Lord’s sight, for they were treating the Lord’s offering with contempt.”* 1 Samuel 2:12,17

The sons of Eli were priests, yet they were guilty of gross immorality and theft – even in the Tabernacle.

*“Now Eli, who was very old, heard about everything his sons were doing in all of Israel and how they slept with the women who served at the entrance to the Tent of meeting. So he said to them, ‘Why do you do such things? I hear from all the people about these wicked deeds of yours. No, my sons; it is not a good report that I hear spreading among the Lord’s people. If a man sins against another man, God may mediate for him; but if a man sins against the Lord, who will intercede for him?’ **His sons however did not listen to their father’s rebuke, for it was the Lord’s will to put them to death.**”* 1 Samuel 2:22-25

The Lord sent a man of God to warn Eli: *“Why do you scorn my sacrifice and offering that I prescribed for My dwelling? **Why do you honour your sons more than Me**...those who honour Me I will honour, but those who despise Me, will be disdained. The time is coming when I will cut short your strength and the strength of your father’s house, so that there will not be an old man in your family line and you will see distress in My dwelling...in your family line there will never be an old man. Every one of you that I do not cut off from the altar will be spared only to blind your eyes with tears and to grieve your heart, and all your descendents will die in the prime of life.”* 1 Samuel 2:27-32

The Lord also spoke to the young boy Samuel and gave him a message for Eli. *“And the Lord said to Samuel: ‘See, I’m about to do something in Israel that will make the ears of everyone who hears of it tingle. At that time I will carry out against Eli everything I spoke against his family – from beginning to end for I told him that I would judge his family forever **because of the sin he knew about**; his sons made themselves contemptible, **and he failed to restrain them.**”* 1 Samuel 3:11-13

***“A curse on him who is lax in doing the Lord’s work! A curse on him who keeps his sword from bloodshed!”***

*“So watch yourselves. If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him.”* Luke 17:3

*“Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them.”* Ephesians 5:11

## WHOLE HEARTED OBEDIENCE TO THE LORD IS ESSENTIAL

*“Be sure to finish the task you were given in the Lord’s service.”* Colossians 4:17

*“My deep desire and hope is that I shall never fail in my duty, but at all times, and especially just now, I shall be full of courage so that with my whole being I shall bring honour to Christ whether I live or die.”*

Philippians 1:20

*“But I consider my own life to be worth nothing to me; I only want to complete my mission and finish the work that the Lord Jesus gave me to do, which is to declare the Good News about the grace of God.”*

Acts 20:24

Where God guides, He provides. **The will of God will never lead you where the grace of God can not keep you.**

As General Stonewall Jackson often said: ***“Duty is ours. The consequences are God’s.”***

It is spiritually refreshing to step out in faith. The most healthy habit you can cultivate is the habit of practicing responding to the Word of God in obedience.

*“Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the Gospel of Christ...stand firm in one spirit, contending as one man for the faith of the Gospel.”* Philippians 1:27

The men of HMS Birkenhead certainly conducted themselves in a manner worthy of the Gospel of Christ. They stood firm on a sinking ship. They did not break ranks, they did not attempt to swim to the boatloads of women and children – so as not to endanger the women and children in the fully laden life boats from being swamped or being de-stabilised. Even as they could see the sharks circling around the sinking ship, the men stood firm. They did their duty. **“Greater love has no-one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends.”** John 15:13

## THE CURSE OF COMPROMISE AND COWARDICE

But that is only the first part of this verse. Jeremiah 48:10 has two parts: *“A curse on him who is lax in doing the Lord’s work! A curse on him who keeps his sword from bloodshed!”*

In Revelation 2:12-17 we read in the letter to the Church in Pergamum that the Lord rebuked the believers for tolerating the idolatry and immorality of the Nicolaitans. *“Repent therefore! Otherwise I will soon come to you and will fight against them with the sword of My mouth.”* Revelation 2:16

Warfare calls for sacrifice, conscription, rationing, dedication, determination, courage and tenacity. In warfare one is required to fight. To attack the enemy. To apply all the force that is necessary in order to defeat the enemy and defend ones homeland.

*“Shall your countrymen go to war while you sit here?”* Numbers 32:6

*“Curse Merzoz, said the angel of the Lord. Curse its people bitterly, because they did not come to help the Lord, to help the Lord against the mighty.”* Judges 5:23

## WHOSE SIDE ARE YOU ON?

*“Now when Joshua was near Jericho, he looked up and saw a man standing in front of him with a drawn sword in his hand. Joshua went up to him and asked, ‘Are you for us or for our enemies?’ ‘Neither’ He replied, ‘but as Commander of the Army of the Lord I have now come.’ Then Joshua fell face down to the ground in reverence and asked Him ‘What message does the Lord have for his servant?’”* Joshua 5:13-14

The Lord does not come to bless our plans but to give us His orders. The question is *not* “Is God on our side?” But **“Are we on God’s side?”**

*“Whoever is for the Lord, come to me.”* Exodus 32:26

*“Choose for yourselves this day whom you shall serve.”* Joshua 24:15

## Who is on the Lord’s side?

**“Who will rise up for Me against the wicked? Who will take a stand for Me against evil doers?”**

Psalm 94:16

## THE SWORD IS A SYMBOL OF OUR FAITH

The sword is also a symbol of our faith. During the crusades, the Knights of Saint John initiated the members of their military order with these words: *“Take this sword – its brightness stands for faith, its point for hope, its handle for charity.”*

When I visited Zurich, in Switzerland, I had the privilege of visiting the church where Reformer Ulrich Zwingli ministered. Outside the church is a statue of Zwingli holding a large Bible and an even larger sword. As Ulrich Zwingli lay dying on the battlefield, attempting to defend the religious freedoms of Zurich, he declared: *“They may kill the body, but they cannot kill the soul.”*

On that same ministry trip, I was asked by a minister in Switzerland why it is that our mission, Frontline Fellowship, has a sword in its badge. I replied *“For the very same reason that Ulrich Zwingli’s statue out there has a sword.”*

Christianity is not a pacifist religion. A Christian, by definition, must be active. With his sleeves rolled up, being willing to get his hands dirty protecting the innocent, defending the defenceless and saving lives from unprovoked aggression. Christian love is not mere words and sentiment. **True love shows itself in action** (1 John 3:18).

If all the people with a conscience refuse to fight, then it will leave the battlefields in the hands of men without a conscience. Those who want peace must prepare for war. We must learn to be courageous, to be loyal, to be sacrificial and unselfish. We need to suppress selfish fears and desires, and choose to do our duty, to protect the innocent and to defend the defenceless. The Christian dare not choose the easy way out.

In the words immortalised by General Douglas MacArthur’s great speech at West Point: *“Duty! Honour! Country!”*

## CHRISTIAN COURAGE

I think of men like King Alfred the Great, Oliver Cromwell, General Robert E Lee, General Stonewall Jackson, General Charles Gordon, General Christian De Wet, Field Marshall Erwin Rommel, General Douglas MacArthur, and General George Patton. These men epitomise duty and honour on the battlefield.

I also think of some of the men it is my privilege to know: General Constand Viljoen, and Mr Ian Smith, the previous Prime-Minister of Rhodesia.

When I read this verse, I also think of the brave men who fought against all odds at the battles of **Isandlwana** and **Rhokes Drift** in Zululand (1879). Also the **Shangani Patrol** in the country where I was brought up, Rhodesia. In 1893 a small reconnaissance patrol under the command of Major Alan Wilson was cut off by the flooded Shangani River and encircled by thousands of Matabele warriors. They fought to the last man, selling their lives dearly. After the battle, the Matabele warriors came to Bulawayo and surrendered. They reported that Alan Wilson’s patrol had died singing their national anthem and praying the Lord’s prayer together. *“The white men sang”* they said. *“If these young men could fight like lions, what will happen when their fathers come for revenge! We want to make peace.”*

I think of the courageous Christians in **the Nuba Mountains** of Sudan. An Island of Christianity in a sea of Islam. These beleaguered brethren have been enduring some of the worst persecution in the world today. Most of their villages had been burned down, most of their crops have been destroyed, most of their livestock has been looted by the National Islamic Front government. Even wells have been poisoned. Children have been kidnapped by Arab slave traders, separated from their parents, and brought up in *khalwas* where they are forcibly Islamised and Arabised. Many have been enslaved. Hundreds of Christian men have been crucified. Almost all their churches have been burned to the ground. Yet the resilient Nubans continue to stand firm and to fight ferociously for faith and freedom.

In the words of Nehemiah: *“Don’t be afraid of them. Remember the Lord, who is great and awesome, and fight for your brothers, your sons and your daughters, your wives and your homes.”* Nehemiah 4:14

## FIGHT THE GOOD FIGHT OF FAITH

Warfare is fought on many levels. Jesus said *“Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth, I did not come to bring peace, but a sword.”* Matthew 10:34

*“For the Word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joint and marrow, it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.”* Hebrews 4:12

The Bible is *“the sword of the spirit which is the Word of God”* Ephesians 6:17. A curse on him who keeps his sword from bloodshed.

The Scripture commands us ***“Fight the good fight of faith...”*** 1 Timothy 6:12. *“The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have Divine power to demolish strongholds.”*  
2 Corinthians 10:4

We read in the book of Revelation 12:11 that *“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 Bible makes it clear that the Christian life is real, serious warfare. Weapons are issued (2 Corinthians 10:4); strategies are formulated (Luke 14:26-33); infiltration and sabotage by the enemy is exposed (Acts 20:29-30); commissions are given (Matthew 28:19-20); battlecries are sounded (Ezekiel 33:3-9); opponents are disarmed (Colossians 2:15); captives are taken (2 Corinthians 10:5); prisoners are freed (Isaiah 51:14); and victories are won. ***“But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”***  
1 Corinthians 15:57

## YOU CANNOT WIN VICTORIES BY AVOIDING BATTLES

**We cannot have victory without a battle.** The only reason why the devil is so often winning is that the church is so seldom fighting.

Not only has Satan enslaved millions to false religions, sinful habits and addictions, but he is also waging an all out war against the forces of Jesus Christ. Satan aims to undermine the Church and frustrate the Divinely appointed rescue mission entrusted to it. Satan has lured many into the ambush of pride and thousands have triggered the landmines of lust. Others have been discouraged by the bombardment of criticism and many have retreated before the poison gas of gossip. The booby traps of bitterness have crippled the critical and those who have straggled behind their units have found themselves captured by the diversions of the world. Propaganda has led some to surrender to the army of unbelief.

We are in a spiritual world war (Ephesians 6:12), and the fight is to preach the Gospel to the millions living under communist oppression and Islamic deception, to smuggle Bibles to those Christians living under severe persecution, to rescue those millions living under the satanic deceptions of false religious cults and sects, to free the drug addicts and liberate the alcoholics. The world is enemy occupied territory and it needs to be liberated for Christ.

Our primary targets must include the seemingly impenetrable Marxist and Muslim areas. These strongholds must be reached for Christ, no matter what the cost! The whole church needs to be involved in this war of liberation to free the whole world from the tyranny and oppression of sin and Satan and his cohorts.

As Christians we are to be soldiers of Christ. ***“Endure hardship with us like a good soldier of Christ Jesus. No one serving as a soldier gets involved in civilian affairs – he wants to please his commanding officer.”***  
2 Timothy 2:3-4

We have a spiritual enemy to fight. *“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.”* Ephesians 6:12

We have a spiritual war to win (Romans 13:12-14). We have spiritual weapons that are powerful to the destroying of strongholds, to destroying false arguments and to pulling down every proud obstacle which is raised against the knowledge of God (2 Corinthians 10:3-5).

***“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.”*** Philippians 4:13

*“If God is for us who can be against us?”* Romans 8:31

*“In all these things we are **more than conquerors** through Him who loved us.”* Romans 8:37

Greater is Him who is in me than he that is in the world (1 John 4:4).

## THE DANGER OF INACTIVITY

King David was an extraordinary soldier and a devoted servant of the Lord God. David was Israel’s greatest king and the author of many of the most loved Psalms and Hymns. David has the unique privilege of being described by God as *“a man after My own heart”* Acts 13:22.

Yet 2 Samuel 11 records the most disastrous fall into sin by David. It all began with these ominous words: *“In the spring, at the time when kings go off to war... David remained in Jerusalem”* 2 Samuel 11:1

The quickest way to destroy ones spiritual zeal is to respond to Biblical commands with apathy and inactivity. It is a guaranteed pathway to spiritual disaster:

- When God speaks and we don’t listen;
- What the Bible teaches, we don’t apply;
- What God commands, we don’t obey;
- Where God sends, we don’t go.

There is a tremendous danger in passivity – inactivity is deadly to spiritual life (Matthew 25:33-46).

***“Anyone, then, who knows the good he ought to do and doesn’t do it sins.”*** James 4:7

Of course, on the opposite extreme, battle fatigue / burnout is another serious threat to healthy, balanced discipleship. Nevertheless, those who linger inactively at home when they should be off to war, are easy targets for temptation. The devil finds evil work for idle hands.

## WHEN DUTY CALLS

When God commissions us to fight – then we dare not flinch from our duty. We as Christians have the obligation to love our neighbours and this love must be shown in action. When Christian brothers and sisters are suffering persecution in China, Sudan, Zimbabwe and elsewhere, we must respond in prayer and action. Publicise their plight. Alert other Christians to the crisis. Pray both privately and in public meetings for the persecuted. Mobilise pressure against the persecutors. Be generous in your support of those who are practically helping the persecuted. Encourage others to contribute whatever skills or resources they can towards helping those brothers and sisters in Christ who are suffering. And if God calls you to go personally and serve His people in Sudan, North Korea, Cuba, Angola or wherever – then be prepared to respond with wholehearted enthusiasm and dedication.

It is certainly spiritually refreshing to step out in faith and obey God. The first time I heard the Gospel, I went forward and committed my life to Christ. The first time I heard a request for volunteers, I volunteered. When Scripture Union needed workers for a holiday mission; when the Sunday school needed another teacher; when posters needed to be put up to advertise an evangelistic rally; when counsellors were needed; when I heard the

first challenge to get involved in missions, I volunteered. And looking back, I'm so glad I got involved on each of these occasions.

Responding to these calls with enthusiasm were the best things I could have done. They were followed by spiritually testing times, sometimes tough times, always teaching times. They were used by the Lord to purge, purify and prepare me to be more prayerful and practical in the adventure of Christian discipleship.

## OVERCOMING OBSTACLES

The first time I heard of the persecution of Christians in **Mozambique** – that there was less than one Bible for every thousand Christians in Mozambique – I started to pray for Mozambique. Soon I was preparing to smuggle Bibles into that war torn Marxist country. Before long, God had miraculously provided, guided and protected me all the way to the capital city, Maputo, and I was able to deliver the first shipment of Bibles Christians had received since the Revolution. It is a tremendous privilege to trust and serve our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Since that first mission trip over 22 years ago, I have had the joy and privilege of crossing countless borders for Christ, delivering desperately needed Bibles and medicines to war ravaged Mozambique, Angola and Sudan. Walking across the Nuba Mountains, to deliver relief aid and show Christian films in remote areas. This is the essence of Christian love in practice. Overcoming all obstacles and discouragements, enduring whatever suffering is required, making whatever sacrifices are necessary – persisting until the task is completed. *“A curse on him who is lax in doing the Lord’s work! A curse on him who keeps his sword from bloodshed!”*

## THE WASHING OF THE SPEARS

One of the most unusual compliments that I have ever received has been from a man I deeply respect, Rev. Fano Sibisi, a Zulu missionary of KwaSizabantu Mission, the President of Christians for Truth. At the first Christians for Truth conference in 1991, Fano Sibisi responded to my presentation on Saturday evening with these words: *“Peter is a real Zulu. He sticks in the spear and then licks off the blood!”* Those who may have read *The Washing of the Spears*, and understand something of the culture and history of the warlike Zulu people will understand that this was actually a compliment. Zulus were not considered men, and were even not allowed to marry, until they had washed their spears in blood. They had to show their courage in battle by killing the enemy. For the Zulu men at that time, it was literally a curse not to have blood on his assegai. So a real Zulu was one who did not hesitate to stick in his spear (assegai) and then showed his eagerness for battle by licking the blood off the blade.

## IN THE SERVICE OF THE KING OF KINGS

We need Christians today who would have a vision of the Lord standing with a drawn sword - the *“Commander of the Army of the Lord”*. We need men and women who will say: *“Whatever You have commanded us we will do, and wherever You send us we will go.”* Joshua 1: 16. To go where God sends us, to do what He commands us.

*“But the Lord said to me ‘Do not say I am too young. You must go to everyone I send you to and say whatever I command you. Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you’ ...declares the Lord”* Jeremiah 1:7-8

***“Be strong and courageous...be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the Law my servant Moses gave you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you may go. Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful. Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.”*** Joshua 1:6-9

## THE DISGRACE OF DISOBEDIENCE

Yet, all too often we stay seated when we should stand up. We keep silent when we should speak out. We stand back when we should step out in faith. We remain at home when we should be going out into the highways and byways to proclaim the great news of our Lord Jesus Christ.

## THE MAGICIAN IN THE MALL

Sometimes the Lord makes the stones to cry out and out of the mouths of children he ordains praise.

When my daughter, Andrea, was only five years old, she was taken to the shopping centre by my mother. There in the centre of the shopping mall a magician was holding a group of children's attention when he called out to Andrea and her grandmother walking past: *"Hey, little girl, come over here! We have magic for you!"*

My mother reported that Andrea responded immediately: *"My Lord Jesus does miracles, and that's better than your magic!"*

The magician stood speechless. (There are times when we should stick the spear in and lick the blood off).

## THE SERIOUSNESS OF SIN

Jesus taught *"I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven and whoever welcomes a little child like this in My Name welcomes Me. **But if anyone causes any of these little ones who believe in Me to sin, it would be better for him to have a large millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea.** Woe to the world because of the things who cause people to sin! Such things must come, but Woe to the man through whom they come! If your hand or your foot causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life maimed or crippled than to have two hands or two feet and be thrown into eternal fire. And if your eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life with one eye than to have two eyes and to be thrown into the fire of hell."* Matthew 18:3-9

We are Christians. We are people with a message. A message of life and death. We are soldiers of Christ engaged in a great spiritual world war. Let us wake up to the urgency of a world going to hell and a spiritual emergency in the church. Truth is at stake as humanistic philosophies sweep through our universities, infiltrate our seminaries and creep into our churches.

## TO KNOW GOD AND TO MAKE HIM KNOWN

The priority of our time is to love God with all our heart, soul, strength and mind. This will involve the fear of the Lord which is the beginning of wisdom (Proverbs 1:7). ***"To honour the Lord is to hate evil."*** Proverbs 8:13. ***"Do not let evil defeat you, instead conquer evil with good."*** Romans 12 :21

*"...I am compelled to preach. Woe to me if I do not preach the Gospel!"* 1 Corinthians 9:16

*"For we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard."* Acts 4:20

*"Make every effort..."* Luke 13:24

*"...fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you..."* 2 Timothy 1:6

***"For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of self-control."*** 2 Timothy 1:7

Do you know what God wants you to do? Are you doing it wholeheartedly? *“When duty calls or danger – be never wanting there.”*

Do you know your Bible? Are you applying it effectively to every area of life? *“A curse on him who is lax in doing the Lord’s work! A curse on him who keeps his sword from bloodshed!”*

***“Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labour in the Lord is not in vain.”*** 1 Corinthians 15:58

*“Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be men of courage; be strong.”* 1 Corinthians 16:13

*“If anyone does not love the Lord – a curse be on him.”* 1 Corinthians 16:22

*“Praise be to the Lord my Rock, Who trains my hands for war, my fingers for battle. He is my loving God and my fortress, my stronghold and my deliverer, my shield, in Whom I take refuge...blessed are the people whose God is the Lord.”* Psalm 144:1-15

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