

THE BIBLE VIEW

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It's the Lord's Battle

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Having been born in the 1950's, I have seen a lot of changes in Americans and people from all over the world. Social behavior is not what it used to be, and these changes are not for society's good, either.

Sins that have been disdained and were disgusting to past generations are now openly talked about, practiced, and accepted. Those that speak out against the practices are branded "haters" and "phobic." Using the Bible as a measuring tool for what is right and what is wrong is now frowned upon, and those that stick to the old standards are laughed at and mocked. Some of the most popular television shows have an open season on making fun of Christians.

Being a Christian in the past would have often resulted in immediate respect and trust; now to many, those that are Christians are automatically mistrusted and labeled as "out of touch with reality." In the past, Christianity was recognized as a solution to social problems; now, Christian beliefs are seen as part of the "problem." Many countries are even reporting the murdering of Christians. It seems what was universally understood as evil is now thought of as good, and what was once "good" is now considered "evil."

"Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!" Isa. 5:20

Although the tides are drastically changing at the present for those that attempt to live biblically and have the Bible as a moral standard, the pressure to change God's plan has always been around. When the people rebelled against the way God had set up Israel's government, the leader Samuel was very distraught. God told the leader the real reason for the rebellion, and it was not because of Samuel. The real reason was not that they were rejecting Samuel but that they were rejecting God and refusing to obey Him.

"And the LORD said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them." I Sam. 8:7

When King Jehoshaphat faced an overwhelming army in battle, the king was also reminded whose battle it was. The battle was the Lord's.

"... Thus saith the LORD unto you, Be not afraid nor dismayed by reason of this great multitude; for the battle is not yours, but God's." II Chron. 20:15

It seems the closer a born-again child of God tries to get to God, the more problems he has. Often the challenges are from those around him, be it harassment from classmates, ridicule from peers, or legal pressure from man's laws.

The solution to stopping any beliefs or activities that are causing social pressures is not giving in and doing what the world wants us to do or changing how it wants us to think. That kind of thinking is usually what got Christians into the mess they are in in the first place: their not standing for what was right, and then compromising godly standards. We are always to continue and stand for what is right.

Here is some of what the Bible tells us to remember when facing challenges from those around us:

Do not be afraid. Trust that God will help you. Do not change what you are doing, if it is what the Lord wants you to do. The Lord will help you.

“And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he will shew to you to day: ...The LORD shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace.” Ex. 14:13-14

“Be strong and of a good courage, fear not, nor be afraid of them: for the LORD thy God, he it is that doth go with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.” Deut. 31:6 Also: Deut. 1:29-30, Ps. 118:6, Heb. 13:5-6.

The battle may be spiritual, not just the physical part you are seeing and experiencing.

“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.” Eph. 6:12

The challenge you are facing may be God’s way of changing your direction to align with His. Paul thought he was serving God until he discovered that the obstacles (“pricks”) he was facing were God’s intervention to alter his beliefs and life.

“And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks” Acts 9:5-6

Expect to fight against the forces of evil. The prophets, and biblical heroes, including Jesus, had to fight those forces. You can expect battles to come!

“Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.” I Tim. 6:12 Also: II Tim. 4:7

“If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.” John 15:19

Most opposition Christians may face may be directed at them, but in actuality, the opposition is toward God. Many of those that are saved can remember, before their salvation, how they may have mocked or been a negative influence to Christians. Lashing out against Christians is often a way to cover one’s guilt about one’s sins.

“The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil.” John 7:7

“If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified.” I Pet. 4:14

“And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.” John 3:19-20

We are to overcome difficulties God’s way, not by lowering ourselves to the world’s way of handling problems. Our handling of unpleasant situations God’s way may be the only example

of godly living others ever see. We are to be a light in this sin-darkened world. How will they see the right way, if we do not show them?

“Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.” Rom. 12:21

“See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men.” I Thes. 5:15

“Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ.” I Peter 3:16 Also: III John 1:11

“Christians are on the winning side. They need not concede to the standards of the losing side.” — Author Unknown

The Rooted Christian

Edited from an article by C. H. Spurgeon

One day I saw several beech trees that had formed a small thicket. They had all fallen to the ground after a storm.

The fact was, they leaned upon one another to a great extent, and the thickness of the wood prevented each tree from getting a firm hold of the soil. They all grew so close together that their root-growth was not enough to hold them up in a powerful storm. When the tempest forced down the first few trees, the others readily followed one after the other.

Close to that same spot, I saw another tree in the open. It bravely defied the winds, in solitary strength. The hurricane had beaten upon it, but it had endured all its force. That lone tree seemed to be better rooted.

I thought, “Are not those fallen trees like so many that profess Christianity? They often hold together and help each other to grow up, but if they have not a firm, personal roothold, when a “storm” arises they fall in rows. A minister dies or certain leaders are taken away and over go the members by departure from the faith and holiness.”

I would have you be self-contained growing each man into Christ for himself, rooted and grounded in love and faith and every holy grace. Then, when the worst “storm” that ever blew on mortal man shall come, it will be said of your faith, “It could not shake him.”

“One’s testimony is like an arrow shot from a long-bow. The force of its impact depends on the hand that drew the bow.” — Lord Bacon