

STOP WHINING-START WINNING

Part One

For I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea; and all ate the same spiritual food; and all drank the same spiritual drink, for they were drinking from a spiritual rock which followed them; and the rock was Christ. *Nevertheless, with most of them God was not well-pleased; for they were laid low in the wilderness.*

Now these things happened as examples for us, that we should not crave evil things, as they also craved. And do not be idolaters, as some of them were; as it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink, and stood up to play." Nor let us act immorally, as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in one day. Nor let us try the Lord, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the serpents. Nor grumble, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the destroyer. Now these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.

1 Corinthians 10:1-12 (Excerpted From NASB)

I. We Want to See You WIN!

A. The Mark of Godly Ministry

1. The older you get, the more you know it's not about YOU!
2. The older you get, the more you want to see your kids WIN!
3. As a pastor, you want to see the people assigned to your care WIN!

B. The Old Testament Model of Salvation

1. Paul says everything that happened to Israel in the Exodus story is a learning example for New Testament believers! So WHAT HAPPENED to them?

- God brought them OUT of Egypt
- God took them THROUGH the wilderness
- God brought them INTO the Promised Land

Then He brought us *out* from there that He might bring us *in*, to give us the land of which He swore to our fathers.
Deuteronomy 6:23 NKJV

3. We are all *purchased* for a *purpose*!
4. God has a great "destiny" for all believers, a "promised land" to which He's taking them.
5. But Paul is WARNING us that not everyone who came OUT got IN!*

**We cannot take a lot of time to develop this thought theologically. Suffice it to say that we DO believe in the "preservation of the saints," the doctrine that all born-again children of God will go to heaven. However, we believe this teaching warns about the possibility of falling short of the full purpose of God because of sin.*

6. The Apostle Paul is writing to the Corinthians as a “father” (see 1 Corinthians 4:15), exhorting them to guard against the kinds of things that can kill them “in the wilderness,” short of their purpose.

C. Locating Our Progress in God’s Plan

1. If you are still “in Egypt”, you aren’t yet redeemed.
2. If you are “in the wilderness,” you are redeemed, but unfulfilled in your calling.
3. If you’re “in the land,” you are very likely engaged in Kingdom warfare, displacing all God’s enemies and fulfilling His purposes.

*Israel spent 40 years making a two-week walk!!!
In the same way, so many are “wandering in the wilderness!”*

And when the people complained, it displeased the Lord: and the Lord heard it; and his anger was kindled; and the fire of the Lord burnt among them, and consumed them that were in the uttermost parts of the camp.
Num 11:1 KJV

II. Three Things that Keep You Whining, Not Winning

- **No Will for Warfare**
- **Stuck in the “Blame Game”**
- **Thinking with a Spirit of “Entitlement”**

A. Whining Within Our Hearts: No Will for Warfare

When Pharaoh finally let the people go, God did not lead them along the main road that runs through Philistine territory, even though that was the shortest route to the Promised Land. God said, *“If the people are faced with a battle, they might change their minds and return to Egypt.”* So God led them in a roundabout way through the wilderness toward the Red Sea.
Exodus 13:17-18 NLT

I do not want the people to change their minds and return to Egypt when they see that they are going to have to fight.
Ex 13:17-18 TEV

1. Let’s be clear about this: The delays in the wilderness are not because of *GOD*; they are caused by something inside of *US*!
2. There were enemies in Egypt, and in the Promised Land. There were **NO ENEMIES** to fight in the wilderness! (Except the ones in their hearts)
3. You will **NEVER** possess your destiny until you are ready to **FIGHT** for it!
4. If God sees into our hearts and knows we can’t take the warfare, He keeps us “circling” in the wilderness!!!

B. Kingdom Violence

1. Only a fool likes warfare, but there *ARE* things worth fighting for!

A "pacifist" nation will surely be conquered by another nation. But spiritually speaking, pacifism has an even worse result...dispossession from the Kingdom of God!

2. The Old Testament is a physical picture of spiritual truth.

3. We're not talking about tanks and guns; we're talking about a spiritual attitude willing to confront the situation.

4. Jesus uses John the Baptist as an example:

But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in *soft raiment*? behold, they that wear soft clothing are in kings' houses. But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet. For this is he, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. Verily I say unto you, among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. *And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.*

Matthew 11:8-12 KJV

From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven has been forcefully advancing, and forceful men lay hold of it.

Matthew 11:12 NIV

5. Jesus' message upset the Jews because He de-nationalized God's program from being about Israel to being about the Kingdom of God, with every man personally responsible to "press" into it!

"It (the Kingdom of God)...is not so much a political-national situation...but every man that is convinced he has a soul to save and an eternity to provide for, thrusts to get in, lest he should come short by trifling with it...*Those who would go to heaven must take pains, must strive against the stream, must press against the crowd that are going the other way.*"

Matthew Henry's Commentary

"He that will get possession of the kingdom...must be in earnest; all hell will oppose him in every step he takes, and if a man be not absolutely determined to give up his sins and evil companions, and have his soul saved at all hazards, and at every expense, will surely perish...this requires a violent earnestness."

Adam Clarke's Commentary

C. De-Fanging the Lion of Judah

1. What's wrong with the Church today? She's whining instead of winning!

2. The Gospel of the Kingdom has been "dumbed-down" into a gospel only concerned with personal salvation and personal happiness.

3. We've been so concerned to preach the "LAMB OF GOD," we have forgotten how to preach about the "LION OF JUDAH." (See Genesis 49:9; Hosea 5:14; Revelation 5:5)

- We think the goal of the Church is to produce “nice” men.
- We are concerned about being controversial.
- We’ve been intimidated by the voices of anti-Christ forces!

4. We’re not talking about physical violence, but an aggressive attitude of Kingdom commitment that recognizes warfare with the world is inevitable.

- If you say the Bible has something to say about education of our children, taxes, and moral standards, you are going to “see war.”
- If you declare Jesus is THE Way, THE Truth and THE Life, and that no one can come to God except through Him, you are in for a battle.
- If you’re going to stand up against radical Islam, gay marriage and government-run health care, you’re going to get into some battles.

5. If you think THIS is strong, it’s only going to get worse next week!

III. Stop Whining about the Warfare and Start Winning Some Battles

A. Is Disillusionment a Bad Thing?

1. Usually, we think of “disillusionment” as a negative term. But it’s actually a good thing...it’s the “end of an illusion.”

- “Well, I thought he said if I’d give my heart to Jesus everything would be fine.
- “Well, I never believed I’d have to go through this!”

2. If your expectations about life and following Jesus are false expectations, the sooner they get thrown down, the better!

B. It’s Not How You Start, It’s How You Finish

1. Review: Paul says we ought to learn some lessons from the Israelites.
2. The first lesson is that God will never take fearful people into the real warfare that only comes when you get into your proper place.
3. The only place for fearful people is the “wilderness”.

- You can’t go into the land
- God won’t let you go back to Egypt
- So what’s left? To wander interminably in the wilderness

C. The Kingdom of God: God’s Total Provision for Man’s Total Need

1. What do you need? It is there, it’s available.
2. But it’s there for the “violent”, those who “press” in. It’s for winners, not for whiners. Are you ready for warfare?