

**FIGHT THE GOOD FIGHT****#2 – FIGHT WHEN YOUR FOES OVERWHELM YOU**

PSALMS 41:5-9

**Intro:** To fight the good fight as Christians means to fight God's way according to His will – to resolve the conflict and, if possible, reconcile relationships.

*My enemies say of me in malice, "When will he die and his name perish?" Whenever one comes to see me, he speaks falsely, while his heart gathers slander; then he goes out and spreads it abroad. All my enemies whisper together against me; they imagine the worst for me, saying, "A vile disease has beset him; he will never get up from the place where he lies." Even my close friend, whom I trusted, he who shared my bread, has lifted up his heel against me.*

Psalms 41:5-9

**I. Understand Your Foe Spiritually Deal with Them*****Why is he your foe?***

- **Misunderstanding** – 1) Personality differences, 2) misunderstanding words or actions, 3) misunderstanding of motivations and purpose.
- **Are you at \_\_\_\_\_ for offending him?** – Prayerfully examine your words, actions, and motives. Have you scripturally sinned against him/her? Be willing to admit that you are wrong.
- **Is it a mere \_\_\_\_\_?** – In many situations, there is no clear right and wrong, merely differences in preference and personal opinion. Do not escalate the conflict into a right vs. wrong and win/lose situation. Sometimes seek to understand your foe's viewpoint. Often, there is some truth on both sides. Compromise, if resolution is required. At other times, agree to disagree.
- **Is it an issue worth \_\_\_\_\_?** – Many issues and offenses are inevitable when imperfect people interact...and minor. If it is occasional and minor, turn the other cheek – forgive and let it go (Matthew 5:38-42).
- **Is it sin and Satan \_\_\_\_\_ your foe and it is a major issue?** – 1) It could be jealousy, 2) unforgiveness, 3) wanting to get victory over an issue at all costs using Satan's tactics, 4) Satan's ways and agenda trying to defeat God's will and ways. In these situations, make an attempt to reconcile, then be ready to escalate the conflict.

***In our major conflicts...***

*You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you...*

Matthew 5:43-44

**II. Love Your Enemy and Forgive Them**

- **In any conflict, \_\_\_\_\_ negative emotions** – When you believe you are the innocent and aggrieved party, it is easy to let your feelings of humiliation, hurt, and vengeance to overwhelm God's guidance and cause you to overreact or react negatively. Pray to see the spiritual reality in the situation and spiritually respond, not emotionally react (Proverbs 15:1, 27:4, 29:11, 30:33).
- **Choose to \_\_\_\_\_ your enemy/foe** – This is not love with warm feelings of affection but "agape" love, a commitment to care for someone and their welfare whether they deserve it or not. This can only be done by the guidance and power of the Holy Spirit.

- \_\_\_\_\_ **your enemy/foe** – We cannot hold grudges or over time undercut or get back at our enemies. To forgive is to clean the slate and live as if our enemy owes us nothing. This does not mean the offense wasn't serious, just that it is up to God to administer justice.

*I pursued my enemies and overtook them; I did not turn back till they were destroyed. I crushed them so that they could not rise; they fell beneath my feet.* *Psalms 18:37-38*

*Finally, be strong in the Lord, and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes.* *Ephesians 6:10-11*

### **III. Sometimes, Fight Your Enemy and Defeat Them**

- ***We fight when God*** \_\_\_\_\_ ***us*** – As we deal with enemies, sometimes God directs us to fight and He will guide and work through our efforts.
- ***Often, God directs us to fight when the enemy's goal is to destroy us and*** \_\_\_\_\_ ***God's kingdom*** – When the conflict is win/lose and the goal of the enemy is to destroy us, our witness, our ministry, and damage the kingdom of God, God may direct us to stand up and fight back.
- ***We fight using God's weapons and tactics, and*** \_\_\_\_\_ ***up*** – This is spiritual warfare! We must use God's weapons of truth, wisdom, and love; not lies, conspiracies, and hate. We also fight ultimately to redeem our enemy, not destroy. We also fight using the armor of God for protection (Ephesians 6:10-19). God will direct and work through our efforts if we continually pray.
- ***We fight to accomplish God's*** \_\_\_\_\_ ***, not our own*** – Because we have been unfairly attacked, hurt, and offended, it is easy to fight to destroy the enemy, not just defeat them spiritually. This is seldom God's goal. Pray for God's goals that often will be redemption, and always God's glory, Christ magnified, and God's kingdom advanced.

*Vindicate me, O God, and plead my cause against an ungodly nation; rescue me from deceitful and wicked men.* *Psalms 43:1*

### **IV. Sometimes, Let God Do All the Fighting For You**

- ***Sometimes, God wants you to do*** \_\_\_\_\_ ***!*** – He will do all the fighting in ways that do not include your personal efforts. This means you will have to withstand the attack without fighting. Pray for God's guidance and strength to be patient and survive. Have faith that God is at work, even when you cannot see it.
- ***Sometimes, God wants you to be a*** \_\_\_\_\_ – There are those Christians who will follow God's guidance and will lose, maybe even be destroyed by the enemy. This is hard to accept. But if you are chosen to be a martyr, it is an honor to suffer as Christ did, and great is your reward in heaven! (Philippians 1:27-30, Philippians 3:10, Matthew 5:11-12)

<p><b>Answers:</b> I. Fault; disagreement; fighting; dominating. II. Control; love; forgive. III. Directs; damage; armored; goals. IV. Nothing; martyr.</p>
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