

Sermon Notes

05072023

It's Time to Fight! We Were Made to Fight.

“From the time of John the Baptist until now, the Kingdom of Heaven suffers violence and the violent take it by force.” **Matt 11:12**

- I. Violence began in the Kingdom of Heaven when John the Baptist began preaching a Gospel of repentance. **Matt 3:1-3** “Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.”
 - a. This fight began with preaching the Gospel of confession and repentance.
 - b. This fight continues in our time as the Gospel of confession and repentance is preached and men and women confess and repent by believing that Gospel. Not the gospel of prosperity and social justice or any other philosophy.
 - c. **Jesus** said, “Thus it is written and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, and that **repentance** and remission for sins should be preached in His name to all nations beginning at Jerusalem.” This is the Gospel that Jesus died for.
- II. The time of John the Baptist until now is now. As believers in Jesus, we must know what time it is (**Eph 5:15-18**; Redeem the time!). We still fight today through confession and repentance (**1John 1:9**). Not just to come into the Kingdom, but to operate in the Kingdom. Confession and repentance lead to spiritual cleansing. Without confession and repentance we fall into a weakened state, where we rebel against God. The Bible says, “if we say we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.” (**1John 1:10**)
 - a. We are **not** to be passive Christians (**passive**-accepting or allowing what happens or what others do, without active response or resistance.) The church in **Revelation 2:20**, Thyatira was a passive church that allowed false doctrine to thrive, leading to ramped sexual immorality in their midst. Jesus’ message to this church is to **repent**.
 - b. We are not to be complacent or aloof Christians (**complacent**- marked by self-satisfaction, especially when accompanied by unawareness of actual dangers or deficiencies; **aloof**- removed and distant either physically or emotionally cool and lukewarm). The church in **Revelation 3:14**, Laodicea relied on their wealth and comfort for justification, but Jesus said that they were wretched and naked in the spirit. He said they were neither hot or cold, just existing, and not in service unto the Lord. Jesus’ message again to this church was to **repent**.
- III. We are to fight, understanding that we don’t fight against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual host of wickedness in the heavenly places. **Eph 6:12** Since this is a spiritual battle, we must be spiritually dressed in clean garments. **1John 1:9**
 - a. We must be a faithful church like the church in Philadelphia identified in **Rev. 3:7**. Jesus told this church, “Because you have kept my commandment to persevere, I will keep you

from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth.”

- b. We must be courageous believers like the church the church in in Smyrna. Although they had very little materially and were heavily persecuted, they continued to work for the Lord. Jesus told them that outwardly they may have been poor, but inwardly, because of their faith they were rich. Jesus promised them that if they were faithful unto death, He would give them a “crown of life”.
- c. Fight the good fight! **1Tim 6:11,12**