

# MARK JENKINS MINISTRIES

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Christianity Isn't For Wimps!

Dear Friend,

Recently, I taught a message on our weekly LiveStream, Thursday night, broadcast entitled "Christianity Isn't for Sissies". The message was based on a statement Paul made in his second letter to young pastor Timothy in which he admonished Timothy to "Endure hardness as a good soldier". (II Timothy 2:3) I marvel at how the Holy Ghost was able to use those few words to paint a picture that has taken me years to truly appreciate.

If someone had told me 26 years ago, shortly after having accepted Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior that I would need to "endure hardness as a good soldier" I would have looked at them with bewilderment wondering exactly what they meant. My reply might have been something like this; **'Bless God, I'm saved and going to heaven and I have absolutely no idea what it means to "endure hardness as a good soldier" because I am just so thankful to be saved.'**

I believe most new Christians are like I was, oblivious to the spiritual "hand to hand" conflict that awaited me once I made the decision to follow Jesus. Granted, for those who choose the path of least resistance and opt to ride a pew instead of maturing in the things of God, they pose little threat to satan's kingdom. It's the person who makes Jesus Christ the Lord of their life and decides they want all of God they can get that earns the attention of the enemy.

Depending on what path you choose to walk you may or may not ever be faced with this issue of "enduring hardness". What I mean by that is this, if you have chosen to take the path of least resistance and found a home in a church that pats you on the head once a week and tells you your okay just the way you are, then you will most likely not be interested in hearing about how God expects us to endure anything.

But, if you are like me, someone who is hungry for truth and who is willing to "fight the good fight of faith" (I Timothy 6:12), then I'm sure you have already

discovered that “Christianity isn’t for wimps!” You have most likely discovered that it is necessary, or maybe I should say expected of us as God’s children to take our stand on His Word and refuse to bow to the attacks of the devil. Our Father expects us to believe His Word and be courageous enough to hold onto His Word in the face of dire circumstances.

By making a stand of faith on God’s word when all of hell seems to be lined up against us; a “hardening” takes place in us. **This “hardening” in turn qualifies us to be used by God in greater levels of responsibility and service for the King.** Choosing not to make these faith stands certainly won’t keep a person from spending eternity with Jesus, but it might shorten the time they have to wait to be with Him.

Believers who choose **not** to make these faith stands limit themselves to the solutions offered by the world’s system. In the case of sickness and disease, so long as the world’s system offers a solution the believer can breathe a sigh of relief as they take their medicine. In the event they are faced with an incurable disease, if they have never taken the time to develop their faith, they will most likely succumb to the disease. What a shame to die to a disease, even though they have an iron clad guarantee that their healing is an accomplished fact, according to I Peter 2:24.

***“Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes you were healed.”***

For those Christians who do choose to make a stand of faith, many will wait until all other possible solutions have been exhausted and the symptoms are raging in their body before attempting to act on the promise of I Peter 2:24. Instead of establishing a lifestyle of using God’s word against their problems, long before being faced with an incurable disease, they have waited until they are in the fight of their life to try and build a bridge of faith to their healing. The best time to build a bridge is not when the floodwaters are rising, it’s before.

The power in God’s word is no less powerful regardless of what stage of the fight you are in. Yet, why does it seem as though so few who find themselves in this predicament come out the other side successful? The training process, referred to by Paul, which would have produced a “hardening” on the inside of them, was never established. Consequently, they were unable to withstand the pressures brought on by the ailment and the disease overtook them. Their failure to clothe themselves in God’s armor, by pouring over God’s word and praying in other tongues, left them ill equipped and unable to stand against the wiles of the devil.

(Ephesians 6:10-11)

***“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might. (11) Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.”***

So let's say a person gets saved and chooses the path of least resistance by limiting their Christian walk to reading a verse here or there during the week, praying over their meal, and occupying their favorite pew once or twice a week. They listen to messages that don't encourage them to press on in the things of God, but rather tell them they are okay the way they are. Years may go by and while they have a happy life, comparable to those around them, they are in no way prepared for any attacks by the enemy. Instead of "hardness" they are soft and spongy like a marshmallow.

One day, disaster strikes. Maybe they or one of their loved ones contracts an incurable disease and doctors are no help to them. What good will all those "powder puff" messages that told them to "be a good person" and "live a good moral life" do now when disease is raging in their body?

What's worse is when some **misinformed** preacher begins telling them that God made them sick to teach them something. How sad! Or, that God "**allowed**" this terrible thing to happen to teach them something. I wonder what Bible they are reading or if they have ever taken the time to get to know our wonderful heavenly Father. When God in His word said "**By His (Jesus) stripes you were healed**" all questions as to God's mind regarding our healing are revealed.

How ridiculous it is to believe that our Father God would send Jesus to the cross to redeem us, which includes our deliverance from sickness and disease and then use satan's attack on our bodies to teach us. The person who believes and teaches that doctrine does not yet comprehend the message of redemption. They have no comprehension about our deliverance from sickness and disease being an accomplished fact. They still think they are waiting on God to respond to their prayers when in fact God did respond 2000+ years ago by sending Jesus to the cross.

It's this kind of wrong believing that keeps a person bound with sickness and disease thinking they are waiting on God to heal them. When a Christian believes God is their problem, where else do they have to turn? Can you see what a horrible trick satan has played on the body of Christ?

Now that we see the problem, let's look at the solution. First of all, **God is not our problem**. Wrong teaching and wrong believing is our problem. The idea that as long as we live a good, moral life, occupy our favorite pew once or twice a week and pray over our meals we are fulfilling God's expectations for us, must be changed. How do we change it? Good question. Continuing to do the same things, listen to the same preaching and expect different results isn't going to change the problem.

For some, it may mean leaving a church that their family has gone to for generations. For others it may mean exposing themselves to teaching other than what they are receiving at the church house once a week. It certainly is not for me to say what is best for you. Only the Holy Ghost can give you your answer. The real solution then is learning how to turn yourself over to the true Teacher, the Holy Ghost, and enrolling yourself in His training camp. That is, of course, assuming you desire to meet the enemy head on and stop trying to fend him off with wrong doctrine and wrong ideas.

It reminds me of when I was a young boy playing tackle football with a youth league. My position was on the offensive line and I was supposed to protect the quarterback. We were preparing for a game and the whole team was listening as the coach described the players from the opposite team and where they played. The coach came to me and told of the boy whom I would be responsible for guarding against and told of his skill and size. I said, "I hope he plays somewhere else." To my shock, the coach pulled me out of the lineup and put someone in my place. I learned real quick to keep my mouth shut.

**The whole idea of all those football practices was to harden me up so that regardless of the size or strength of my opponent I would face him with every confidence in the world that he would not overtake me.** The same is true spiritually. The enemy wants to scare us into believing that he is some great foe and we are defenseless against him. Unfortunately, far too many Christians believe Satan's lies because they have not been taught the truth about our redemption or about our authority over the devil as children of the most high God.

Consequently, when he comes **roaring like a lion** (1 Peter 5:8) we freeze and look to God to save us. Just like me, we are looking at the "coach", who in this case is God, and saying, "I wish the devil would go somewhere else" or "Can you make the devil leave me alone?" All the while Jesus won our victory over the devil and gave us the responsibility of **resisting the enemy and making him flee from us**. (James 4:7) That is, of course, assuming that we are wholeheartedly surrendered to God.

Christianity isn't for wimps, and never has been. Successful believers are those who are strong in the Lord and courageous no matter what the enemy throws at them. No one wakes up one day and says; "Now I'm going to be a strong and courageous Christian! Yesterday I was a wimp but today is a new day and I am strong in the Lord". It is a great confession, but in reality the road to strength and courage and maturity is a road of progression that begins long before we ever see the fruit of its existence.

Although it won't happen overnight, the moment you purpose in your heart to become the person God has created you to be and enlist in God's training process, which is the school of the Holy Ghost, the growth begins. Along the way, you will come into times when the enemy will challenge you and what you believe. It will be in those times that you will either take your stand of faith on God's Word or draw back in fear. Simply repent if you have drawn back, but know that if and when you make your stand of faith that a hardening will take place, which will serve you in the battles you will face in the future.

Notice what Peter said, (1 Peter 1:7)

***"That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perishes, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ."***

As you make your stand of faith realize that your weaknesses are going to surface and you are going to be faced with having to deal with your own weaknesses. Impatience, fear and issues of control are going to have to die as the gold of your life is cleansed of the dross of the flesh. It is by no means fun, but it is very necessary if we are ever going to have the best God has for us.

God loves us so much and He wants us to be strong in His strength and courageous no matter what we face, knowing He is more than enough. Our strength is found in Him and His word, which comes alive in us through the ministry of the Holy Ghost as our Teacher and "Coach". We empower the Holy Ghost to begin the training process by praying in other tongues and meditating and confessing God's word. Decide today to submit yourself to God's training and refuse to ever back down from the enemy because you are not a wimp! In doing so, you will experience the very best God has for us.

~ Jesus Loves You!

*Mark Jenkins*