

## Becoming a Violent Christian — Overcoming Passivity

**Daniel 11:32 (NKJV)**

<sup>32</sup>Those who do wickedly against the covenant he shall corrupt with flattery; but the people who know their God shall be strong, and carry out great exploits.

- *The Book of Daniel is filled with many prophecies which provide insights about the end times.*
- *This prophecy found in Daniel does not paint a picture of God's people being downtrodden. Instead, it paints a picture of people filled with faith and able to rise above the persecution and difficult circumstances of the end times to do great things for God!*
- *However, the one condition for believers to be able to do great exploits is to have a vibrant relationship with God and a deep understanding of His Word.*
- *“but the people who know their God shall be strong, and carry out great exploits”*

**2 Chronicles 16:9a (NKJV)**

<sup>9</sup>For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him.”

- *God is eagerly looking and searching for those among His people who are willing to be totally yielded to Him, so He can manifest His power and glory through them. “whose heart is loyal to Him.”*
- *The problem with many of God's people is that their half-hearted relationship with Him and their service to Him is reflected in their lives.*
- *Rather than their lives reflecting the fruit of the spirit, selfishness and self-centeredness permeate their lives to such an extent that they live mediocre and defeated lives at best.*
- *This mediocre living reinforces in the minds of many believers not to expect much from God and that being sold out for Christ carries no benefit.*

**Matthew 6:10 (NKJV)**

<sup>10</sup>Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

- *Praying this part of the Lord's Prayer should fill us with expectation and embolden us to believe great things from God.*
- *It is a faith-filled and joyful prayer!*

- *There are four things we can learn from Matthew 6:10:*
  1. *God's will is already being fully done in Heaven.*
  2. *God's will is not yet being fully done on earth.*
  3. *We can agree with God in prayer to see His will done on earth.*
  4. *His kingdom is coming and His perfect will is going to be ultimately manifest on the earth. Hallelujah!*

**Matthew 6:33 (NKJV)**

<sup>33</sup> **But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.**

- *God has called us to place His priorities ahead of our own priorities. This is the only way to live an overcoming life.*

**“Delight yourself in the LORD, and he will give you the desires of your heart.”**  
(Psalm 37:4, ESV).

- *When we put God's priorities ahead of our priorities we will be delighted to find that it will result in all our heart's desires ultimately being fulfilled.*
- *God has called us to see His will done on earth as it is done in Heaven. In other words, to see His kingdom and His righteousness manifested in this world starting in our lives and then affecting the lives of those around us.*
- *At Jesus' birth He was declared the King of the Jews.*
- *King Jesus has already come and once He set His foot on the earth, His Kingdom began and continues to be established.*

**Matthew 2:2 NKJV**

<sup>2</sup> **“Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him.”**

- *As we engage in the sanctification process, God is setting up His Kingdom within us.*
- *Jesus was born a King and He died a King!*

**Matthew 27:37 NKJV**

<sup>37</sup> **And they put up over His head the accusation written against Him: THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS.**

- *Jesus was resurrected from the dead as proof that He is the King of Kings!*

**Revelation 1:5 NKJV**

<sup>5</sup> and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth. To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood,

- *Jesus will return as the conquering King to establish His eternal Kingdom!*

**Revelation 19:16 NKJV**

<sup>16</sup> And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.

**Matthew 11:12 (NKJV)**

<sup>12</sup> And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force.

- *This one verse provides an essential key to living a fruitful and overcoming life.*
- *“from the days of John the Baptist until now” Something significant happened during the days of John the Baptist. A change had taken place—Jesus Christ the King of Kings was born into the world.*
- *“the kingdom of heaven suffers violence.” The verb “suffers violence” can be translated as “the kingdom of heaven is forcing itself.” In other words, the subject (the kingdom of heaven) is performing the action upon itself and so is pushing itself forward with great power and strength.*
- *“From the starting point of the days of John the Baptist even to this very moment the kingdom of heaven is forcing itself upon men’s attention...”*

**Matthew 2:3 (NKJV)**

<sup>3</sup> When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.

**Matthew 11:12 (NCV)**

<sup>12</sup> Since the time John the Baptist came until now, the kingdom of heaven has been going forward in strength, and people have been trying to take it by force.

**Matthew 11:12 (NIV)**

<sup>12</sup> From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven has been forcefully advancing, and forceful men lay hold of it.

- *God’s Kingdom is not struggling or being attacked, but it is advancing and pushing itself upon the affairs of mankind and of individuals.*
- *People cannot ignore God; they either have to accept Christ or reject Him. There is no neutral ground. Either we are for Him or against Him.*
- *Either way Christ’s Kingdom is advancing!*

**Matthew 11:12 (NKJV)**

<sup>12</sup> And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force.

**Matthew 11:12 (Williams)**

<sup>12</sup> And from the days of John the Baptist until the present moment the kingdom of heaven has been continuously taken by storm, and those who take it by storm are seizing it as a precious prize.

- *We must see the precious treasure that God's Kingdom is so we will be willing to violently fight for it. It is worth fighting for!*
- *"From the starting point of the days of John the Baptist even to this very moment the kingdom of heaven is forcing itself upon men's attention. The violent and those who use force and take it by storm are seizing it as a precious prize."*
- *God is seeking to get our attention and those who recognize the value of what God is offering us aggressively seek to seize it.*
- *Only the violent Christian will be able to receive what God is offering him or her.*
- *"The most violent thing a Christian can do is obey God absolutely."*

**Matthew 16:18 (NKJV)**

".... on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it."

- *The revelation of Jesus Christ as the Son of the living God is such a violent truth that the very gates of Hell cannot stand against the Church.*
- *One reason the Church and Christians do not experience victory more often is because they are passive in their faith and expectations.*
- *Sometimes Christians are unable to resist temptation or develop the spiritual discipline required to live overcoming lives. This is not because the temptation is so strong, but because their desires are weak and they are far too easily pleased with the status quo.*
- *They are too easily pleased with the temporal and mediocre things of life and are not stirred by truly valuable eternal treasures.*
- *Their desires are not too strong, they're too weak. They have no desire to be violent.*

- *They are willing to live lukewarm and defeated lives instead of being violent Christians willing to be fully obedient to God.*
- *They fail to see God do great things in their lives and they fail to do great exploits for God's kingdom.*
- *John the Baptist was such a violent man that the only way he could be silenced was to kill him by cutting off his head.*
- *John the Baptist never lifted a fist or took up a sword. But his violence was so intolerable to this world and the devil because he was fully obedient to God and he stood unwaveringly for the truth.*
- **EXAMPLES OF THE VIOLENCE OF CHRISTIAN ACTIONS THROUGH SACRIFICE:**
- *The concept of a sacrifice is something that is violent. A sacrifice speaks in itself of violence.*
- *A sacrifice means something must die. Self-sacrifice is dying to self so we can live for Christ.*

#### ***1. Sacrifice of Obedience:***

**1 Samuel 15:22 (NKJV)**

**<sup>22</sup>So Samuel said: "Has the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, As in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, And to heed than the fat of rams.**

- *Full obedience is the most violent act we can execute against our rebellious nature.*
- *Absolute obedience is not obeying as we think or want (that can lead to fanaticism), but as God truly instructs and leads.*

#### ***2. Sacrifice of Praise and Thanksgiving:***

- *Being thankful and praising God even in the midst of painful and difficult circumstances is the most violent act against our selfishness and our sense of entitlement.*

#### ***3. Sacrifice of Blessing our Enemies:***

**Romans 12:20 (NKJV)**

**<sup>20</sup>Therefore "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; If he is thirsty, give him a drink; For in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head."**

- *Blessing our enemies is so violent it is like pouring hot coals on their heads.*

#### 4. Sacrifice of Righteousness:

Matthew 5:10(NKJV)

<sup>10</sup>Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

- *Standing up for righteousness is so violent that people may persecute, mock, and even kill you.*

#### 5. Sacrifice of Forgiveness:

- *For us to forgive, to reach out to those who have hurt us, is an act of violence against our selfish sinful nature that is so strong that it requires the grace of God for us to forgive.*
- *The sacrifice of forgiveness does violence to our sense of vindication, retaliation, and self-righteousness.*

#### 6. Sacrifice of Submission:

- *The sacrifice of submission does violence to our independence.*
- *“Nevertheless, not my will, but yours, be done.” (Luke 22:42, ESV). This single prayer was so powerful it took Jesus to the cross. It was so violent that He defeated Satan, sin, and the world in one single action through His death and resurrection.*

#### 7. Sacrifice of Humility:

- *The sacrifice of humility does violence to our pride.*
- *Passive lives prevent us from pressing through to victory.*
- *A passive Christian does not pray or study God's Word when he or she feels dry.*
- *A violent Christian seeks God diligently even in times when he or she feels dry spiritually.*
- *A passive Christian exhibits outbursts of anger.*
- *A violent Christian exhibits self-control.*

- *A passive Christian experiences turmoil even at the smallest problem.*
- *A violent Christian has a peace that passes all understanding even in the face of great trials.*
- *A passive Christian is discontent with God's provision no matter how much they have or how greatly God has blessed them.*
- *A violent Christian is satisfied and has contentment even in the face of lack.*
- *A passive Christian is driven by lusts.*
- *A violent Christian is motivated by love.*
- *A passive Christian is impulsive.*
- *A violent Christian is patient and does not react, but responds to the leading of the Spirit.*
- *A passive Christian is motivated by self-interest and is self-absorbed.*
- *A violent Christian is a worshiper of God.*
- *A passive Christian can only be thankful and praise God during favourable circumstances.*
- *A violent Christian is consistently filled with thanksgiving to God regardless of circumstances.*
- *A passive Christian rejoices only when circumstances are favourable.*
- *A violent Christian always rejoices because they see the goodness of God regardless of circumstances.*
- *We see an example of violent faith in the story of Nehemiah.*
- *In the face of almost overwhelming opposition Nehemiah stirred the Jews to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem which had been totally broken down and neglected.*

#### **Nehemiah 4:1-3 NKJV**

<sup>1</sup> But it so happened, when Sanballat heard that we were rebuilding the wall, that he was furious and very indignant, and mocked the Jews.

<sup>2</sup> And he spoke before his brethren and the army of Samaria, and said, "What are these feeble Jews doing? Will they fortify themselves? Will they offer sacrifices?"

Will they complete it in a day? Will they revive the stones from the heaps of rubbish-stones that are burned?"

<sup>3</sup> Now Tobiah the Ammonite was beside him, and he said, "Whatever they build, if even a fox goes up on it, he will break down their stone wall."

- *When we begin to seek God and strengthen our faith and rebuild those areas in our lives where we have failed, the enemy will mock us and try to discourage us. His goal is to so dishearten us that we will give up.*

**Nehemiah 4:6 NKJV**

<sup>6</sup> So we built the wall, and the entire wall was joined together up to half its height, for the people had a mind to work.

- *In spite of the opposition the Jews did not give up but continued to build.*

**Nehemiah 4:7-8 NKJV**

<sup>7</sup> Now it happened, when Sanballat, Tobiah, the Arabs, the Ammonites, and the Ashdodites heard that the walls of Jerusalem were being restored and the gaps were beginning to be closed, that they became very angry,

<sup>8</sup> and all of them conspired together to come and attack Jerusalem and create confusion.

- *When the enemy of the Jews saw their words of derision and mocking did not deter them they resorted to threats.*

**Nehemiah 4:9 NKJV**

<sup>9</sup> Nevertheless we made our prayer to our God, and because of them we set a watch against them day and night.

- *However, instead of Nehemiah and the Jews becoming disheartened and giving up they turned to God in prayer and became even more diligent to guard against the enemy's attacks.*

**Nehemiah 4:10-12 NKJV**

<sup>10</sup> Then Judah said, "The strength of the laborers is failing, and there is so much rubbish that we are not able to build the wall."

<sup>11</sup> And our adversaries said, "They will neither know nor see anything, till we come into their midst and kill them and cause the work to cease."

<sup>12</sup> So it was, when the Jews who dwelt near them came, that they told us ten times, "From whatever place you turn, they will be upon us."

- *However, Judah began to be overwhelmed by the plans of the enemy and the people began to falter in their faith. Fear and discouragement began to set in.*



- *We must be careful not to listen to the lies of the enemy but fill our hearts and minds with God's truth.*

#### **Nehemiah 4:13-14 NKJV**

<sup>13</sup> Therefore I positioned men behind the lower parts of the wall, at the openings; and I set the people according to their families, with their swords, their spears, and their bows.

<sup>14</sup> And I looked, and arose and said to the nobles, to the leaders, and to the rest of the people, "Do not be afraid of them. Remember the Lord, great and awesome, and fight for your brethren, your sons, your daughters, your wives, and your houses."

- *As the faith of some of the Jews began to weaken, Nehemiah strengthened their faith by calling them to take up their weapons and to exhort them to fight for their families and nation.*

#### **Nehemiah 4:18a (NKJV)**

"Every one of the builders had his sword girded at his side as he built."

- *Violent faith continues to build God's Kingdom even while fighting against the enemy!*
- *We need to be violent to fight when the enemy seeks to destroy our families and our testimony. We need to arm ourselves with God's Word and prayer.*

#### **Nehemiah 4:23 NKJV**

<sup>23</sup> So neither I, my brethren, my servants, nor the men of the guard who followed me took off our clothes, except that everyone took them off for washing.

- *Having violent faith is not allowing the enemy to ambush us. We must learn never to take our eyes off of Jesus but to always be in prayer, in His Word, and in fellowship. Rebuilding the wall was a collective effort.*

#### **Nehemiah 6:15-16 NKJV**

<sup>15</sup> So the wall was finished on the twenty-fifth day of Elul, in fifty-two days.

<sup>16</sup> And it happened, when all our enemies heard of it, and all the nations around us saw these things, that they were very disheartened in their own eyes; for they perceived that this work was done by our God.

- *The end result of their violent faith was threefold:*
- *The wall of the entire city was completed in 52 days!*
- *The enemy was the one who became disheartened and downtrodden.*

- *The people of God were encouraged and strengthened for it became very evident that God was with them in their work.*
- *My desire is that each church would be able to declare: our pastor and church are violent.*
- *Christians are often passive, so the world sees Christians who are filled with hostility and contention. The world sees passive Christians who act very much like non-believers.*
- *Let us be violent for Jesus armed with Faith, Hope and Love!*