



INSTRUCTIONS IN RIGHTEOUSNESS

Dr. Peter D. Wyns

Entry 6 - 11

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Moving to the Next Level

Christians fight battles every time they move to the next level of God's purpose. If they are not advancing they may not face battles, but when they step out to accomplish the work of God, they face resistance. Believers experience many battles. Some are due to judgments from generational curses. Others may be self-imposed because of sin or wrong choices. The most important battles, however, are fought over one's calling and purpose. When a person is advancing in the purposes of God, they will have a fight. It happens when folks get saved, when they plant a church, start a new ministry or serve the Lord at a higher level. Spiritual resistance may come before a marriage, a new job, the birth of a child, when they connect with a new ministry or when they go on a mission.

Too many saints are caught in a dreadful fight for survival. They are digging their way out of a mess that was caused by their past, a family member, or a pre-existing situation. We are called to pray for, strengthen, be patient with, and help those people. Some of them are weak, fearful, oppressed and even rebellious, but scripture exhorts us to help those who are facing such battles. 2 Thessalonians 5:13

My focus in this study, however, is on a different kind of battle. It concerns the battle that Paul fought as he pressed forward to find his calling (Philippians 3:12). This is the battle to move to the next level of purpose, blessings or ministry for your life.

Every Bible hero faced next-level battles before reaching their goal. Noah suffered persecution, Moses faced rejection and insecurity and Joseph met with opposition, as did David and Daniel. Peter, Paul, James and John were constantly bombarded with attacks designed to keep them from their purpose.

Jesus is our greatest example. Before, starting His ministry, He faced intense battles in the wilderness.

Jesus fought battles from the moment He started His ministry. Each of Christ's battles came as an attempt to stop Him from completing His mission. He, however, was victorious in the face of every battle and we should learn to follow His example. Read Lk. 4:1-14

Jesus was 30 when His ministry and His battles began. His parents fought battles at His birth but Jesus did not face them until His ministry was forthcoming. So it is for us; advancement brings battles.

The story of Jesus in the wilderness is given in 3 of the Gospels. It is preceded by His water baptism. Baptism is the definitive expression of Christian commitment. Jesus said He must be baptized to fulfill righteousness. He demonstrated his commitment in a public setting and immediately He was led into the wilderness to a private setting. This is where He learned about His coming ministry. If you want to serve the Lord, it begins with a public commitment.

Jesus was led into the wilderness because the time had come for God to reveal the depths of who He was and what His full mission would entail. Jesus was about to move to the next level and of course, Satan was there to derail Him, if possible. Jesus is God, but

He still had to grow in favor with God and with man. In other words, He did not know everything when He was born. He had to learn and grow. He was like any other baby who had to discover the basics of walking and talking. His spiritual growth was progressive as well. At some point, God had to tell Jesus everything about who He was and what He was called to accomplish. The full details were reserved for His pre-ministry, wilderness experience. It is no wonder that the devil was there to tempt Him.

Jesus had prophecies spoken over His life at birth and the scriptures are full of prophetic words about Him. His mother would have talked with Him about these prophecies. The wilderness experience, however, was God talking with Jesus, away from the crowds. It was time for Jesus to receive more details concerning His prophetic calling.

God may be releasing new words over your life, at this time, to help you prepare for the next level of purpose, blessings or ministry.

In the wilderness, Jesus learned the fullness of who He was and how His ministry should proceed. He learned about His coming struggles and His purpose at the cross. He foresaw His burial, His resurrection and His ascension into heaven. He saw the coming birth of the Church and His future in the throne room. He learned about the salvation of

the multitudes, His second coming, His millennium reign and His ultimate victory over the devil. This was so serious a time for learning and testing that Jesus fasted for 40 days. It released a monumental transition in His life so that Jesus could move to the next level.

There were 3 temptations that Jesus faced in the wilderness. If He was tempted, then we will be tempted, especially if we are advancing. Satan wants to derail us. The sins Jesus was tempted with are the 3 sins that include every kind of sin. John describes them.

For all that is in the world - the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life - is not of the Father but is of the world. 1Jn. 2:16

The lust of the flesh is the craving desire to satisfy the wants of the body. It includes such sins as adultery, gluttony, laziness and drunkenness. Jesus was tempted with the lust of the flesh when Satan said,

“If you are the Son of God, tell this stone to become bread.” Lk. 4:3

The lust of the eyes is the craving desire to have the things we see. Jesus was tempted with the lust of the eyes when Satan showed Him the kingdoms of the world and said:

“I will give you all their authority and splendor - if you worship me.” Lk. 4:6

The 3rd sin is the pride of life; the craving desire to draw attention to one-

self and to be recognized as very important. Jesus was tempted with the pride of life when Satan said:

“If you are the Son of God, ... throw yourself down ... for it is written, He will command His angels - to guard you.” Lk. 4:9-10

For each temptation, Jesus quoted a scripture to deflect the attacks of the devil. He was victorious and Satan was unable to derail, distract or even delay Jesus from the call of God on His life. Jesus had to fight heavy battles before moving to the next level. Like the battle over your future, Jesus faced battles and afterward He needed the angels to attend and comfort Him (Mt. 4:11).

The story ends with the report that **Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit**. If you are victorious in your fight to move to the next level, you will be tired and need the comfort of angels, but you will definitely leave that battle and go forth in the power of the Spirit.

Look for these signs of victory after any moving-to-the-next-level battle.

1. You will be focused and more determined concerning the mission.
2. You will find that God opened doors for you that no one can close.
3. You will be anointed by God and have supernatural help for the ministry ahead of you. AΩ



Christians for Messiah Ministries

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Christians for Messiah Ministries PO Box 36324, Rock Hill, South Carolina, 29732

Office: 803-324-0739 or 704-608-7793 e-mail: reachus@peterwyns.com www.peterwyns.org

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