
NORTHSIDE BULLETIN

Editor: Mike Webb | July 21, 2019

Sick

Shut-ins and Members Battling
Health Issues:

Sis. Darnell

Sis. Burns

Sis. Sharp is in Encompass 209

Sis. Higginbottom

Sis. Linda McClure

Bro. Carl Hollis Jr

Bro. And Sis. Wheeler

Bro. and Sis. Young

Sis. Shirley Berry

Sis. Mary Branscum

Sis. Janie Gilbert

Sis. Linda Rose

Sis. Brenda Fasulo

Family and Friends of Members

Amy Branscum's brother

Phyllis Hale's brother

Shirley Meade's niece

Brenda Fasulo's mother

Sue Southard's mother

Sheila Brogdon's brother

John Erickson

Bro. And Sis Wade

Stephanee Hart's Step-father

Ready to Fight?

by John Gibson

“Fight! Contend! Do battle! When apostasy arises, when false teachers emerge, when the truth of God is attacked, it is time to fight for the faith.”

Those words, taken from the introduction to Jude found in the Wide Margin Reference Edition of the New Kings James Version from Thomas Nelson Publishers, copyright 1994, remind us that the life of a Christian is not always a life of ease. Peter warns us that just as Israel of old had to deal with false prophets, we will regularly contend with false teachers who are capable of leading many astray ([2 Peter 2:1, 2](#)). The introduction cited above went on to say, “Only believers who are spiritually ‘in shape’ can answer the summons.” Do we possess the necessary spiritual fitness to do battle with the forces of darkness that threaten God’s people?

Perhaps the best place to begin our conditioning is with a realization of the danger involved. Most today, including far too many Christians, do not see false teaching as a great danger. The constitutional freedom of religion has produced a society that thinks it has an inalienable right to believe and practice anything it wants. This all too common attitude ignores at least two very significant points.

First, God warns against false teachers. “Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world ([1 John 4:1](#))” Add to that the warnings in [Matthew 7:15](#); [Acts 20:29-31](#); [2 Timothy 2:14-18](#); [3:13](#); [4:2-4](#); [Titus 1:9-11](#); 2 Peter 2; the book of Jude, et al. It is an indisputable truth that the Bible contains warning after warning against being led astray by false teachers and false teaching. We must take this threat seriously.

Second, only the truth can make us free ([John 8:31, 32](#)), and with so many different things being taught it is obvious some are not teaching the truth. If we do not take the danger of false teaching seriously we are ignoring passages such as [Galatians 1:8, 9](#). “But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed. As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed.”

But if we realize the danger, how do we get ourselves into shape to fight? Just as a boxer preparing for a fight spends many hours running, jumping rope, sparring, etc., we must prepare for battle by building ourselves up spiritually through study and prayer (cf. [Jude 20](#)). Before launching a lengthy discussion of the danger of false teachers in 2 Peter 2 and 3, the apostle spoke repeatedly in ch. 1 of the

importance of knowledge. He reminded his readers that the word of God was completely trustworthy and could be relied on ([2 Peter 1:16-21](#)). If we are going to be prepared to fight a spiritual warfare, we must be well acquainted with the sword God has placed in our hands, i.e. His word ([Ephesians 6:17](#)). If we are not taking our Bible study seriously, we are in danger of following their destructive ways, being allured by the lusts of the flesh, being overcome and brought into bondage, and being entangled again in the pollutions of the world we had previously escaped ([2 Peter 2:2, 18-20](#)). The successful boxer spends countless hours in strenuous preparation for his fight—will we spend the time necessary to win a battle of far greater significance?

Preparation by way of acquired knowledge is vitally important if we would be prepared to Fight! Contend! Do battle!, but another essential to preparation is the development of our character. In [2 Timothy 4:1-5](#) Paul gave his son in the faith a most solemn charge to preach the word despite many turning aside to fables, but take note of what was said earlier in the epistle: “Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart. But avoid foolish and ignorant disputes, knowing that they generate strife. And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, in humility correcting those who are in opposition... ([2 Timothy 2:22-25](#)).

Just as the disciples worried that the sinless Savior had offended the Pharisees ([Matthew 15:12](#)), some find all spiritual conflict offensive and would have us sheathe the sword of the Spirit never to do battle again, but the enemy has not put down his weapons and neither can we. But while recognizing that some will unfairly and improperly object no matter how skillfully, kindly, and righteously the battle is conducted, it must be acknowledged that far too often the servants of God have not conducted themselves as the Lord instructed in 2 Timothy 2. When the battle is conducted with arrogance, lack of love, intimidation instead of teaching, a belligerent spirit, etc., it is not only displeasing to God but also causes some to turn from the battle. While our good works are capable of leading others to glorify God ([Matthew 5:16](#)), when ugly attitudes are displayed and mean-spirited actions take place in the heat of battle it can lead others to reject the very thing God requires of His people, viz. honorable conflict. Let us never forget that being spiritually “in shape” requires more than knowledge and debate skills—it also requires that the fruit of the Spirit be displayed when called upon to do battle ([Galatians 5:22-26](#)).

Are we prepared to “Fight! Contend! Do battle!”? If not, it is time to start our spiritual “conditioning” program.

Remember VBS is July
29-31st

This Week's Scripture Readings:

July 23- 2 Kings 7-8, 2 Chron.21, Matt.6

July 24 - 2 Kings 9-10, Psalm 49, Matt.7

July 25 - 2 Chron.22-23, 2 Kings 11, Psa. 131, Matt.8

July 26 - 2 Chron.24, 2 Kings 12, Psa.50, Matt.9

July 27 - Joel, Matt.10

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Assembling Times:

Sunday Bible Class: 9:00 am
Sunday Worship: 10:00 am and 5:00 pm
Wednesday Bible Study: 7:00 pm



**The Bible is
Our Guide**