

The Battle With Sin: Violent With Humility (Part 3)

Tim Conway | illbehonest.com

The truth is... Jesus said, "what would a man give in exchange for his soul. The way we read our Bibles is... There is a battle you have to fight as a true christian and you have to win if you would take heaven and I know... people suddenly get stirred when they hear that and say "I thought we were saved by grace through faith". We are, but the kind of faith that takes heaven is the kind that sees Christ so valuable and it will fight through everything that stands in the way to get there. That is the kind of faith that saves and to get there, as one man wisely said to the church in the book of Acts, "through much tribulation we inherit or we take or we enter that kingdom". Through it. You don't go around it, under it, over it, you have to go through it and the person who has the faith that sees the Christ on the other side of that tribulation as more valuable than the tribulation itself will go through it and fight through whatever hellish thing, whatever passions of the flesh, whatever temptations of the devil and I realize you cannot win this battle in your own strength. It's gotta be in the strength of God.

Brethren, back to the first Peter 2, verse 11, let's read that again. First Peter 2:11. This is basically the text from which this whole series is gonna spring from. Brothers and sisters, in the end, nothing is gonna matter to you if you lose your soul. That is all that is gonna matter. We are in a battle. It is a battle of life and death and your soul hangs in the balance. It's not as though this is a trivial thing. It's not as though this is a battle that just really doesn't have any impact in your life or in my life. This is so important to each one of us. We've got to make it. Jesus says you've got to overcome, you've got to endure to the end if you would be saved and there is no other way, you've got to endure to the end and it's a battle and you've got to fight it and your soul hangs in the balance. There are few things that are more important to you than to win this battle. There are other things that may be equally important but as far as your own welfare, your own wellbeing, your own self preservation, everything hangs in the balance in winning this battle because if you don't, you lose everything. Everything. If you lose your soul, you lose everything because even what you have will be taken away from you. To lose the soul, is the ultimate loss folks.

We are talking about the battle that, amazingly, the world around us, they're not even talking about and yet all of our souls hang in the balance here. Here it is: "Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul. Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honourable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation." And the whole point that I brought out last week, "there are passions of the flesh which wage war against your soul," that means there are passions, there are forces, there are powers that are against your soul. That's true. That's what he's saying. There are anti-soul forces and they're against your soul. It's not just that they float around there and they happen to find some poor soul that happens to drift into their airspace. You're in their airspace. These are passions that you have to

wage war against. This is a battle you have to fight and people forfeit their souls. These are forces that seek the destruction of souls.

I can tell you this: last week when I was done, I was approached by somebody who didn't like this. They didn't like the sound of this because in their estimation it's sounded like I was saying that you can be saved and you have to fight this battle and if you don't fight it or if you fall out of fighting it then you lose your salvation. Brethren, this is not a matter of losing your salvation, it's a matter of proving your salvation. Look, in other words, it's like this: when God saves a person, He makes a warrior out of them, He makes a fighter out of them, He makes a sin killer out of them and this is so certain, it is so real, it is so universally the way it is with God's people that when they hear a verse like Matthew 18:8, they fight the passions of the flesh that wage war. You will say, "what does that say?" Listen to this, Matthew 18:8, "if your hand..."

Listen very carefully. Turn to it because I want you to see this. I'm doing nothing else than talking the way that the Bible talks, the way Jesus talks, the way the apostles talked. Matthew 18:8, "And if your hand or your foot causes you to sin..." Now look, Jesus is speaking in spiritual terms here. He's not saying that Christians should amputate physical hands and physical feet because, ladies and gentlemen, physical hands and physical feet and physical eyeballs don't cause us to sin. He's talking about something that it is so close to us that to take it out it's like taking out parts of ourselves. They are passions that are so much part of our old nature, they are so much part of the flesh, they are so much part of the passions of the body that, when you extract them, when you excise them out of yourself, it is like gouging out an eye. It is that integral to us, like a thing so deeply implanted in us that is like amputating part of yourself to rip these things out but listen to this, "And if your hand or your foot causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life crippled or lame than with two hands or two feet to be thrown into the eternal fire. And if your eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into the hell of fire."

Now, notice very carefully brethren how Jesus argues, He says, "this is a life and death battle," does He not? I mean, can you make anything else out of these words? Do you all see it? What He is saying in this is: "Look, if you would escape hell, this is not passive". You don't sit over on the couch and get to heaven. That's what He's saying. Yes, we fight with the power of God Almighty. Jesus Christ Himself said, "without Me, you can do nothing" The apostle said this, "if, by the Spirit, you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live". Brethren, it is by the power of Christ, it is by the power of the Spirit but brethren, it is exactly when we are confronted by verses like this and our faith says, "yes, I believe that text, I believe what Jesus says and I believe that I will have to do radical amputation in order to make this and I'm gonna fight it because at the end of this, Christ is most worthy and I want Him above all things and I'm gonna fight. Brethren, absolutely it's by the Spirit's power, absolutely it's being united to Christ but we experience that power precisely when we determine to engage these mortal enemies that do battle against our soul. It's right there brethren that the power is unleashed.

Brethren, what happens is, when by faith I hear this and by faith I say, "I'm going to battle, I'm gonna wage war, Lord help me," and brethren, we stay abiding in the vine, we stay tight to Him in the Word, we stay close to Him in our walk, we stay in close communion with Him, we converse with Him, we are watching Him, looking for Him, singing of Him, going and

hearing preaching that's all about Him and we're keeping focused, we're keeping in there and all the time we realize that Jesus Christ Himself walked the same path, He walked this path where He resisted all the temptations that hell could throw against Him and He went through this thing and He obeyed in it and He has told us, "follow Me!" and He said He won't leave us or forsake us and it's in that knowledge, it's in that strength brethren that we launch forth and the way Jesus argues is exactly like this: Brethren, go to war against these things that do battle and you cut them off and tear them out and throw them away or go to hell! That's exactly what Jesus is saying, exactly. You can't even argue that. That's what He says, "if your eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life with one eye... " It's better for you to enter life having gouged that thing out. And again brethren, He's not talking about the physical eye. He's talking about these passions that well up inside the man.

Brethren, talking that way excites a lot of people and it excited some folks that were here last week, it stirred them up. They think that what I'm saying by that is that you can lose your salvation but do you see what the assumption is? I know I'm saved and I'm not fighting like that and you are coming along taking my salvation away. You basically say that I can lose it because they hear in my words that I'm taking it away from them and I will say this: if that's not at least to some degree, characteristic of your life, if there's not something in these words that somehow resembles your life, brethren, Jesus says, "you're gonna go to hell." I'm not saying this, Jesus says this. It has just come to my attention: we need to do all out battle. And I know some of you young people, like I said last week: the honeymoon period... you're coming to a place when the honeymoon period is over. We don't wanna follow into that camp: the honeymoon period comes over and we say, "you know what? Christian life is getting hard." Yep, that's what Barnabas said, "through much tribulations"... it's getting hard but your soul is at stake and Christ is at stake.

Brethren, it's all or nothing in this battle, all or nothing. You're not gonna get halfway in there, part way in there. Brethren, people are getting all excited about this and they say, "but, I'm saved, I can't lose my salvation. This sounds like you're saying that if I don't fight I'm gonna lose it. I don't like the way that sounds." But listen, whatever you may think it's true about yourself, we cannot just lightly discard Jesus' words. No matter what you think is true about yourself. Folks, if you don't fight the way Jesus said you've got to fight... Jesus basically gives you two scenarios: go into life, having ripped and gouged and cut and thrown away these things or go to hell. And those were His words. So brethren, you argue at your own danger, you argue at great risk to yourself.

I'll tell you this: Bunyan saw this reality. Are some of you familiar with Pilgrim's Progress? Do you remember this? Here is a slightly modified... I took some of the old words out. Christian, your remember in Pilgrim's Progress, he came to the Interpreter's house, here's one thing that he saw there: "then The Interpreter took Christian and led him up towards the door of a palace and behold, at the door stood a great company of men as desirous to go in". So, here's the door and you have a crowd of guys outside the door that want to go into the door of the palace, "but they dare not go". They want to go in, but they are afraid to go in. "There also sat a man at a little distance from the door at the table side with a book and his ink horn before him to take the name of him who should enter therein. He saw also that in the doorway stood many men in

armour to keep it being resolved to do to the man that would enter what hurt and mischief they could."

So, here you have a palace, you have a door, you have a bunch of armed men in that door that are goon seek to do battle with anybody that tries to get in and there's a group of man out there that would want to get in but they are afraid to get in because of the men that are there in armour to resist their getting through. "Now, was Christian somewhat amazed, at last one, every man jumped back for fear of the armed men. Christian saw a man of a very stout countenance come up to the man that sat there to write saying, "Set down my name, Sir!" And when he had done it, he saw the man draw his sword, put a helmet upon his head and he rushed toward the door upon the armed men who laid upon him with deadly force but the man was not at all discouraged but fell to cutting and hacking most fiercely so after he had given and received many wounds to those who attempted to keep him out, he cut his way through them all and pressed forward into the palace." Now, what in the world do you think it's a picture of? Cutting and hacking... Brethren, this is... and listen; Bunyan was only reflecting what he knew the Master Himself taught. Luke, "the good news of the kingdom of God is preached, and everyone forces his way into it." Matthew 11:12, "the kingdom of heaven has suffered violence, and the violent take it by force." How many people... they don't even talk that way today? How many people talk that way? The kingdom of heaven is taking by force, the violent take it by force. What? Christian's violence? Taking it by force? You better believe it. But that doesn't mean we are like Muslims who pull out the bombs and try to blow out people. This again, is all out warfare against the passions of the flesh that do warfare against our souls.

Folks, you do not easily get into the kingdom of heaven. It is through violence, it is through force, it is through effort, it is through battle. Brethren, that see, true faith. People so flippantly talk about faith, "well, I believe". Wait a second, "do you believe Christ is so precious and so real and accomplished such things by His life and on that cross that you are willing to pull out the sword just like that man and you go to battle and after giving and receiving many blows, you're cutting and hacking and you hack your way through? Brethren, that's gonna take and it's gonna be all out war. Brethren, Revelation 2:7, "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who conquers I will grant to eat of the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.' Revelation, "The one who conquers will have this heritage, and I will be his God and he will be my son." Do you see how all this works? The faith says, "I believe this, I believe I must overcome, I must put to death, I must do mortal combat and take the kingdom by force." Do you wanna know what faith says? Faith says, "Sign my name down there, Sir! I'm going in. Because God has shown me that there is such value in taking this kingdom and having this palace and going into where the King reigns so that I can stand in His presence and in the pleasures at His right hand. Sign my name down, I'm going in! Come what may, I'm going in." That's what faith says.

But then, there's the other person who says, "well, I don't like that, I just wanna get to heaven by faith, I shouldn't have to do anything, I shouldn't have to fight... I don't like the way that sounds. Sounds like I either have to find against these passions that wage war against the soul or go to hell... and I don't like that. That makes it sound that if I get saved and I don't finish, I'm gonna lose my salvation... and I don't like that." But brethren, what that really says is the person doesn't have genuine faith. Real faith says, "i'm gonna have heaven and I'm gonna have

Christ of heaven and mark my name down and I want it no matter what the hellish feigns throw against me, I don't care... I mean, we do care but in the end it's like, "I'm gonna have it" And you see brethren, the person that want to sit there and cry and mourn and complain and find fault, brethren, all that that person shows is that they don't have that faith.

You see, it really comes down to a faith matter, it really does in the end. But it's not just a matter of, "O, I said that prayer and I believe that Jesus died and was raised from the dead." It's not just believing some facts and being able to recount them. It's so believing those facts that you tell the man at the gate to sign your name down there. It's believing that much... It's not believing so little that you're gonna sit there and cry and complain. It's, "No, I want this Christ, no matter what it costs and I'm gonna have Him." Did you notice? When he took out that sword, he went to fight even after he received many wounds. It says he wasn't discouraged, he went on because brethren, for the joy set before a man, he will trade whatever even his own comforts, even his own life, for the joy... so, you don't get discouraged in that. Here it is brethren: the flesh, this is where the passions come from and what Scripture says is, "make no provision for it, give it no quarters, brethren, none whatsoever, no quarter... and I'll tell you this, PRIDE is the air the flesh breaths in. You wanna pump energy into it? PRIDE does it. HUMILITY! The flesh doesn't survive in the soil of humility. When the apostle says, he says it to the Romans, right at the end of the Romans 13, "no provision to the flesh, make no provision." It's like an animal. You wanna kill that animal? You wanna starve it? You don't wanna give it any food, you don't wanna give it any drink, you don't wanna give it any health, you don't wanna give it any place where it can survive. You wanna beat that thing, you wanna hit that thing, you wanna try to knock the life out of it. You certainly don't wanna feed it.

Or you can liken it to the old man. I'm not gonna argue about whether the old man, or the flesh or whichever... obviously, we know brethren, the flesh is there and it's like an old man. You can picture it like that. That old man, up there on the cross... and he's being crucified and you can come along and you can put that straw up to his mouth and let him drink and you can give him food and you can lighten his suffering and you can give him air to breath. Brethren, what the apostle is saying is, "make no provision!" None, and humility brethren, is right at the start because there is no passion of the flesh that exists well in the climate of humility. Humility is a stranglehold on the flesh. Brethren, you got to carry around this body, this mortal body. You've got to live in it but I tell you what, the apostle Paul said that he buffeted this body. You can bring this body into submission, but when this body is ruled by those fleshly passions, it is not in submission and that is where you need to pluck out, that is where you need to gouge this out, this is where you need to hack and kill.

Brethren, you've got to go after pride with the passion. It is a root cause of feeding the flesh, a root cue. Humility, the flesh cannot survive there. No matter what defect there may be, whatever may be going wrong in your life, I guarantee you this: it's coming back to this place: you're giving provision to the flesh and PRIDE feeds flesh. You did something proud, you did something arrogant, you're living that kind of life when the flesh is being fed and Paul says, "starve it, beat it into submission, don't feed it!", and that means you've got to be on the outlook for every manifestation of pride. You've got to go after it, brethren. Make no provision to the flesh to gratify the desires of it. Don't go there! Gratifying those desires, guaranteed, you have moved away from humility and you have moved in the realm of presumption and pride and

arrogance and hastiness. Folks, here is a thing! I think one of the ways we are gonna do battle with this is right here. You've got to become convinced that every manifestation of PRIDE feeds the flesh and brethren, when you start feeding it will rear its head a thousand ugly ways. I remember hearing and again... I can't remember this exactly but maybe one of you guys remember better but Paul Washer was talking about the fact that when he was a you Christian, he should have prayed a lot more for humility than for the things he was praying for. I think I brought up that last week. Brethren, one of the things here: we've got the fight for humility at all cost. We've got to be convinced it's the air in which righteousness breathes, it's the air in which the new man breaths. It's the climate that it's conducive to godliness in every fashion. We've gotta become so convinced that it is the foundation and that no righteousness can be built except on that foundation. You've gotta become convinced of that, you've gotta be convinced that that is where the grace of God, the river of the grace of God flows. You've gotta be convinced of that because listen: those things you're most convinced that you have to have for the preservation of your soul to win this battle... When you become absolutely convinced of something, when you become absolutely convinced that if I don't have that, it will cost me my soul. When you really become convinced of that you become desperate for that thing.

And I tell you brethren, I think that it's very true and it's very real that we, Christians, are many times far more desperate for many other things than we are for humility and I think it's because the proper value is not put on humility by most of us and I can tell you... just my ear opened to especially young people, lot of you young people, the things that really seem to excite you. It's not often you find a young people who is really excited about humility. Excited by sacrifice? Yes. And that's an excitable thing, we should be. By daring evangelism, yes and that's good. Powerful preaching, yes. Wanting gifts, yes. Memorizing a lot of Scripture, yes. These are good things. Powerfully being able to reach our generation, boldness, being able to go down on the streets and declare the Gospel clearly. All those are good things, and those are things that excite young people and I'm glad there is a generation that's excited about those things: excited about the sovereignty of God, excited about certain doctrines in the Scriptures, excited about the filling of the Spirit, excited about these things. Good! Those are good things: excited about evangelism, excited about missions... but brethren, how often are we excited about humility?

And most of us have to admit that as young Christians, that's probably not the thing that we are most desperate for and seeking above every other thing to have. But if I read Paul Washer... he's at a place in his life where he realizes that was probably the thing he should have been seeking chiefly when he was a young Christian and that's the thing that I want you to see. Brethren, our mortal bodies become docile in that climate. We're not gonna get rid of these mortal bodies until we pass out of this world but what the Scripture says is that the body is for the Lord. I can bring this body into submission to the Lord but the climate in which that happens is HUMILITY. Well, think with me here! Brethren, I'll tell you this, that's one of the first things in doing battle: you've got to be convinced this is necessary.

Listen, I think it's apparent to all of us if we think for a second. As you read through the Scriptures, do you know something you will find? God created the heavens and the earth. Do you know how often we were told God created the heavens and the earth? Like, everywhere. Do you know why? Because God created the heavens and the earth, He creates everything and He provides everything and look, He did so in a way that the fact that He is the supplier of all

things would be demonstrated literally everywhere. He never designed His creatures to be independent from Him but totally dependent. Jesus comes into the world and says, "without Me, you can do nothing" Is this not what we hear? Who makes you to differ from another? Paul says 1Corinthians 4:7, "what do you have that you did not receive?" This is the truth of the Scriptures: "you don't have anything that you didn't receive."

Do you remember, brethren, this reality: although they knew God? The wrath of God is revealed against ungodliness and unrighteousness of men. Why? What horrible thing have they done? Romans 1:21, "Although they knew God, they did not honour Him as God or give thanks to Him." You know what? God created this whole thing to be honoured as the sole supplier of everything so that men, in everything that they do, should have their eyes set upon Him, in gratitude for everything, literally everything.

Listen, God designed this whole thing to just shower His fullness into His creatures for them to totally receive it with thanksgiving. Isn't that what we've read about? Even marriage and sex in marriage and food, it's all to be had and to be enjoyed by those who believe as they offer thanksgiving up to Him. You see brethren, that's all about. He created the whole thing and when man stepped away and like Nebuchadnezzar said, "look what great kingdom I have established" or like Pharaoh, "who is the Lord that I should obey Him?" O brethren, that is such... the whole universe is just rent from its original purposes. When Satan reared his ugly head in PRIDE and rebelled against the Lord... the creation was totally thrown out of whack when that happened. Brethren, we've got to be convinced of that, we've got to come to realize. It was said of Hezekiah that after God helped him, he did not give God due recognition for what had happened.

Asa, brethren, I brought some of these up last week. Asa, it says, he even, when he was diseased in his feet, sought the doctors, not the Lord. Christian, when you are in financial need and you do not seek the Lord first, when you are in medical, physical needs and you do not seek the Lord first, when you need food, when you need clothing, when you need help, when you need a home, when you need a church, when you need understanding, when you need humility, when you need... brethren, whatever it is, if you are not seeking God first, it is pride, it is relying on the arm of the flesh and God hates it and it is absolutely opposed to the way God created this Universe and I'll tell you this, "you've got to become convinced of that, you've got to see that in everything when you lay your head down on the pillow at night to thank God that you have a pillow to lay it on, when you wake up in the morning, to thank God that he gave you... brethren, you've got to be convinced of this, that when you do not acknowledge Him, it dishonours Him. When you do not go to Him for every single need first and foremost, you dishonour Him.

Brethren, man is so arrogant, he is so proud and he is so independent and you've gotta see it in yourself. If you're going to do battle with it, you've got to see it brethren for what it is. You've gotta see it that your independence... God did not make man to run around and boast in his own gifts or boast in anything he has. The apostle says, "what do you have that you have not received?" You don't have anything, not anything... Without Him you are worthless, without Him you are useless. Brethren, live in the life of that. That is the first and foremost fundamental principle if you're gonna do battle against these fleshly passions and one of those passions brethren is self exaltation. It is a desire in you to set yourself forth, to poster yourself, to position

yourself, to look as though you are something and to take credit for it. Brethren, that's innate in us as natural men and God help us, we are not natural men anymore, we live in the power of another, the power of the Almighty and brethren, you've got to do battle right there, you've got to do battle with this. Brethren, let this truth ring in your heads. It's not just that when you don't honour Him, He withholds this stream of grace. The Scripture says it very plainly that He opposes the proud. Brethren, I remind you 1 Peter 5. He's dealing with Christians when he said, "God opposes the proud."

Can I tell you something? There are examples in the Scriptures... God doesn't just oppose the lost proud, He opposes the saved proud. You will say, "can it that be?", "Can there be saved proud?" Brethren, that's what Hezekiah did, that's what Asa did. When James and John wanted to sit at the right and the left hand of Christ, that's what they were doing. When they were arguing about who is going to be the greatest, that's what was happening. That was the same Peter who was one of those arguing would later come along and say, "God opposes the proud." Listen, Peter was pretty haughty: "even if all others deny you, I WILL NOT." God let him fall, square on his face. He let the devil have his way with Peter, in a way that the devil had to ask for a special permission. Brethren, when God set himself against you, to oppose you, watch out, cause you will be opposed.

So, be careful!. We've got to be convinced of these things. Brethren... you've got to be convinced you need this. You need to be convinced there is too little regard in the church, there is too little regard in the preaching, there is too little regard in yourself, in myself, for this very thing. The call to humility, I'm afraid, has been indeed too little regarded in the church and I think it has been because its true nature, its true importance has been little appreciated and I'll tell you this: humility does not come effortlessly. It comes with battle, it comes with tears. Brethren, it's like everything else in this spiritual realm. It comes through desire, it comes through earnestness, it comes through being persuaded that I need that, it comes through making it one of the chief things you are battering, that "battering ram" of prayer against the heaven's fort, "Father, give this to me, give it to me! You told me that you would conform me to the image of Christ, give me humility. I see it as a good thing." "Clothe yourselves with humility!", the apostle said. In another place he said that he urged us, he encouraged us, he exhorted us to walk in a manner worthy of our calling with all humility and gentleness. With all humility, brethren!. We've got to be desperate for this, we got to go after it, we've got to be earnest for it. You pray for it like your soul depends on it because it does. It does brethren, it does and we've got to be convinced of it and I'm not certain brethren that we have been entirely convinced of just how much we need it. It needs to be an object of our special attention, our special desire, our special prayer, an object of our faith.

What do I mean by that? By faith brethren, you need to lay hold on this, "Lord, you promised that you would conform me to the image of your Son and one of the crowning characteristics is that He is gentle and lowly in spirit, He did not please Himself, He did not come to be served but to serve, He told us to follow Him... Lord please, give us this. You told us that if we would cry out to you, you would not withhold any good thing from us. You told us if we then being evil know how to give good gifts to our children... that how much more you would give every good thing to us that ask. Lord please, we're asking for this thing, we believe it to be good, we believe it Lord. This needs to be an object of special practice, we must strategize in pursuit

of humility. Jesus said, "learn of Me!" Brethren, many of you, young people, recently were in school or you are now in school. Think about your hardest subject. Did it come easy? You had to learn, you had to study.

Brethren, I can tell you this, as I was telling some of the folks in Laredo, on Sunday: I went through four levels of calculus. Brethren, you won't learn four levels of calculus effortlessly and I guarantee you this, you are not going to learn the humility of Christ, the gentleness of Christ, the loneliness of Christ in passing or in some half-hearted effort of Bible reading once a week or twice a week. Brethren, you learn calculus by effort, by strain, by sleepless nights, by study and you're gonna learn Christ harder than I learned calculus. I guarantee you brethren, it's gonna be all out earnestness to learn this humility. And it's the kind of humility that goes hand in hand with force and violence and effort and waging war.

Brethren, the seminaries, I've never heard of one that has a class on humility and yet when Jesus Christ comes along to His disciples, He says this, "If you're going to learn in my school, learn this first. Learn of Me!" And here is the crowning character that He would have us learn: meekness, gentleness, lowliness. Young people, do you know one of the places where God takes special attention, special time? Listen to this, James 4:13, "Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go into such and such a town and spend a year there and trade and make a profit"—yet you do not know what tomorrow will bring. What is your life? For you are a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes."

Brethren, I brought it up last week. This is a famous saying of Charles Spurgeon. He said, "humility is having an accurate assessment of yourself" Brethren, do you see? This is exactly what James is doing here. He's saying, "Don't be proud! You need to have an accurate assessment of yourself" And the true assessment of yourself is that you are nothing without God, you have nothing without God, you can do nothing without God, your life is a mist, it's a vapour, that's all you are and you have no control, you have no idea if you are going to be able to carry out tomorrow. And he says, "when you talk like that you don't have an accurate assessment of yourself". In other words, Spurgeon is right: humility is an accurate assessment. Pride is when you think you are something that you're not and James goes on to pinpoint their pride right here, "Instead you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we will live and do this or that." As it is, you boast in your arrogance."

Brothers and sisters, I don't hear many young people talk this way. This isn't a magic formula "if the Lord wills." There's a lot of different ways you can say this, But again brethren, it's a heart issue, it's an atmosphere, it's a climate in which you need to fight to live. So that even in your words, you are living as a creature who is constantly in recognition of its entire dependence on the Lord. Our very words need to flow out of that mindset that I am nothing and that everything I have is from the Lord. Young people, talk this way! Groom and cultivate your language to show constantly an entire dependence on the Lord. Groom your language to cultivate a sense of understanding who you are. That is humility brethren, when you recognize who you are, when you constantly recognize it. You don't just say, "I'm going to drive up to Denton for the conference in April" NO. You see, when you talk that way, it shows arrogance, it shows that you are making plans and you are thinking without a constant God awareness of His supremacy and His supply and His command of all things.

Some of you guys, I don't know how you've talked... remember the guys were heading up to Chicago. Now, I don't know how you guys talked ahead that time but I hope that the way you talked was, "We're gonna go to that conference up in Chicago, if the Lord wills." And you saw, the Lord didn't will. You see, that's a humble way to talk. And brethren, what a way to talk in front of your lost family, what a way to talk in front of your classmates. Because you see, if you hold those words back because you're afraid, fear of men is pride too. You see, you're not fearing God, you're fearing men. That's what the fear of men is. It's not humility. It's thinking too high of men and too little of God. That's basically the heart of PRIDE, it exalts man and diminishes God. Brethren, talk that way in front of the teller at the supermarket, talk that way in front of your professor, "Teacher, I'm gonna hand out that paper on Wednesday, if the Lord wills" Because you know what? That's speaking right And that's a witness to you saying, "I'm depending on Him."

Brethren, I want you to look at this one. Isaiah 51:12. I want your eyes to scheme this because this just falls out right from what I was just saying here about the Lord wills. And like I say brethren, you can come up with 20 or 30 or 50 different ways to say that, "I'll do that if the Lord helps me, I'll do that, God willing". Well, if God is in it then that's gonna happen. Brethren, you don't have to get to where it's just a cliché, a little statement you're saying. Brethren, think about it when you say it. Isaiah 51:12, "I, I am he who comforts you; who are you that you are afraid of man who dies, of the son of man who is made like grass" Do you see what God is saying to His people? He's saying, "I comfort you". In other words, "You are a people of my possession who I comfort, you are a people who I come to, who I commune with, who I comfort, who I'm kind to. I am your God, who are you to be afraid of men?"

Do you see what He's saying? He's saying, "Don't you remember who you are? Don't you remember that you belong to Me and don't you remember who I AM? Don't you remember that you have a connection with ME? Don't you remember that you are the people who trust ME, who have been comforted by ME?" Brethren, who do you think you are to be afraid? Who do you think you are? You say, -"Well, I think I'm a child of God" Exactly, -"A child of WHO?". -"A child of God". -"Of what God?" -"The one true and living God, the God Almighty, the one who is over all and through all and in all, the one who created everything, the one before whom no one can stand, the one before whom no weapon formed against you can prosper." -"Is that the God?" You see how he's arguing here? Who are you to be afraid of men?

Christian, when you fear men, it is not humility, I say this again, it is not weakness. What it is, it's attributing to men the strength that he does not have and it is attributing to God weakness that is not true of Him. Brethren, when you realize that there is no man that can lift a pinky against you except God give the green light... now look, sometimes He does, but if He does and it takes your life, you go to be with Him. If He does, and He gives you the grace to endure it, your faith is made stronger and brethren, there are many times He says NO, and your fiercest enemies cannot come. Again, back to Pilgrim's Progress, remember the time he walked down the middle of that path and there were lions on both sides, those lions were chained and they could not come to him and that every one of your fiercest enemy is on a chain and God says, "I am your God, I will be with you, I will help you", and when you walk through life... Brethren , do you not remember what Peter says, "Humble therefore under the mighty hand of God, casting all your cares upon Him"? See brethren, when you're full of anxiety and fear, it's

PRIDE. Humility says, "I am total weakness and God is total strength" and like the man who was shipwrecked, I've read this, it's a true account, the man that shipwrecked at sea, floating on a board said Lord, there in the waves, in the middle of the night, he climbed up on that board and it must have been big enough for himself to steady himself on it and he said, "Lord, there's no sense both of us staying awake and he crawled up on that board and went to sleep." Brethren, that's humility, casting all your cares, "Lord, there's no sense me staying awake and worrying about being shipwrecked out here on this... the waves of the ocean all alone, cause I'm not all alone, You're here with me, I can go to sleep." The same waves and wind that bowed to you before, bow to you now... Well, brethren, we'll visit this again, PRIDE is such a deep, big one that will come back to it again, Lord willing, next week. Any comments or anything before we shut down for the night?

I enjoy your fellowship service all the time.

Thank you. God help us brethren, God help us. This battle is real and it's a battle to the death. Amen.