

## Side-line Christianity

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### Genesis 4:7

*"You will be accepted if you respond in the right way. But if you refuse to respond correctly, then watch out! Sin is waiting to attack and destroy you, and you must subdue it." NLT*

One translation of this passage says that sin is crouching at your door, another says, waiting to pounce on you. Today I'm going to speak upon the topic of side-line Christianity. Let me first define this term. Side-line Christianity is the belief system that allows others to do the work that God has called all of us unto. It is the practice of drawing back and coasting when the true Church is pressing forward and advancing. Moreover, it is the practice of allowing other believers to battle and to strive to enter in at the Strait Gate – while you coast along witnessing the bravery and the tenacity of the true Saints.

This kind of Christianity is not at all Christianity but these side-liner's identify themselves as such because they simply affiliate themselves with God's Saints. They dress like Christians, carry Bibles, attend services, and mingle with the Saints of God but one thing they lack; the passion and integrity to abandon everything to follow Christ. They choose to idly sit back and allow others to get involved in out-reach, ministry, sacrifice, persecution, saintly hardship, but they will not affiliate themselves with the sacrifice of saint-ship but they cling to the name of Saint although they are not willing to endure the flames of affliction that forge a true Saint.

As the passage indicates, because of their decision, sin is waiting to attack and destroy them. It is my concern that you can enter these doors weekly and listen to powerful and anointed messages, you can be surrounded with mighty men and women of God, you can sing anointed songs, and experience the presence of God just as the true Saints, but leave this place none the better – but in fact worse off.

The true Saints are nurtured in this environment of holiness. Their worship is as a sweet incense to the Lord, and therefore He pours out the oil of Joy to them. They hear God's Word proclaim and they are filled with His Spirit and power to go forth to boldly proclaim His love and faithfulness. Their fellowship with the other Saints is a divinely appointed means to edification – and the environment is electric to them, advancing their growth and maturity in Christ.

Yet, the side-liner is deceived into thinking that he/she is a partaker of the out-pouring that is taking place in the lives of the obedient-sacrificing Saint simply because of association but the reality is they are prey for the enemy to destroy their lives.

The partial commitment of the side-line Christian is in the eyes of the Lord as a Judas Iscariot. Being partially committed signifies being partially committed somewhere else to someone else, and our Lord of holiness will not attach Himself to idolatrous acts such as these.

My concern is for those of you that are not committed to the vision that God has given us. You know that God is among us, but you are on the outside looking in, instead of on the inside going forward with us. You acknowledge that God is in the midst of this ministry and the work that is on-going but your commitment to other things is robbing you of the hope of being committed to the right thing.

You see the victory that is abounding in the lives of those that are committed to the Lord, and are sacrificing their all towards the vision of the Kingdom of God, and something inside you yearns to taste that victory for yourself, but your hands are tied up and bound by preoccupation with other endeavors making it impossible for you to wholly lay hold of the plow and to press forward with these victorious saints.

You come here week after week tasting of the heavenly atmosphere provided for you by our Lord as He honors His Saints with His presence as they continue to forsake all and deny themselves – follow Him. Yet, the true Saints leave with that heavenly presence and you my friend leave it here. The decisive issue is that the true Saint is not entangled with the affairs of this life – hence they can war and battle for and with our Lord and experience times of refreshing perpetually.

## **2 Timothy 2:3-4**

*Take [with me] your share of the hardships and suffering [which you are called to endure] as a good (first-class) soldier of Christ Jesus. No soldier when in service gets entangled in the enterprises of [civilian] life; his aim is to satisfy and please the one who enlisted him. AMP*

## **Acts 3:19**

*“Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord;” KJV*

Beloved, I am calling for those of you who are on the outside looking in – to join with us in this battle we call Christianity. Commit yourself; join with us in our commitment to our Lord and subsequently in His work. Loose yourselves from all that entangles you and loose your life in Christ. There is so much to be done for our Lord. He has committed unto us a ministry of reconciliation and we must press towards that mark of the high-calling of Christ.

God is not nor will He be satisfied with what seems to be satisfying you. Your uncommitted lifestyle satisfies you because of your affiliation with those who are committed. But what is satisfying you will not satisfy God. He demands that we leave the side-lines and get into the fight and to commit ourselves there! For me to live is to Christ – for me to die is gain! Let me give you a scriptural picture of what happens in the Spirit when we sit back and watch while others fight.

## **2 Samuel 11:1-4**

*“And it came to pass, after the year was expired, at the time when kings go forth to battle, that David sent Joab, and his servants with him, and all Israel; and they destroyed the children of Ammon, and besieged Rabbah. But David tarried still at Jerusalem. And it came to pass in an eveningtide, that David arose from off his bed, and walked upon the roof of the king's house: and from the roof he saw a woman washing herself; and the woman was very beautiful to look upon.*

*And David sent and inquired after the woman. And one said, Is not this Bath-sheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite? And David sent messengers, and took her; and she came in unto him, and he lay with her; for she was purified from her uncleanness: and she returned unto her house.” KJV*

As it states, it was the time when kings go forth to battle, that David sent Joab, and his servants, and all of Israel, to battle but David stayed in Jerusalem. Here is the picture of the side-line mentality and or lifestyle that we are speaking of today. While Joab and the warriors of Israel were committed to the fight, David was committed to himself. The other Kings were abandoned to battles but this chosen king was abandoned to comfort and ease.

While the warriors of the Lord were sacrificing, fighting, sweating and bleeding, David was on the outside looking in – watching from afar. The true warriors were participating in the hardships of war, enduring grueling circumstances, but wholly committed, but David was participating in other endeavors. We see that this lack of commitment opened doors to lust and every unclean and dirty bird.

David took a stroll after taking a nap and immediately sin is crouching at his door. He sees a beautiful young lady washing herself. The lack of commitment to the Lord's battle made way for David to commit himself to lawlessness. David then inquired, and then David sent for her, David then lay with her, David then schemed to have her as his own, David then was a murderer, David then had to face God.

Beloved, can't you see, David should have gone to battle? David's sin began with his decision to be idle, and to stay in Jerusalem when it was the time for kings to go forth to battle. He was not committed to the battle but committed to allowing others to commit. He wanted to experience the joys and spoils of battle victory without the exertion and commitment it takes to attain it.

It could be that some of you here today have a unqualified feeling of security and blessedness because you are affiliated with what God is doing at PCCC and POF but you are as deceived as David simply because affiliation with is not commitment to and commitment is required if you are to experience the joys and victories given to the Saints of God. You seemingly safety net of side-line inactivity is a snare to your own soul. David felt safe in the comfort and ease of Jerusalem – but it was not the warriors that faced the snare of the devil – it was David. This story is not about the warriors that were committed to the fight. No, it is about David's failure because he was uncommitted to the fight.

It was his lack of commitment to the battle that opened doors for him to be committed to and involved with sin and shame. Beloved, we at PCCC and POF are marching to the battle – God has called us thereunto. We are committed and determined. We have forsaken all to follow Christ and subsequently His calling upon our lives. We experience sacrifice that is at times unspeakable, and we face challenges and obstacles that are at best grueling. As Paul said:

## **2 Corinthians 6:4-10**

*But in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in fastings; by pureness, by knowledge, by longsuffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, by the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left,*

*By honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report: as deceivers, and yet true; As unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and, behold, we live; as chastened, and not killed; As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things. KJV*

Yet, while the Saints of God are experiencing the struggles of sacrifice, they are experiencing the glory of victory. All the while, you are in the comforts of Jerusalem taking a relaxing stroll while God's army is valiantly and sacrificially obtaining victory in His name.

Yet, the discomforts of commitment that you seek to avoid will become the snare that disqualifies you to experience the glorious victory that God has in store for His committed army.

### **Romans 11:8-9**

*“(According as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear;) unto this day. And David saith, Let their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumbling block, and a recompense unto them:” KJV*

Beloved, God has set before us opportunity within this calling and election that we are participating in. As we are giving up our lives and marching into battle our Lord is going before us. We have the opportunity in this calling to reach at least 500 young people per year. We sow the Word of God as well as the love of God into their lives 3-4 days per week while balancing our jobs, our families, our relationships, and our local assembly.

Many of you are back in Jerusalem taking a stroll while we are with Joab on the front lines in the battle. Our commitment is not wavering, year after year, we are steadfast and unmovable. The sacrifices are demanding, the cost is unspeakable, but the benefits of obedience far out way the temporal ease in Jerusalem.

### **Amos 6:1**

*“Woe to them that are at ease in Zion, and trust in the mountain of Samaria, which are named chief of the nations, to whom the house of Israel came!” KJV*

Beloved, this message is not a gloom and doom condemnation message – but a message of opportunity for those of you who are on the side lines to commit and engage yourself in the purposes of God. It is my job to confront the passive and the idle. God's Word says:

### **1 Thessalonians 5:12-14**

*“Now we ask you, brothers, to respect those who work hard among you, who are over you in the Lord and who admonish you. 13 Hold them in the highest regard in love because of their work. Live in peace with each other. 14 And we urge you, brothers, warn those who are idle, encourage the timid, help the weak, be patient with everyone.” NIV*

We plead with you, give yourself wholly to God!

### **Romans 12:1**

*“And so, dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to give your bodies to God. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice — the kind he will accept. When you think of what he has done for you, is this too much to ask?” NLT*