

How to Battle the Rising Spiritual Darkness

The battle for Brussels is not new, nor is it over. Belgium has produced more foreign jihadists per capita than any of the other countries in the West. Islam didn't force itself into the culture and fabric of Belgium, it was systematically welcomed by the government who has sought to remove Christianity from public life. Christian holidays have been renamed in the guise of "administrative simplification," and the introduction of legislation that would limit free speech and make a person guilty of Islamophobia for suggesting that Islam is capable of violence.

Why would Belgium, France or any nation allow its heritage, values and Christian faith to be overturned? Nations, like individuals, can live in spiritual darkness. The real battle is not with Islam, it is with the powers of darkness.

Well-intentioned people devise all kinds of strategies to correct problems in our nations and our world, but the real battle is spiritual. Principalities and powers seek to control and dominate individuals, communities and even entire nations. Much of the turmoil can be traced back to unrestrained demonic forces operating in the world.

When you turn on the news or scroll through your Twitter feed and see the latest tragedy in London, Paris or Brussels, it can be hard not to react in fear. People naturally crave security and will do almost anything to possess it. We look for a solution, any solution, to control society and bring back law and order. This is why we move to what we deem are safer neighborhoods, install alarm systems and seek ways to protect ourselves.

But what good does that do?

This is not a time to grow weary or to let down our guard. It is a time for conquest and victory. It is a time to lift up the banner of the Lord and proclaim the powerful message of the gospel of Christ Jesus. Too often we live as though spiritual victory depends on our own strength, ability and power, but that is not sufficient if we are to survive in this world, much less thrive. Yet when we are empowered with the Holy Spirit, we invade and exploit the areas of darkness and release those who are held captive.

Ravi Zacharias writes,

As the face of evil becomes more hideous and ruthless, the face of the future becomes more fearsome and dreaded. Yet for the gospel message, this may be the most significant moment in history, for the message of Christ provides the only supernatural hope of a changed heart and life.

The power of the kingdom comes to those who are fully reliant on the Spirit, not to the masses who merely call themselves Christians. It will be the masses who are deceived and lulled into complacency, and already the spirit of the age has had its effect on many. Christianity has become a hobby that is conveniently set aside if something more appealing comes along. I have noticed over the years how many people get serious with God when a crisis occurs, only to fall back into the same complacency when the crisis passes. Maybe those are the ones to whom Jesus refers as being unfit for the kingdom of God (Luke 9:62).

Lawlessness is not going to subside, it is going to continue and get worse. Look at the latest incident in Paris; the city has now seen four attacks in a span of five months.

As followers of Christ, we do not need to cower on the sidelines and watch evil raise its ugly head. Too often all we see is the problem, forgetting that we are filled with the Spirit of Almighty God, who has empowered and commissioned us

to bring heaven to earth.

As Christ-followers, it is essential that we understand our responsibility. We cannot fall back in despair, nor can we give up while we wait for the return of the Lord. As poet and missionary Amy Carmichael stated, "Satan is so much more in earnest than we are—he buys up the opportunity while we are wondering how much it will cost."

If we were not supposed to participate in the battle, why would God supply us with power of the Spirit? Prayer is our strategic weapon that is crucial for this battle. Prayer is such a powerful weapon that the enemy will do whatever he can to frustrate you. He will fill you with lies and make you second-guess yourself.

Never underestimate what you can do. Never let the enemy convince you that you are worthless or weak. You carry the divine presence of God with you and are mighty in God for the pulling down of spiritual strongholds (2 Corinthians 10:3-6). If we fail to deal with the evil in the world, it will rise to greater heights and destroy the good in all of us. {eo}

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