Handling Your Spiritual Sword

A sword is, “a weapon with a long blade for cutting or thrusting that is often used as a symbol of honor or authority.” (Webster’s Dictionary). For centuries, the sword was the primary weapon of warfare and was carried by people from all walks of life for the purpose of personal defense. The sword could protect and defend as well as attack and destroy. It was an awesome weapon in the hands of a skilled knight or samurai. In medieval times, sword training began at an early age and it took years of hard work and dedication to truly master its use. Swordsman-ship was a vital part of a young nobleman's education, without it, he could never attain the rank of knight or be able to fulfill his obligations in time of war. Training with the sword was not simply a classroom or verbal exercise – it required intense physical training and actual practice with the sword to achieve mastery over it.

The Word of God is a “spiritual sword” to be used as a weapon of spiritual warfare and personal defense. The Holy Spirit, by inspiration, speaks of the Bible as His Sword, “And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God;” (Ephesians 6:17). Again in Hebrews 4:12, He speaks of His Word as, “quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.” With the Spirit's Sword, the Christian is to wage an aggressive warfare against forces of darkness. “For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ...” (2 Corinthians 10:3-5).

The Spirit’s Sword is also useful for defense of the Gospel. We are to use it to, “earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints.” (Jude 3 – ASV). To be able to use the Spirit’s Sword we must be trained in its use. How do we train? Answer: by a dedicated study of God’s word and by putting the word into action. “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” (2 Timothy 2:15). “But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:“ (1 Peter 3:15).

Although the physical sword was once the most important weapon in the arsenals of history, today the sword is primarily a symbol used solely for ceremonial purposes. Many of these “ceremonial” swords are not even sharpened and are essentially useless as weapons of warfare or personal defense. Today the
sword is a relic of history on display in museums or as a decoration in homes. Very few train in its use; even fewer still are masters of the sword.

The same is true of the Spirit's Sword today. Very few people know how to use it. Most people have a Bible, yet few ever read it or even open its cover. They have a Bible, but it is only a “ceremonial” Bible to be brought out only when the preacher or one of the elders visits. The remainder of the time, it is simply the centerpiece of the coffee table or bookshelf to be taken out and dusted once or twice a year.

In years past this was not so; Christians were “Spiritual Swordsmen”. Most Christian were skilled in its use, not just preachers and elders. Most Christians were thoroughly intimate with the Bible. They spent hours and hours each week studying and memorizing scripture. They could give a “book, chapter and verse” defense of the gospel at a moments notice without having to even open a Bible – because they were so thoroughly trained in Spiritual Swordsmanship. In our society today – even in the church today – the Bible is seen as a relic of a bygone era; to be revered for its beauty and for what it symbolizes, but not as actually something to be read or studied, much less put into action.

Does this describe you? Are you a “Spiritual Swordsman”? If not, then it is time to begin your training. Just as there was no easy way of learning the art of swordsmanship, there are no shortcuts in learning to use of the Bible. The only way to become proficient with either sword is to practice, practice, practice. Prayerfully study the Word daily, commit yourself to putting into practice its precepts and you will become a “Spiritual Swordsman.”

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