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# PRESSIN' IN

The Teaching Letter of **Toward the Mark**

**I**ntimidation is a very broad subject indeed and is something that appears in many forms. We may feel intimidated by people or circumstances, and then there is the added dimension



involving the activities of wicked spirits. Even so, despite the apparent complexity of the subject, there is only one solution for overcoming intimidation. It is first and foremost a spiritual problem that requires a spiritual solution. We can only truly overcome intimidation through God and Him alone! We must have a close, abiding, and personal relationship with Him. Jesus teaches us, "Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can

ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing." (John 15:4-5)

Jesus followed these words with

this: "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." (John 15:7) When we abide in Him and His words abide in us, we shall ask what we will, and it shall be done. So many people read this and skip over the "Abiding In Jesus" Clause and jump straight to the "Ask What We Will" Clause, not realizing that without the former, the latter is null and void. So, how do we abide in Him and His words abide in us? The answer involves seeking first His Kingdom and

His Righteousness, and of course, begins with Salvation. The Apostle Paul teaches us, “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.” (Ephesians 2:8-9) After stating emphatically that Salvation is not by works, the Apostle then goes on to say that good works should follow Salvation: “For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.” (Ephesians 2:10)

Jesus also says this about works, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father. And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.” (John 14:12-13) Jesus promised that believers can do works that are even greater than His! How can this be? The answer **can be** seen later in the same discussion: “I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.” (John 15:5) As also said the Apostle Paul: “I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.” (Philippians 4:13)

This then is the Great Partnership: Without Christ, we can do nothing. Through Christ, we can do all things. Good works accomplished by our strength cannot do this. Church attendance cannot accomplish this. Not even prayer and Bible study are sufficient. Apart from Jesus, no matter how good a person seems to be, all of the works are worthless: “for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.” (Romans 14:23) However, when we begin to walk in faith, even the seemingly smallest deeds are worthy of reward: “And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward.” (Matthew 10:42) Moreover, when we are intimately walking with the Lord Jesus Christ, great things happen! Jesus said it Himself, “And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.” (Mark 16:17-18) Did you notice that Jesus said “these signs shall follow them that believe” and did not say that believers shall follow signs? Just about ten chapters earlier in the book of Matthew He gives us the key to doing things the right way.

“But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.” (Matthew 6:33) Believers are not to seek the signs of God’s power, but instead are to seek the Kingdom of God and His Righteousness. When we truly obey this wonderful command, the power of God is unleashed in our behalf and through us to the benefit of those around us, but always it is for the glory of God!

Jesus said, “Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.” (Matthew 18:18-20) The majority of the times that I have heard this passage of scripture taught the emphasis is usually placed on “That if two of you shall

agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them,” as if there were something magical or mystical that would occur if we could only get two or more Christians together that will believe for the same thing. If this has been your understanding of what Jesus was saying, you have missed His meaning. The emphasis should be placed on these essential facts: the believers were gathered in the Name of Jesus Christ as evidenced by His very real presence “in the midst of them” and the very real result that “it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven.”

*“The Name of the Lord is a Place, though not a geographical one. It is a spiritual Place, a State of Being.”*

Despite what many believe, gathering in the Name of Jesus is much more than a simple declaration. Merely saying that we are gathered in the Lord’s Name does not make it so. The Name of the Lord is a Place, though not a geographical one. It is a spiritual Place, a State of Being. “The name of the LORD is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe.” (Proverbs 18:10) Note that this verse proclaims the same principle found in these verses: “I called upon the LORD in distress: the LORD answered me, and set me in a large place. The LORD is on my side; I will not fear: what can man do unto me?” (Psalms 118:5-6)

When we are in this Large Place, we are in the Name of the Lord. Notice also that when we are in that Place, we need not fear what people can do to us. When we are in the Place that is the Name of the Lord, He is on our side, because we have obeyed the command to seek first His Kingdom and His Righteousness. What this means is, we no longer have to be bullied by intimidation, as long as we are one with God, abiding in Him and His words abiding in us! All that we are, all that we think, do, and speak, should be directed to that pursuit. We can only find success in this through Him. Conversely, we will not see success if we are not abiding in Him. An excellent illustration of this point is found in the book of Acts. Paul had just been used by God in the nineteenth chapter to perform many great miracles. A few rough fellows saw the things that Paul was being used by God to do and thought they would like to give this “casting out demons thing” a try for themselves. You need to know that they did not have a relationship with Jesus Christ. Regrettably, this is what happened. “Then certain of the vagabond Jews, exorcists, took upon them to call over them which had evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth. And there were seven sons of one Sceva, a Jew, and chief of the priests, which did so. And the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye? And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, and overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded.” (Acts 19:13-16) The moral of the story should be abundantly obvious, before you begin wielding the name of Jesus Christ around you had better make sure that your relationship with Him is up close and personal.

We must learn the importance of speaking the word of God with authority, out loud! For example, God said, “ Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.” (Genesis 1:26) Question: If God said that we are made in his image and likeness, then wouldn't it stand to reason that we too should, as the means by which to rule over all things, speak God's Word as well? And wouldn't this be just as true when it comes to our taking authority or dominion over unclean spirits? After all,

John teaches us this as the first of a two-part means by which we overcome satan or his demons when he said “And they overcame him (satan) by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.” (Revelation 12:11) When this finally sunk in, when this word became alive in me, it changed my life. Here is the story.

I was working as an outside sales representative for a Maryland based graphics company. I was scheduled to do a presentation before a group of wealthy corporate executives and frankly, I was terrified! Satan knew full well that landing this account would mean a nice increase in my monthly income and I could tell that he was not going to let me walk out of there without a fight. As I was on my way to the conference room, the Holy Spirit whispered to me, “before you enter the room, pause for just a moment and bind, in Christ’s name, all spirits of intimidation.” All I could say was wow! When I entered the room after binding the spirits, even though I did not know a soul there, I felt as if I were among friends. I did my presentation without a hitch and left the meeting with a new and rather lucrative account. Notice how this exemplifies the Great Partnership? God and I walked to that room together, and as we did, He instructed me what to do. I obeyed and He brought the victory. The Apostle James described this in his General Epistle: “Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.” James 4:7

*“... we no longer have to be bullied by intimidation, as long as we are one with God, abiding in Him and His words abiding in us!*

What does it mean to resist the devil? **Webster’s defines “resist”**, 1) to withstand; fend off 2) to oppose actively; fight against. The Greek word for “resist” is, anthistemi (anth-is’-tay-mee) meaning to stand against, to oppose, resist, withstand, to resist by actively opposing pressure or power. In a number of languages one may appropriately translate ‘to resist’ in a number of contexts as ‘to fight back or fight against’ or ‘to oppose.’ This word, anthistemi, is made up of two words. The first part is “ant.” This is where we get “anti” which means: opposite, instead of; often used to denote contrast. The second part of the word is **“histemi”**: (his’-tay-mee):

meaning to stand, used in various applications literally or figuratively. Translated as abide, appoint, bring, continue, covenant, establish, hold up, lay, present, set (up), stand (by, forth, still, up). To stand means the opposite of sitting, reclining or moving. To resist would mean that we are not only, not to stand with anything that satan and his hoards are remotely a part of, but that we are to aggressively fight against and defeat their efforts as well. It is of the utmost importance that we remember that we are not fighting against people! We are warring against unclean spirits that control the willing to facilitate satan's objectives in the earth. Paul describes resisting the devil in this way: "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." (Ephesians 6:12)

Exactly what kind of wrestling is involved? Paul tells us: "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil." (Ephesians 6:10-11) Notice that this form of fighting also includes "stand against." Thus, resisting the devil according to James and wrestling against the devil according to Paul both describe spiritual warfare. We must have armor to be able to fight, and not just any armor will do. This warfare requires spiritual armor, because the opponents are wicked spirits. Furthermore, according to both Apostles, the battle is set within the context of the Great Partnership. James said that before we can resist the devil, we must submit ourselves to God. Likewise, the Apostle Paul says that we must "be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might." Why? "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds". (2 Corinthians 10:4)

It should be obvious that we must submit first to God in order to become "strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might." Likewise, before we can put on the armor of God, we have to have the armor to put on. So, how do we get the armor? Since it is God's armor, we must submit to Him and His ways to get them. As for using the armor and the weapons once we have them, we still must submit to Him and His ways. After all, it is the Armor of God. It's His armor and we can only wear it and use the weapons through

Him. For without the Lord Jesus Christ, we can do nothing, but through Christ, we can do all things, because he strengthens us. So, what is this armor?

“Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.” (Ephesians 6:13-18)

The sevenfold Armor of God consists of the Belt of Truth, the Breastplate of Righteousness, the Shoes of the Preparation of the Gospel of Peace, the Shield of

Faith, the Helmet of Salvation, the Sword of the Spirit, and Prayer in the Spirit. Note that the Apostle says we must take this Armor unto ourselves. It is crucial to understand that the Great Partnership does not

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mean we are to be passive and expect God to do everything for us. Faith means that we actively obey His Word and trust Him to bring to pass what the Word promises will come when we do obey. Soldiers are trained to prepare for war, but they do not go out onto the battlefield alone nor at their own discretion. Moreover, the soldier does not have to understand all of the reasons for the different types of training, but through obedience to the rigors of that training, he is prepared to go forth and succeed in the day of battle. Similarly, the soldier does not formulate the battle plans and does not need to understand the strategy. He has to trust the leadership and obey the tactical instructions believing that doing so will support the overall strategy.

So, as a brief introduction to the Whole Armor of God, consider the Helmet of Salvation. In the spiritual sense, it is similar to the helmet that I wore for protection during my many years of playing football. With my helmet on, believe me, a game was rough

enough. I must admit, I got my “bell” rung a bunch of times, even though I was wearing my helmet. But lose your helmet in the middle of a pile up, and you are pretty much guaranteed that you are going back to the huddle with a few knots and bruises on your head. That is, if you make it back to the huddle at all. These knots and bruises would have never occurred if only your helmet would have been securely fastened. Much more importantly, lose the helmet of salvation, and intimidating spirits will head straight for your mind.

It is of the utmost importance that we know and remember that Jesus has made complete provision for all of our needs, including spiritual warfare. Paul’s letter to the Ephesians affirms that the Whole Armor of God contains both offensive and defensive weapons, seven in total, the number of completion and fullness; hence, these seven are the Whole, that is, the complete, Armor of God. Consequently, the list of the pieces of the Armor is not a menu from which we may pick and choose at our own discretion and inclination. Put on the whole armor of God and as you venture into battle and never forget, “No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and their righteousness is of me, saith the LORD.” **(Isaiah 54:17)**

If these messages have been a blessing to you please take a moment to write and let us know. Your encouragement and support mean so very much to us. You can e-mail us at: [keith@towardthemark.com](mailto:keith@towardthemark.com)  
Thank you for allowing us to speak into your life.



*Would you please stand with us in prayer for the nation of Israel.*



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