

The Spiritual Wild, Wild West



“The laborers carried on their work with one hand supporting their load and one hand holding a weapon. All the builders had a sword belted to their side.”

Nehemiah | Nehemiah 4:17-18 (NLT)

A glimpse at the news highlights the reality of the world we live in. Once written off as the ways of the past, has the “wild, wild west” reemerged? As much as we long to live in a peaceful world, we don’t...

not yet.

"I mean, the more a man was in the Devil's power, the less he would be aware of it, on the principle that a man is still fairly sober as long as he knows he's drunk." C.S. Lewis

Tragedies are coming so frequently that I fear myself becoming numb to them. How about you? The scary thing is that what is happening is merely evidence of a much greater battle... a spiritual "wild, wild west" most have long since grown numb to. The enemy in this battle would just assume stir us to war with each other so much that we forget or even deny he exists... could you imagine a better strategy?

"Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world." The Apostle Peter (1 Peter 5:8-9 (ESV)

Crafty, full of deceit, your enemy (mine too) is willing to do the unthinkable... against you!

Reflect: Have I grown numb to my enemy?

Born behind enemy lines, the spiritual wild, wild west is the true reality we live in.

“For we are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world, and against evil spirits in the heavenly places.” The Apostle Paul (Ephesians 6:12)

We are warring, not against each other, but against the powers behind everything we see. Against the one whose army has two primary objectives: Preventing Intimacy between you and God, and stopping the advancement of your Mission.

“So, it becomes the devil’s business to keep the Christian’s spirit imprisoned. He knows that the believing and justified Christian has been raised up out of the grave of his sins and trespasses. From that point on, Satan works that much harder to keep us bound and gagged, actually imprisoned in our own grave clothes. He knows that if we continue in this kind of bondage... we are not much better off than when we were spiritually dead.” (A.W. Tozer)

Beware of the illusion that simply being a Christ follower places you in a protective bubble. On the contrary. As my friend Brad likes to say, “If you’re not flying over the target, you won’t get shot.” Advancing your Mission places you square in your enemy’s sights. While he can’t “kill” you, he can neutralize you so that you are as ineffective as you were when you were spiritually dead.

Your Kingdom Sword

- *“...and take the sword of the Spirit, which is **the word of God.**” The Apostle Paul (Ephesians 6:17)*
- *Let **the praises of God** be in their mouths, and a sharp sword in their hands –” (Psalm 149)*
- *“Everyone who **acknowledges me publicly** here on earth, I will also acknowledge before my Father in heaven. But everyone who denies me here on earth, I will also deny before my Father in heaven. “Don’t imagine that I came to bring peace to the earth! I came not to bring peace, but a sword. Jesus Christ (Matthew 10:32-34)*

Nehemiah instructed the workers to strap on their swords. Paul said take up your sword. You too are a worker, on Mission. Remain sober... danger lurks! Have you strapped on your Kingdom Sword?

*Consider: **The Lord doesn't have me here to hide.***

Your Kingdom Sword belted to your side; do you know how to wield it? Fortunately, the Lord knows your situation.

“Praise the Lord, who is my rock. He trains my hands for war and gives my fingers skill for battle. He is my loving ally and my fortress, my tower of safety, my rescuer. He is my shield, and I take refuge in him.” King David (Psalm 144:1-2)

A rock like no other, he provides refuge; your enemy can't kill you...
praise the Lord! But wars are not fought while hiding in the fortress.
Receive your training and go out to advance your Mission!

*Imagine: **Wielding my Kingdom Sword slays whatever attempts to deter my Mission.***

You are not simply trained to wield your Kingdom Sword; the Lord has given it mighty power.

*"Once Eleazar and David stood together against the Philistines when the entire Israelite army had fled. He killed Philistines until his hand was too tired to lift his sword, and the Lord gave him a great victory that day."
(Samuel 23:9-10)*

David's Mighty Men demonstrated this superpower time and again. Two faith filled men took down an entire army! The Lord gave them a great victory in their Mission. Likewise, wield your Kingdom Sword! It's the only way to advance your Mission while living in...

The Spiritual Wild, Wild West.

Go off the grid and ask these questions:

Coach's Questions

- When I see tragedy happening in the world around me, how will I remind myself that I live in the spiritual wild, wild west; that my enemy is not other people?
- How will I practice wielding my Kingdom Sword?
- How has my enemy been working against my Mission? Swing my Kingdom Sword with mighty power now!

Spirit Talk

Post this where you will see it regularly.

Wield My Kingdom Sword Mightily.

"How blessed you are, O Israel! Who else is like you, a people saved by the Lord? He is your protecting shield and your triumphant sword! Your enemies will cringe before you, and you will stomp on their backs!"

Moses | Deuteronomy 33:29 (NLT)



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