

“So he made a whip out of cords, and drove all from the temple area, both sheep and cattle; he scattered the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables.” (John 2:15 NIV)

Even one of the last glimpses we have of Jesus in the Scriptures describes Him with military language.

“And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.” (Rev. 19:11-14 KJV)

Jesus was never a spiritual appeaser. He was bold and strong when He was on this earth and He gives us the power to also be bold and strong warriors fighting against the wicked schemes of the Devil. Jesus overcame sin with His death, burial and resurrection and He sent a sword — His Word — for us to use as a weapon.

“For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. (Heb. 4:12 NIV).

Let us never forget that a sword is an *offensive* weapon for *attacking* the enemy.

“Since the children have flesh and blood, He too shared in their humanity so that by His death He might destroy him who holds the power of death— that is, the devil.” (Hebrews 2:14 NASB)

Satan *does* hold the power of death — death for all eternity. His evil scheme to convince Christians that it is “unloving” for them to take a stand and battle with their sword against sin and error successfully turns them into spiritual appeasers instead of soldiers for Christ. Once that scheme has been accepted by Christians and implemented, it’s easy for Satan to use false religions to gain many souls for all eternity. His scheme to convince Christians that one religion is as good as another nullifies the power of the Gospel and gives the power of death to Satan.

Jesus didn’t come to earth to diplomatically compromise His Word. He came “...that he might destroy the works of the devil” (I John 3:8 KJV) The day of rest and of peace will come for the faithful Christian but for now we have been called to combat. Ephesians 6:10-18 tells us exactly how we are to prepare for that battle. This is no time for cowardice or spiritual appeasement. We must put on the armor, pick up the sword and face the conflict that ensues.

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Dennis and Sherri Owens — Cincinnati, Ohio  
diligence@gorfsystems.com — <http://www.gorfsystems.com/diligence/>

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# DILIGENCE

“We want each of you to show this same diligence to the very end, in order to make your hope sure.” — Hebrews 6:11

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## The Devil, His Tricks And The Fight — Part One

“Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword.” (Matthew 10:34 KJV)

Jesus didn’t come to bring peace and comfortable surroundings to those who accept Him as their Savior. The call to be a Christian is a call to battle.

“Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil.” (Ephesians 6:11 NASB)

“Put on the full armor”? ...to stand against the schemes of the Devil”? That’s war talk. The King James Version uses the phrase “...wiles of the Devil.” The Today’s English Version calls it “...the Devil’s evil tricks.”

Jesus won the decisive battle when He overcame sin by His death on the cross but the war is far from over. Jesus came to start a fight — a fight between His soldiers and the evil tricks and schemes of the Devil. As Christians, we should be prepared to *fight*! But — you say, that attitude is just too aggressive, too violent, too unloving and besides *that*, it contradicts Matthew 5:39.

“But I say to you, do not resist an evil person; but whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also.” (Matthew 5:39 NASB)

A detailed discussion as to why this does *not* contradict the above verse is not the focus of this article but briefly, when read in its entire context (verses 33-48), we readily see that it instructs us to not seek *personal* revenge. Suffering a wrong is far better than inflicting one. While it may be true that we are sometimes too quick to quarrel, it is often *right* to fight. Why else would Jesus Himself have said He came to bring a sword? And why does Ephesians 6:11 speak of putting on *armor*? Evil is aggressive! Satan is aggressive! And it is therefore *necessary* that Christians *aggressively* fight *against* Satan by *aggressively* fighting *for* Christ. Christians can not be spiritual pacifists or spiritual appeasers. A sword is an *offensive* weapon. Armor is to protect the one who wears it from the enemy but the sword is a weapon used to *attack* the enemy. God does not allow us to sit back and just be “comfortable” during this battle on earth as Christians. He *expects* us to use the sword for an offensive attack against the enemy. It’s also very clear in the Scriptures that we should *expect to be wounded* during the battle

“Blessed are you when men hate you, and ostracize you, and insult you, and scorn your name as evil, for the sake of the Son of Man.” (Luke 6:22 NASB)

“Indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.”  
(II Timothy 3:12 NASB)

*“If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are you, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. On their part He is blasphemed, but on your part He is glorified.” (1 Peter 4:14 NKJV)*

According to the dictionary, to appease is to “*pacify or attempt to pacify (an enemy) by granting concessions, often at the expense of principle.*” From this definition, it’s easy to see that a spiritual appeaser will simply grant concessions and change his/her belief rather than fight for it. One might say then that people who don’t believe much, probably won’t fight much. They would simply allow a victory for Satan rather than risk being wounded in the battle defending Christ and His Word. Spiritual appeasers see no need for conflict. Many go so far as to avoid singing hymns that even hint of conflict or battle. They may even choose to use versions of the Bible that soften passages about Christians at war. Why? Because they don’t understand (or accept) the *power* of Satan — his scheming, his evil tricks and the damage he can do to the cause of Christ. They don’t see him as a threat. They see little need to *aggressively* fight sin and error. They don’t see Satan’s use of false religions as a danger to the souls of men. Satan has convinced them that *all* conflict is wrong — even if it’s caused by using their sword — The Word, to stand for Christ and his teachings. (Apparently, the early martyrs such as Stephen in Acts chapter 7 didn’t consider diplomacy to be more important than declaring the Truth). Spiritual appeasers think we have only a few tasks as Christians — that is to love God, love others and ourselves and just be tolerant of *everything* and all will be forever well. Doing *that* doesn’t require the armor spoken of in Ephesians 6:10-18 *or* the sword Jesus tells us he sent to earth. If that’s all there is to being a Christian, why then did God see fit to talk about putting on armor and using a sword?

While the Bible certainly does allow governments to use physical force and physical weapons in certain situations, that’s not what the *church* is called to do. (For additional discussion on *Christians and War* see *Diligence* Volume 2 Issue 2 at [www.gorfsystems.com/diligence](http://www.gorfsystems.com/diligence)). The kind of warfare we are addressing in *this* article requires that Christians be determined, courageous, knowledgeable of the Word, bold, strong, even fierce at times!. Revelations 5:5 describes Jesus as “...*the Lion...*” and Proverbs 28:1 says that “...*the righteousness are bold as a lion*” (NASB and KJV). Christians who expect nothing more than a peaceful, comfortable life are not prepared to battle the evil schemes of Satan. Satan is an evil tyrant who would like nothing better than for everyone around us (as Christians) to perish. He wants Christians to avoid *all* conflict thereby allowing those around us to believe and accept false religions that will cause them to be lost for eternity. A life without conflict or struggle brought on by defending Christ and His Word is a life controlled not by God but by Satan. We can’t be spiritual pacifists or spiritual appeasers and at the same time be in the Lord’s army. Exodus 15:3 says “*The Lord is a man of war...*” (KJV or “*warrior*” in the NASB)

1 John 3:16 states:

*“We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.” (NASB)*

“...*Lay down our lives...*”? Isn’t that much more than being a spiritual appeaser who is willing to “...*grant concessions...at the expense of principle*” to avoid conflict and battle wounds? Doesn’t that require a lot more than just being tolerant of *everything* (even sin and error) while thinking *that* is “showing love” for God and others? If as a Christian, you believe that’s all it is, may we suggest that you go on line and read Volume 1, issues 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10 of *Diligence*. Love requires commitment. Sometimes it requires personal discomfort. Sometimes it requires that a Christian strap “*on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil.*” As Christians, God *will not* allow us make peace with the Devil or to be tolerant of his schemes.

Spiritual appeasers who believe they are acting meek and mild just like Jesus always did, might want to take a look at Jesus in action. Let’s look at just a few examples that demonstrate Jesus was not always so mild mannered. There were many times He was intimidating and fierce.

Example 1 — In Matthew 15:1-11, Jesus had said some things that greatly offended some elite religious leaders.

*“Then the disciples came and said to Him, ‘Do You know that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this statement?’ But He answered and said, ‘Every plant which My heavenly Father did not plant shall be uprooted. Let them alone; they are blind guides of the blind. And if a blind man guides a blind man, both will fall into a pit.’” (Matthew 15:12-14 NASB)*

Did Jesus apologize for offending them? No. He offended them *more* by calling them “*blind guides.*” He didn’t grant concessions at the expense of principle.

Example 2 — The demons begged and then fled in terror.

*“A large herd of pigs was feeding there on the hillside. The demons begged Jesus to let them go into them, and he gave them permission. When the demons came out of the man, they went into the pigs, and the herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and was drowned.” (Luke 8:23-33 NIV)*

Example 3 — Jesus had no fear of the wicked King Herod.

*“Just at that time some Pharisees approached, saying to Him, ‘Go away, leave here, for Herod wants to kill You.’ And He said to them, ‘Go and tell that fox, ‘Behold, I cast out demons and perform cures today and tomorrow, and the third day I reach My goal.’” (Luke 13:31-32 NASB)*

Example 4 — Perhaps the most familiar account is when Jesus went on a rampage with a whip.