



General Topics :: Spiritual Battle

Spiritual Battle - posted by crusader (), on: 2014/10/20 18:36

Hi All

It is disappointing to see many responses on this site treated and replied too in such a fleshly manner. someone said it was just a forum, really!!! if it just a forum then Jesus doesn't need to be a part of it does he! at times this site has been the only christian fellowship that i have had. At other times its been the catalyst for me into intense spiritual battles. we are accountable for every word we say as we represent Christ when we take up our cross and follow him.

as another saint said on the forum the battle is not with each other but against a common enemy. it is our own responsibility as the children of God to check the "plague of our own hearts" I really learnt a lot from the saints that are leaving the forum and i believe that if anyone leaves the site is a loss for all of us either because of the encouragement or the friction of swords that makes us sharper.

The danger of being passionate about a subject is that we can open up ourselves to emotional onslaught and there is always someone on sermon index that will fuel this.

To Greg

you do well with what God has commissioned you to do, i can see the temptations that Satan would have brought against you through the years in relation to the maintaining of this site and yet you chose prayer and long suffering to overcome this which is clear fruit of the spirit. I think the biggest dangers on site is not so much the topics but the fleshly responses on posts in the deception that they are led from the holy spirit when they are not. it is the small foxes that burn the vineyard.

to the saints that are leaving the site, May our father bless your journey but remember also that there is a time and a season for everything although i didn't agree with some of your responses you challenged me to test the beliefs that reside within in my heart.

Re: Spiritual Battle - posted by InTheLight (), on: 2014/10/20 21:17

Quote:

-----as another saint said on the forum the battle is not with each other but against a common enemy. it is our own responsibility as the children of God to check the "plague of our own hearts"

"a common enemy", one who is afraid to see saints advancing together against his kingdom on their knees, so he tries to stir up bitterness among us, knowing this hinders our march;

Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.
(Matthew 5:23-24)

Our gifts and our prayers won't make up for our lack of love. I do pray that there can be reconciliation among us and advancement of Christ's kingdom.

In Christ,

Ron

Re: - posted by crusader (), on: 2014/10/21 2:49

Hi Ron

I so agree. i personally have found it hard not to take things personally on this site and in my community but i do find that when i put it in the context that we all have the same enemy hiding in the darkness ready to pounce when saints are we ary and only through submission to Christ can the enemy be illuminated in his deceptive schemes.

Unforgiveness to me is the worst spiritual state to be as it breaks our own covenant with Jesus if we are in this state. i have in the past said things that have caused offence even though i didn't intend to and as a result i wasn't forgiven by that person. i tried to make amends but now its in the lords house.

a story i once read explained all to me and it was about a man that took a bag full of feathers and climbed the highest mountain. at the top of the mountain he threw all the feathers into the air and swept across the valley until they were seen no more. these are like our words, wether posted or spoken once they are said or written we no longer have control over them leaving it to the spirit realm to use.

Re: - posted by Sree (), on: 2014/10/21 3:26

Quote:

Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.
(Matthew 5:23-24)

Very true brother. I still remember the first conversation I had here. I wrote about how a person can be full of gifts yet not right with God. A frequent poster here who holds OSAS theology literally went after me with lot of bashing comments. Since I was new to all these theologies I was surprised how he was failing to acknowledge the clear word of God that I have quoted here. He was so much against the word I quoted as if it was taken from some other religious book and not Bible. I kept quoting scriptures supporting my view which made him even more furious.

That evening I went to attend a prayer meet and a well known preacher came to address us. Before the meeting God clearly convicted me that I had bitterness against this brother and also let bitterness spring up in him by arguing with him. I then quickly wrote an open apology. He then took it as if I have apologised for holding a wrong doctrine and was all happy for winning battle. It did not bother me even 1 bit, I was happy that my heart was set right before God and man. That poster soon left the forum after fighting with other posters here. We still read about him that he is still frequently visiting SI forums but restraining from posting.

Re: - posted by Oracio (), on: 2014/10/21 13:27

Brothers and sisters, since joining the SI forum back in 07 I have seen this same type of warfare and division come up and have seen brethren come and go for the very same issue that has recently come to the forefront again. I am thankful for how brother Greg and the other moderators have handled these types of situations. They've handled them with much love and patience (with much more love and patience than I myself have demonstrated to my shame), yet also with firmness when needed. Indeed, the enemy of our souls is always trying to pit us against one another over non-essentials. This recent situation has been a reminder and has made more clear to me the need to be careful not to be condemning of other Christians or churches or divisive over non-essentials.

Re: - posted by passerby, on: 2014/10/21 14:39

Discussions/learning from the wisdom of our brothers and sisters as well as hearing news about their blessings and burdens is a very important part of christian fellowship.

Basically, many are missing the fullness of this part of christian fellowship with their home churches for one reason or another. I believe this forum can be a source of grace and spiritual refreshing to all of us.

Re: - posted by crusader (), on: 2014/10/22 5:01

Hi passerby

i agree and as i have traveled alot many locations didn't have a christian fellowship that i could join and sermon index was one of the only sites in which i knew and trusted at the time for me to fellowship.

Re: Spiritual Battle, on: 2014/10/22 6:42

Dear brother,

I agree with all you have written here. I think I might have mentioned on at least one occasion that this is a forum, not a flesh and blood church where we know each other in real life and deal with each other face to face as we do in a local church. That doesn't mean we should not treat each other with honor and respect though. We must always behave in a Christlike manner through any kind of medium, face to face, on the phone, email and in a forum. But lets not treat this forum as a local church. Most people do not know each other in real life and there really should not be all kinds of melodrama associated with "leaving" a forum. When we go down that road it really comes across as very immature and helps to keep a spirit of division alive. Thats just my opinion. I think it is best if someone wants to leave, just leave, it is no big deal, life goes on...just move on and hold nothing in your heart towards anyone (as Sree so wonderfully stated).

Again, I want to stress that I 100% agree with your statements above though.

On another note, I am willing to bet that a lot of people who get offended and leave forums like this in a little bit of a huff.. are typically people who are NO LONGER involved in an active, vibrant church community. They have left any kind of established church for a variety of reasons but in so doing they are separating themselves and missing out on the opportunity of allowing the Lord to humble themselves in submission to REAL LIFE believers:)

I have also observed, mostly through my own life and in those who I happen to know (who are a lot like me), that the problem always seems to start when we get offended. So many are wandering outside of a local church today because somewhere along the line they got offended and this turned to resentment and finally a root of bitterness took root.

I want to stress (before I am flamed to a well done crisp) that NOT ALL PEOPLE who are outside an established typical local church involvement are in this category...so please do not get offended if you are one of the fortunate ones who has left the local church but still have a carefree and peaceful and submissive spirit:)

Re: - posted by crusader (), on: 2014/10/22 9:05

Hi Mark

Thankyou for the way you posted your response it was easy to see your respectful intent.

I agree with alot that you are saying, i personally do not see sermon index as a church but as a wonderful opportunity to talk to my brothers and sisters in christ that live in different cultural settings. I get to read about peoples beliefs from their exposure to the different churches and this fascinates me.

I am not outside of any church but i do see clearly the points that are made and agree with alot of these points. i am also aware of the dangers that satan can manipulate emotions when passionate about a subject as well.

words are so so powerful no matter how they are actioned, the bible is our proof of this. On the other side of the coin its not what goes into the body which defiles a man, its what comes out that defiles him. to me this is about what we say and how we respond and we are accountable for both.

yes it is a forum but what is unique about this forum is that we are asked to spend time in the holy spirit with all our responses thus holding up the banner of truth and honouring our father through Jesus Christ. I know that this is not the case with some people who post on this site and that is expected as it is an open forum.

I work on the principle that there are four types of hearts, and it is our responsibility on how we respond to each one as they all have a flowing effect. For example the Bible describes four fields, 3 of which are sown seed the wrong way and one is sown the right way. With submission to Christ through prayer the condition of the heart can be revealed and the seed can be sown the right way. All Christians are spiritual farmers entrusted with the word.

sorry for the long post but I just wanted to shed more light on where I was coming from. Karl

Re: - posted by MrBillPro (), on: 2014/10/22 10:47

Dear Christians:

I'm hungry. I'm lonely. I'm scared. I'm broken. I'm tired. I'm lost. And you're arguing about who is "amillennial" or "premillennial"?

I'm tired of people telling me what I need to think about Calvin, Spurgeon, Sproul, Driscoll, Grudem, and Packer. Tell me instead what I need to know about Jesus.

I'm sick of people saying I should be a continualist or a cessationist, missional or evangelical, egalitarian or complementarian, Arminian or Calvinist (whatever all those words mean), when all I really want to be is a Christian.

I've had it up to here with people yammering about dead Puritans, when I'm looking for a living Savior.

All you 21st-Century Pharisees who are so worried about whether I'm too "reformed," or not enough, to be in your "tribe" need to just stop it.

Stop your smug debates.

Stop outing and disowning Jesus-loving people for daring not to drink your particular flavor of kool-aid.

Stop spending the church's energy debating fringe issues instead of loving God and loving people.

Stop being so worried about whether I'm a member of the John Piper fan club, and worry instead about whether I am a child of God.

Because maybe I don't fret as much as you about who has bought into all 5 points of you-ism, but I do fret about what my family will eat today. I'm worried about what it all means, or even if it has a meaning. I'm worried about being a slave to sin.

I ache inside. I have an empty place and don't know how to fill it, but I do know that none of the ways I've tried have worked worth a flip.

Can you help? Do you know someone who can? Then introduce me to Him, and stop asking whose theology is "systematic."

Really? I need to meet Jesus, and you're giving each other litmus tests?

You know what? Never mind. I'll just wait on the government. Congress is actually fighting less than you guys.

Sincerely,
Lost People

Re: - posted by crusader (), on: 2014/10/22 15:09

Hi MrBillPro

I am not sure if i really understand where you are coming from in your reply and i apologise if somehow you have interpreted me "fighting" with people on this site.

Christianity is a spiritual fight as we are in a war against a spiritual enemy in the guise of varying principles that oppose God's principles which is stated clearly in Ephesians. The problem is when the fight gets drawn into the flesh and becomes personal rather than against the true enemy. This fight is not against flesh and blood but rather the wrestling of beliefs that are either supportive of God or are not.

It is through love that I wrestle for the truth with a brother or sister. Not to prove who is right or wrong but to allow God's truth to renew my carnal mind.

I am happy for you to email me if there is any way I can help. Cheers Karl

Re: - posted by PaulWest (), on: 2014/10/22 16:19

Disagreements, fights, contention and challenges are inevitable. When we are immature, we see these things as nuisances and become highly defensive. All we are really doing when you take away all the sanctimonious window dressing is fighting to "be right", so we don't come off looking inept publicly in spiritual matters. We all want to be right; we want to be aligned with correct doctrine and establish our reputations before men as learned and all-wise Christian sages.

As we mature, however, this paradigm shifts. We become much more judicious in picking our battles. We find the need to defend and justify our doctrinal leanings more and more petty. This is not to say that what we believe is not important. Far from it! What I am talking about is the need to engage others who are not looking precisely through the "dark glass" as we are -- this need to incessantly engage, defend, attack. Show me a believer who constantly wars with brethren who challenge him over pet doctrines and convictions and I will show you a believer who is, in fact, immature and insecure. The mature brother, on the other hand, will concede and let others win the battle.

The battles we fight should never be with other brethren. They should never be with flesh and blood, no matter how ardently someone disagrees with us. These battles are exclusively the Lord's; He alone changes hearts and minds. Our battle is with spiritual forces which ever seek to influence our own minds and hearts. We are not responsible to change anyone's point of view in matters of the Lord, in doctrine, theology, etc. Our prerogative is rather with ourselves, with stewarding our own hearts and souls so we may be healthy to feed others who will receive the grace of a life-giving ministry in the Holy Spirit. So that the River of Living Water flows from within an undammed, clean vessel.

We need to see what can dam the outlet, and then prevent this damming from happening. Knowledge is power! For example, will arguing on Sermon Index (regardless of the topic) help widen the flow? Will it restrict it (even if I win)? I need revelation on what God's will is for me here, and once I receive the revelation, to obey it. If God tells me, like He told Jesus, to "leave alone" my dissenters, I had better take heed.

Jesus picked His battles, and so should we. There is a time and place for everything under heaven; discerning when to act and when not to act comes from the same Author who constrained Solomon to pen that scripture. When we humble ourselves in the mighty hand of God and concede defense, things get ironed out without us even having to lift a hand. Isaac never fought for the wells to be re-opened his father had dug. He just let the uncircumcised have them. Jesus did not speak a word of defense before Herod or Pilate. He told his disciples to leave the religious people alone and not engage in their debates. But he certainly went after Satan! He warned His disciples to "take heed" to themselves, lest they be deceived by false prophets. But never to fight with them.

If you want to see something amazing happen in your life, try this. It will revolutionize your experience on Sermon Index in the very least, guaranteed. Resolve by the power of God's grace to never argue with another believer on this website (or anywhere else for that matter) again. As soon as you think you are being baited, just excuse yourself and step away, or change the conversation. God will let your know when to do it. See how quickly you will grow in wisdom, how parts of the Word previously closed to you will open up.

God bless you all as you endeavor to walk the narrow path of life and experience the exciting joy of following Christ!

Brother Paul