

# MADRID CHURCH OF CHRIST

SUNDAY, MAY 28, 2017

2017 ANNUAL THEME:

## PUTTING ON THE FULL ARMOR OF GOD



EPHESIANS 6:10-20

**"PUT ON THE WHOLE ARMOR OF GOD, THAT YOU MAY BE ABLE TO STAND AGAINST THE SCHEMES OF THE DEVIL" (EPHESIANS 6:11).**

## HOW CHRISTIANS CAN BE WRONG WHEN STANDING UP FOR WHAT'S RIGHT BY WES MCADAMS

A few hundred years ago, during the Inquisition, the Catholics used to burn people at the stake for disagreeing with official church doctrine. So the fact that those claiming to be Christians are no longer killing one another over doctrinal disagreements shows great progress. However, there are still times when those of us who name



the name of Christ are wrong in the way we stand up for what we believe is right. Here are some things to consider.

## **1. When We're Always in "Attack Mode"**

For some of us "attack mode" seems to be our default setting. We treat every matter of disagreement like a matter of life and death. When our brethren offer a slightly different view on a matter, no matter what it is, we talk to them like they've denied the deity of Christ. Of course, living in attack mode is a failure to recognize that Jesus said some matters are "weightier" than others (Matthew 23:23). And the apostle Paul dealt extensively with the fact that some matters are matters of conscience and opinion (1 Corinthians 8; Romans 14). Yes, there are times we must metaphorically gird up our loins and arm ourselves for battle, but that doesn't mean we "go to war" over every little matter. In fact, we should be people who "live in harmony with one another" (Romans 12:16) and "so far as it depends on" us, we "live peaceably with all" (Romans 12:18).

Yes, there is "a time for war." But there is also "a time for peace" (Ecclesiastes 3:8). It takes wisdom to know the difference.

## **2. When We Treat Everyone Like "False Prophets"**

When someone has the audacity to chide us for being too harsh in our treatment of those with whom we disagree, we often cite Jesus' treatment of the religious leaders of His day. After all, Jesus used some pretty harsh language when he called the Pharisees a "brood of vipers" (Matthew 12:34). So aren't we being like Jesus when we use harsh language against "false teachers"?

First of all, I think it needs to be said that Jesus could read people's thoughts (Matthew 9:4). You and I don't have that luxury. Jesus knew that the Pharisees, and other religious leaders of His day, were power-hungry murderers. They were guilty of destroying anyone who got in their way. Their entire religious life was a charade. Jesus wasn't exaggerating at all when he said they were deadly "vipers." 99.9% of the time when we have a disagreement with someone, it is NOT "Christ-like" to treat them the same way Jesus treated the Pharisees. Even if we are right and they are wrong, that doesn't make them on the same level as the Pharisees. It could be that they are simply

mistaken. There is a vast difference between someone who is knowingly and maliciously leading people astray and those who are simply mistaken. And then of course, there is always the possibility that we are the ones who are wrong. We must be careful to always take our own fallibility into account. We are neither God, nor one of His prophets. We must be extremely humble, even when contending for the faith.

### **3. When We Are Rude**

Whether online or in person, there is no excuse for Christians behaving rudely. I usually cringe when I read comments online. And sadly, I often agree with a person's position, while being repulsed by their vitriol. In other words, I believe they are right in what they are saying, but wrong in the way they are saying it. The true evidence that we are children of God is found in our fruit. If our fruit is full of strife, jealousy, and fits of anger, it is evident that we walk according to the flesh and not the Spirit. But if on the other hand, our fruit is full of "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control," then it is evident we are walking by the Spirit (see Galatians 5:16-26). So Christians who stand up for what is right by speaking bitterly, angrily, and unkindly are showing that even though they *know* what is right in one sense, they are still not spiritually-minded people. They are not mature in Christ.

#### **Should We Stand Up for What is Right?**

Of course, we should stand up for what is right. We should stand up with boldness and conviction. We should be people who speak the truth. But fighting this battle isn't *just* about boldness and conviction, it's also about wisdom, discernment, and a heart set on spiritual things.

- We must learn when to whisper, and when to shout.
- We must learn when to say something publicly, and when to say something privately.
- We must learn when to speak up, and when to keep quiet.
- We must learn to choose our words carefully.
- We must learn to be kind.

- We must learn to be loving.
- We must learn to be self-controlled.

If we do not learn these things, then our standing up will be in vain. We must “be wise as serpents and innocent as doves” (Matthew 10:16). We must speak the truth, but only in love (Ephesians 4:15).

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## **UPCOMING EVENTS:**

- 06/04 - Song Service @ 9AM
- 07/30 – Next Invite Sunday - *The Best Possible News: Jesus is Risen*

*If there is an event you are planning at your house that you want put in the bulletin, let Jason know!*

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## **DAILY READING:**

- **05/29** – Job 38-39; Psalm 145
- **05/30** – Job 40-42; Psalm 146
- **05/31** – Psalm 1-2; Psalm 147
- **06/01**– Proverbs 1-3; Psalm 148
- **06/02** – Proverbs 4-6; Psalm 149
- **06/03** – Proverbs 7-9; Psalm 150
- **06/04** – Proverbs 10-12; Psalm 1



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## **VISITORS: THANK YOU FOR COMING TODAY!**

If you are visiting with us and have any questions about what you have seen or heard today, please fill out a visitor’s card or ask to talk to one of our elders. You can also contact Jason Smith using the information below. We would be happy to schedule a time to sit down with you and to answer your questions from God’s word. If there is anything we can do to help you spiritually, please let us know. We are here to serve!

Call or text Jason @ 412-999-4837 or email him @  
preacher@madridchurch.com