

HIGH FIVE!

Mighty in Fortitude

INTRODUCTION

“When you are young in the faith and spiritually immature it is easy for every wind of doctrine to blow us in different directions. Today, I want to teach you how to be strong and mighty in your fortitude against false doctrines and aberrant teachings that will only throw you into spiritual confusion and leave you spiritually flimsy.”

Questions: Do you know people who are spiritually flimsy? Are you spiritually flimsy?

SPIRITUAL FLIMSY

- One day you believe this religion. The next day you believe that religion.
- One day you hold on to this philosophy. The next day you hold on to that philosophy.
- You announce your new faith one year. Then you reject that same faith the next year.
- You believe that all religions lead to God.
You believe that everyone goes to heaven when they die and there is no such thing as hell.
You believe that Jesus and Buddha, and Muhammad and Confucius and Ghandi and Mother Theresa and the Virgin Mary are all equal deities or divines sent by God.
- You believe that God and the universe are the same thing.
- You believe that your destiny can be discovered in horoscopes, astrology, fortune tellers and fortune cookies.
- You go through a bad circumstance in your life and you now question the very existence of God.

“Spiritual flimsiness comes from clumsy and confusing teachings that are not based on God's word, the Bible.”

SERMON IN A SENTENCE: **Spiritual maturity weakens spiritual flimsiness and strengthens spiritual fortitude.**

Definition of fortitude: The strength to bear misfortune, pain, or adversity with firm courage.

Fortitude means:

- you don't go down easily
- you are spiritually tough and won't just topple over at the easiest opposition
you know how to take a punch from life and you get back up.

2 Corinthians 4:8-9 NIV84

We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; ⁹ persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed.

That's Fortitude!

"Everybody has a plan until they get punched in the mouth."

- Mike Tyson, heavyweight boxing champion

"Some of you have been punched in the mouth by life! But because of your fortitude, you are still standing. Because of your spiritual fortitude, you are still moving forward. Some of you don't even look like what you've been through!...You've got fortitude!"

"Fortitude is that ability to stand for Christ when everything is being thrown at you!"

No doctrine of teaching is going to sway you.

No adversity is going to dissuade you.

No false teacher is going to deceive you to believe in him/her against God's word.

Question: How is your fortitude?

Question: How strong is your faith to stand against false doctrine, false accusations, trials, tribulations, and even traumatic events that come in life?

Question: How can you and I become mature & mighty in Christ so that we are not enamored by the next new model of Christianity?

"There are new fads that come from time to time that make us flitter and flutter from one book to the next, from one idea to the next, from one church to the next, from one trend to the next. We get excited about the newest and shiniest idea that sails past the port of our lives."

“I am in no way saying that we should resist new innovations, new methods, and renewed mind sights that reimagine strategies & old structures. In fact, I embrace new innovations. I encourage new ideas and improvements. I welcome new revelations.”

“But I’m also keenly aware that biblical aberrations and unbiblical affiliations can lead God’s people astray and away from God’s word and God’s will.”

As one of the spiritual authorities in your life I want to help you become mature & mighty in Christ so that you will not be flimsy, fluttering back and forth with every wind and doctrine.

Ephesians 4:11-14 (NIV84)

It was he [Christ] who gave some to be the apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, ¹²to prepare God’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up ¹³until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. ¹⁴ Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming.

3 Observations From verse 14

1. SOLID TEACHING PRODUCES FORTIFIED BELIEVERS. FALSE TEACHING PRODUCES FLIMSY BELIEVERS.

“Flimsiness comes from what people are taught and if their teachers are teaching flimsy, weak messages that don’t come from God’s word then that’s what followers will pick up and that’s what their faith will produce.”

2 Peter 2:1-3 NIV84

But there were also false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you. They will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the sovereign Lord who bought them--bringing the way of destruction on themselves. ² Many will follow their shameful ways and will bring the way of truth into disrepute. ³ In their greed these teachers will exploit you with stories they have made up. Their condemnation has long been hanging over them, and their destruction has not been sleeping.

ELEMENTS OF A FALSE TEACHER From 2 Peter 2

1. They are “*among the people*” (v.1)

Matthew 13:24-30 NIV84

Jesus told them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field. ²⁵ But while everyone was sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and went away. ²⁶ When the wheat sprouted and formed heads, then the weeds also appeared.

²⁷ “The owner’s servants came to him and said, ‘Sir, didn’t you sow good seed in your field? Where then did the weeds come from?’

²⁸ “ ‘An enemy did this,’ he replied.

“The servants asked him, ‘Do you want us to go and pull them up?’

²⁹ “ ‘No,’ he answered, ‘because while you are pulling the weeds, you may root up the wheat with them. ³⁰ Let both grow together until the harvest. At that time I will tell the harvesters: First collect the weeds and tie them in bundles to be burned; then gather the wheat and bring it into my barn.’ ”

“We need to understand that while we’re in the body of Christ, yes, we will be with other people who are like wheat - they are growing for Christ. But there are also people planted in that same garden that are tares, which means they are not the real deal. It says in Matthew 13...that they grow up together...Peter is saying they are among us.”

“Sometimes we think that false teachers and false teaching and false prophets are not inside the church but are they’re outside somewhere and they’re waving a flag telling you, ‘these are lies...hello everybody, we just want you to know, these are great lies and we’re false.’ “

“Part of spiritual maturity is understanding that everyone is NOT right in the head.”

“Innocence as a child is one thing; but as an adult, you’ve gotta learn that not everyone is not safe.”

1 Corinthians 13:11 NIV84

When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put childish ways behind me.

“Children’s innocence should be protected, but as they grow up, you’ve got to teach them that not everybody is safe, that’s a part of maturity. When you realize that you need boundaries and that everyone is not safe.”

2. They are “secretive” in teaching (v.1b)

“When teachers are trying to teach in secret, there’s something wrong.”

“When there is a sense of secret follower-ship within the body, something is not right.”

3. They teach “*destructive heresies*” (v.1b)

Heresy - opposing & contrarian beliefs to orthodox Christianity

4. They deny the “*sovereign Lord*” (v.1c) (no longer Christ alone)

They are no longer teaching Christ ALONE, they are teaching Christ PLUS something else

“If you follow people who are adding things to Christ...Christ has to be central. If Christ is no longer central but put on the side along with other philosophies, then he is not preeminent and if he’s not preeminent, they’re not teaching God’s word.”

JESUS CHRIST ALONE - Nothing more, Nothing less, Nothing else

5. They are “*greedy*” for money (v.3)

“Instead of being hungry for ministry, they’re greedy for money.”

If you find people who are greedy for money they should not be spiritual leaders

6. They “*exploit*” people (v.3)

This goes along with point #5

“God always has a plan to expose those kinds of exploitations.”

7. They make stuff up (v.3)

2 Peter 2:3

In their greed these teachers will exploit you with stories they have made up. Their condemnation has long been hanging over them, and their destruction has not been sleeping.

Trust but verify!

“Let me not make you scared of false prophets. The goal is not for you to run around ‘Oh my gosh! False prophets! False doctrine!’”

Verse 3 promises “*their destruction*” (**2 Peter 2:3**). God will destroy those who are destroying his church

2. SERIOUS LEARNERS MUST BE SERIOUS DISCERNERS. CASUAL LEARNERS ARE USUALLY CASUAL DISCERNERS.

“When you’re a ‘casual discerner,’ you are more apt to take in information without vetting its sources or its substance. Flimsiness comes from a lack of discernment from the learner. Notice that the learner is grasping at ‘every wind’ of teaching.

Ephesians 4:14 NIV84

Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming.

“Your responsibility as a learner is not to go after every wind of teaching.”

Psalms 1 KJV

Blessed *is* the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.

² But his delight *is* in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.

³ And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.

⁴ The ungodly *are* not so: but *are* like the chaff which the wind driveth away.

⁵ Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.

⁶ For the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish.

“Every learner is called to be a serious discerner. You can’t chase every wind of doctrine. You can’t read every book that’s recommended.”

3. SCHEMING CRAFTINESS IS SATAN’S MODE OF OPERATION

Ephesians 4:14 NIV84

Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming.

Deception! That’s all Satan was doing in the Garden with Adam and Eve. He deceived Eve so that she would go against the word of God.

The description of the Serpent is also stated in this verse:

Genesis 3:1 NIV84

Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made.

Satan uses the same tactic today.

Genesis 3:1 NIV84

He [serpent] said to the woman [Eve], “Did God really say, ‘You must not eat from any tree in the garden’?”

Genesis 3:4 NIV84

“You will not surely die,” the serpent said to the woman.

Satan likes to create confusion

1 Corinthians says that God is NOT the author of confusion

1 Corinthians 14:33 KJV

For God is not *the author* of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.

Flimsiness makes people vulnerable to spiritual confusion. Spiritual predators seize upon that confusion by introducing a “controlling clarity” that seems like nirvana at first. The confused person takes hold of the new clarity and, before they know it, they are locked into a cult.

“Those that are fortified in their faith can somehow still hold on to their faith even in the midst of difficult circumstances.”

Question: What is the best way to fortify your faith?

The answer is in verse 15 as to the best way to fortify your faith.

Ephesians 4:15 NIV84

Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ.

Truth is the answer! God’s truth is the answer to spiritual flimsiness!

PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

1. We must preach the truth in love!

“Without love, truth cannot be appropriately administered. When we speak, teach, preach, and explain God's word, we must do it lovingly with God's heart. If we speak God's word without God's heart, that means we're not really speaking for God, we're speaking for ourselves.”

“When people communicate on my behalf, I want them to not only pass on the content of my words, but I want them to pass on the sentiment of my words.”

“We've gotta speak the truth in love but we've got to speak it with God's heart and then people will be free!”

John 8:31-32 NIV84

If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. ³² Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.

2 We must possess the truth in our hearts!

John 14:6 NIV84

Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”

If you haven't accepted the truth of Jesus in your life, today is the day of salvation.

Hebrews 9:27 KJV

And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment

3. We must practice the truth in our daily lives.

“There is no excuse for not learning God’s word if you’re at Bridgeway Community Church. I counted up all the bible teaching/studying opportunities you have at Bridgeway for 39 weeks during this ministry year.”

39 Sunday Sermons

39 Thursday interactive bible teachings at noon for 30 minutes

30 hours of preaching for the revival on October 29-30th

210 Wednesday Night eLive Classes

TOTAL - 318 teaching and learning opportunities in God’s word at Bridgeway this year!

This doesn’t include the *Great Sermon Conversations*, *Life Group teachings*, the *seminars like SHAPE*, etc.

GO TO Bridgeway.cc/events or Bridgeway.cc/thirty to get started.

“You have so much opportunity to learn God’s word if you decided you want to become a serious learner! That’s what I want you to become in order to grow. A serious learner who can become a serious discerner like the Bereans.

Acts 17:10-11 NIV84

As soon as it was night, the brothers sent Paul and Silas away to Berea. On arriving there, they went to the Jewish synagogue. ¹¹ Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true.

Quote in Pastor DA’s Bible: “If your Bible is falling apart that means your life probably isn’t.”

“Work the word and it will work for you.”

“Work the word and it will work on you.”

“Work the word and it will work in you.”

SPIRITUAL MATURITY WEAKENS SPIRITUAL FLIMSINESS AND STRENGTHENS SPIRITUAL FORTITUDE.