

Picking your battles

Proverbs 19:11 *The discretion of a man deferreth his anger; and it is his glory to pass over a transgression.*

One of the things you discover as you walk with the Lord is not to fight everything that comes your way. While it sends a message to fight, you want to be careful not to fight everyone and every fight. You might win, but you will have to suffer some damages and you have to know that before you proceed.

“Battles are inevitable. They are going to come your way whether you like it or not. The only control you have, is to choose which battles you will fight, and which battles you will allow to slide on past. If you do not learn how to do this, you will spend huge amounts of emotional and maybe even physical energy fighting every battle that pops up.”

I know a thing about Boxing or Mixed Martial Arts sports. One of the things that makes an undefeated champion in boxing is being smart and calculated at picking who you fight. If you are highly rated, you want to be careful who you choose to fight. If you fight anyone, you lose your bargaining worth and you could be defeated by someone average even if it is by a lucky punch.

I heard an example of a builder who was given a huge project and made a mess. He made many unauthorized and consequential decisions for the owner that he should not have made which cost the owner lots of money. In addition to that, he was unapologetic and extremely arrogant. While the owner was very powerful and had all the resources to crush him like a cockroach and/or put him in jail, he chose not to. He was calculative. He chose his fight. He could have won this fight, but was it worth fighting? He did not think it was, so he let it go, not because he was weak, but because he made a different decision. He did not fight for the builder's good.

John 2:13-16 *And the Jews' passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem, [14] And found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting: [15] And when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables; [16] And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not my Father's house an house of merchandise.*

Mark 14:65 *And some began to spit on him, and to cover his face, and to buffet him, and to say unto him, Prophecy: and the servants did strike him with the palms of their hands.*

- a) Jesus had the opportunity to fight yet He chose not to fight everything. In some instances, he did not do a thing. He chose His battles, not because He was weak or was going to lose, but because He was so strong, that He could easily crush His enemies. He chose not to fight for their benefit. He did this out of love for the other person. We can do the same. God help me!
- b) Some battles you do not fight because you know you will not win them. Jesus was not going to win the crucifixion battle. It was His destiny and the will of His Father. He submitted Himself to it.
- c) Not fighting everything or exercising your strength or muscles is wisdom. If you want to live long, I have discovered that you want to exercise maximum caution about when to fight or even if to fight at all.
 - i) This is not to say you should become passive (James 4:7 *Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you*).
 - NO! If you do, you will get the same negative results. You will be destroyed by the enemy. Passiveness can kill you. All I'm saying is you need to have a fight in you for Satan to back off or to know well enough that you will fight back heavier than he could imagine.

Not fighting is not a sign of weakness the same way Meekness is not weakness. When someone is meek, that person has the ability to exercise their power but chooses not to. I have seen various people who are dangerous with their hands and feet, they are trained to hurt people and they can kill yet they will not fight outside the ring because they could easily hurt that person. They are willing to even take insults and humiliations for the same reason. They are disciplined enough to not fight back when they know they could easily win.

Jesus did not teach pacifism, neither is that what I'm saying. We need to fight. There is a need to fight, but not in every fight. We need to pick and choose when and IF we should fight. Not every battle has to be fought. Sometimes we must use diplomatic approaches to get a favorable result rather than simply fighting. We need to let the Lord lead us in which fights to fight and which ones we need to walk away from. Being pacifist promotes evil and wickedness.

Consequences of fighting wrong battles:

- 1) Resounding defeat
- 2) Damaged reputation
- 3) Damaged Relationships
- 4) Emotional stress and anger