

# An Effeminate Spirit



*Psalms 12:1 Help, LORD; for the godly man ceaseth; for the faithful fail from among the children of men.*

*1 Corinthians 6:9-10 Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.*

According to the Scriptures, the *effeminate* shall not inherit God's Kingdom.

- Inherit: (Greek) *klay-ron-om-eh'-o*, To be an heir to, to obtain by inheritance.

We often quote *1 Corinthians 6:9-10* to prove that men who commit such sins will not go to heaven, *and so it is*. However, more accurately, this passage teaches that such sins are contrary to the nature of the redeemed life. Remember, *Jesus* said...

*Luke 17:20-21 ...behold, the kingdom of God is within you.*

Men who commit these sins are clearly not part of the family of God; *not in life, nor in death. If there is no heaven in the soul, there can be no heaven in eternity. Only heirs* have a claim to God's inheritance. Now, the word *effeminate* conjures up an image of the *sissy*. Of course, this is not inaccurate but it's not a perfect or pure definition. So, what is an *effeminate spirit*?

- Effeminate: (Greek) *mal-ak-os'*, Soft (*used only three times in the N.T., only here translated effeminate*).

It's that *cowardly, weak, spineless, gutless, and mamby-pamby* spirit that permeates our culture and has even crept into the professing church. It's that attribute of the heart that refers to the plain declaration of *God's Word* as just

"too hard". Sadly, ours is a generation saturated with an *effeminate* quality, marked by moral softness, particularly among men.

- Effeminate: (*Webster's*) The softness, delicacy and weakness in men, which are characteristic of the female sex, but which in males are deemed a reproach. Having the qualities of softness to an unmanly degree. Tender, womanish, or weak.

In the Kingdom of God, women have a very important role, but God is looking for *men* to lead the church.

***Ezekiel 22:30*** *And I sought for a man...*

A weak pulpit will always produce a weak and soft church. If the leadership of the church is weak and indecisive, so will be the men and consequently, the entire church. With such compromise, the professing church is left vulnerable in the extreme. Biblical Christianity requires a rugged spiritual determination. In the first chapter of *Joshua* we see the characteristics required to lead God's people into the land. No doubt, *God wants these attributes in leadership because He desires them in all.*

***Joshua 1:6-7*** *Be strong and of a good courage: for unto this people shalt thou divide for an inheritance the land, which I swear unto their fathers to give them. Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest.*

All throughout the *Bible*, we see many kindred charges given to those who are called to inherit the promises. For example, in the N.T., we are exhorted to...

***1 Cor. 16:13*** *Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong.*

***Ephes. 6:10*** *Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.*

Such exhortations require us to cast off an *effeminate spirit* and walk in the power of the *Holy Ghost*, as *God's commands* can only be fulfilled through *God's Spirit*. In this article, I want to contrast the prevailing, *effeminate spirit*, with the specific requirements of this charge in *Joshua* and prove there is an *effeminate spirit* which has infiltrated the professing church..

## **FIRST, WE ARE ADMONISHED TO BE STRONG**

*Joshua 1:7a Only be thou strong...*

But the *effeminate*, are *feeble* and *weak*.

The *church of today* stresses the *weakness of the flesh* while the *N.T. church* focused on the *strength of Christ*. We used to sing "*standing on the promises*" but today they sing "*We Fall Down*". Today, misguided ministry seeks to soothe men in their sins while it encourages them to be content with weakness. Think about it, has there ever been a time when there is so much comfort given to spiritual weakness/failure?

*Philip. 3:18 ...whose glory is in their shame*

The charge is not '*be strong*', but rather, '*you are irreparably weak, even under grace, and God does not expect more*'. Listen to an excerpt from Wesley's comments on the *effeminate* mentioned in *1 Corinthians 6:9*:

*"Those who take up no cross, endure no hardship." –John Wesley*

*2 Tim. 2:3 Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.*

When *King David* committed to *Solomon* the responsibility of building God's house he said...

*1 Chron. 28:10 Take heed now; for the Lord hath chosen thee to build an house for the sanctuary: be strong, and do it.*

In this charge, we see the same key elements as we read in *Joshua*.

**1 Chron. 28:10** *Take heed...be strong, and do it.*

Ironically, nothing is more resisted in our times than a gospel that demands that people *hear, be strong, and do*. Our generation recoils at moral responsibility like oil resists water. Of course, the Bible clearly teaches we are weak *in* and *of* ourselves. We must be careful not to deny this Scriptural truth. However, those that truly recognize this and humbly submit themselves to Christ will enjoy His divine and heavenly strength.

**2 Cor. 12:10** *...when I am weak, then am I strong.*

A gospel that fails to promote Christ as all-sufficient Savior and strength for every trial and test of faith is *effeminate* in nature.

### **WE ARE CHARGED TO BE *COURAGEOUS***

**Joshua 1:7b** *Only be thou strong and very courageous...*

While an *effeminate spirit* is riddled with *fear* and *unbelief*.

There is no need to *take courage* if there will be no opportunity to fear. When we follow Christ, the enemy will oppose and attack our resolve and will offer one occasion after another to entertain fear...

**2 Tim. 4:16** *...no man stood with me, but all men forsook me*

To follow Christ is no benign, flowery journey, but it is a path that leads directly into conflict. There is no such thing as a Christianity void of *spiritual warfare*.

*“If there is no struggle, there is no progress. Those who profess to favor freedom and yet avoid confrontation are people who want crops without plowing up the ground. They want rain without thunder and lightning; they want the ocean without the roar of its waters.”* –Frederick Douglass

Every man who *bows the knee to Christ* will rise to look the devil and his crowd directly in the face. Remember, Christ came to deliver us from *sin*, but *Satan* and *dead, sin-excusing religion* comes in an attempt to deliver us from *Christ*. Now, in the natural, a *sissy* is someone who avoids confrontation and

who shuns a fight, because he is intimidated by conflict. Such forfeit the right to be called "men". Likewise, those who avoid the *good fight of faith* are unfit for heaven...

**Rev. 21:8** *But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.*

- Fearful: (Greek) *di-los'*, The *timid* or *faithless*.

In this hour there is a wholesale refusal to *contend for the faith*. The gospel preached today produces men who grow squeamish when faced with battle and who faint at the sight of *spiritual blood*. However, the *Holy Ghost* has never backed down from a challenge from the devil. I can't fathom how men can read the N.T. and suppose we can live and preach this gospel free from opposition. The true gospel strikes at and exposes the very animosity of sinful man toward God (*it brings out the worst in sinners*). The *effeminate* fear the rejection of the world. This fear is what spawns today's crossless, bloodless gospel that is, sadly, gutted of its divine authority.

*“The new cross encourages a new and entirely different evangelistic approach. The evangelist does not demand abnegation of the old life before a new life can be received. He preaches not contrasts, but similarities. He seeks to key in to public interests by showing that Christianity makes no unpleasant demands; rather, it offers the same thing the world does, only on a higher level. Whatever the sin-mad world happens to be clamoring after at the moment is cleverly shown to be the very thing the gospel offers, only the religious product is better. The new cross does not slay the sinner, it redirects him. It gears him into a cleaner and jollier way of living and saves his self-respect. The Christian message is slanted in the direction of the current vogue, in order to make it acceptable to the public.”* –A.W. Tozer

The popular concept that teaches that we must appeal, impress, or otherwise imitate the world to win the world is unbliblical:

**Romans 12:2** *And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.*

- Conformed: (Greek) *soos-khay-mat-id'-zo*, To fashion alike or fashion self according to.

## **WE ARE CHARGED TO TAKE HEED TO GOD'S WORD**

**Joshua 1:7c** *...that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law*

But an *effeminate spirit* either ignores, rejects, or otherwise disesteems *God's Word*.

If we are to embrace *God's Word* it will indeed require *strength* and *courage*. The most unpopular words among professing Christians today are *God's Words*. One of the greatest battles of the Christian life is to overcome *religion's* perpetual but subtle assault on obedience to *God's Word*.

**Matthew 23:13** *But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in.*

Dead, sin-loving religion will always resist the will of God while the mark of the true Christian is a dogmatic zeal for the *Scriptures*. Show me a man who genuinely loves *God's Word* and I will show you a man who utterly hates anything contrary to *God's Word*.

**Psalms 119:104** *Through thy precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every false way.*

However, in this hour there is a moral laxity and softness that translates into a high tolerance for the grossest of sins. A genuine hatred for sin is often seen as extreme, drastic, bigoted, or fanatical.

## **WE ARE COMMANDED TO DO**

*Joshua 1:7d Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law....*

Nevertheless, the *effeminate* insist they *can't*, when in fact, they *won't*.

*Luke 11:28 But he said, Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it.*

The gospel preached today grants men an unbridled license to sin and yet proclaims that they are still under the love of God. Sadly, the prevailing thought in this hour is that men can be born-again and yet remain unchanged. However, this is a lie, the Bible is still true, if we *hear* and refuse to *do*, we are not liberated or enlightened, we are deceived. The *effeminate* professors of Christianity are like the servant entrusted with one talent but who hid it in the earth out of fear.

*Matthew 25:25 And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, there thou hast that is thine.*

They leave *obedience* to God, but God says, "you should have used what I gave you."

*Matthew 25:30 And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*

## **FINALLY, WE ARE TOLD TO BE STEADFAST**

*Joshua 1:7e ...turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest.*

But an *effeminate spirit* is moved by the slightest external pressure.

The genuine Christian is inspired from within by the indwelling spirit while the hypocrite is moved from without. The only other time the Greek word translated "*effeminate*" in *1 Corinthians 6:9* is in the gospels...

**Matthew 11:7-8** *And as they departed, Jesus began to say unto the multitudes concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken with the wind? But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? behold, they that wear soft clothing are in kings' houses.*

Softness is not part of the heavenly adornment: *King's courts are for diplomats and court jesters, not prophets.* Generally, worldly high places are reserved for *delegates* but *dungeons* are made for *disciples*. The river reed swaying in the wind often gives a false indication of the direction of the river's current. The *effeminate* are moved by the wind of opposition, tribulation, and persecution, but soldiers for *Christ* are steadfast.

**1 Cor. 15:58** *Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.*

We must avoid this *effeminate spirit* at all cost.

–B.W.