

The Enemy within or The Fifth Column

This term originally referred to a group of Falangist or Fascist sympathizers in Madrid during the Spanish Civil War who were prepared to join the four columns of insurgents marching on the city.

A **fifth column** is a group of people who clandestinely undermine a larger group to which it is expected to be loyal, such as a nation – it refers to an enemy in one's midst.

Sometimes people do not willingly fight or oppose a cause but they do it unwittingly. Any time we step out of God and do that which is contrary to our beliefs we actually become an enemy of Christ and are in the enemy's camp. Members of the Church who are not living right are fighting against Christ and his cause and unwittingly supporting the enemy, because we are strengthening evil.

In **St. Matthew 16:17** we read Jesus calling Peter blessed after his declaration of Jesus' divinity. Yet not much later in **verse 23** of the same chapter Jesus said to him, ***“Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men.”***

In the film **“Brave Heart,”** I observed an interesting scenario. In the midst of one particular battle, those who the hero, William Wallace was depending on to stand by his side deserted him and joined the enemy. Although only a film you could see the look of disappointment on his face. His enemy was in reality one of the leaders he was depending on. The king of England who they were fighting against had promised this traitor much land and titles so he was willing to sell out his own people and the cause.

There are only two sides and two causes in this spiritual battle that we are involved in; God and the devil; righteousness and unrighteousness. We need to decide which camp we are in.

In **1 Kings 18:21** Elijah called the people to a decision, he said, ***“How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow him; but if Baal [Satan] then follow him.”***

In **St. Matthew 6:24** Jesus said in his sermon on the mount, ***“No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon”.***

Mammon – The personification of riches and greed in the form of a false god.

The church is involved in a spiritual warfare and as members we need to know that we can depend on each other in the heat of battle. It's unsettling for any soldier to be in the front line of a battle and not know if those around you are going to stand with you or turn against you and join the enemy.

Instead of being able to concentrate on fighting the enemy, sometimes we have to expend energy, fighting people who are supposed to be on our side or the spirits that possess them. People can be members of the church and still be possessed by various spirits.

There are the spirits of jealousy, hate, resentment, pride, lust and the list goes on.

Sometimes in our services you look at people and you can see that they really don't want to be there. Their minds are elsewhere; they have divided loyalty so there is a fight going on right in the midst of the service. Sometimes these individuals want to leave the church but are too embarrassed to do so, so they stay waiting for an appropriate excuse and opportunity.

That's why are services are so heavy and lifeless at times, because instead of being able to just worship God we have to first subdue these spirits in our midst and take time to boost people to worship. Sometimes you can literally feel the fighting that's going on.

Sometimes Christians fall into sin but instead of repenting and making it right, they continue on as if nothing has happened. To the literal eye they may look the same but to those who possess the spirit of discernment you can see the change. These members are partially under the control of the enemy [Devil]. Sometimes he allows them to worship and other times he pulls on their strings and prevents them.

Individuals do know when and where they were bitten by sin and failed God but because of shame they continue as if nothing has happened. Often they are in this condition for years until they convince themselves that all is well.

But I have news for you. Time does not heal sin.

“Sin will stop you at the door, bar you out for ever more. Sin can never enter there”.

Achan did what he knew was wrong and it caused God to turn against the whole of Israel and because he did not confess he lost his life.

Just as Jesus drove the people who were doing wrong out of the temple, one of these days The Holy Ghost is going to drive the sinners out of the Church of God.

Isaiah 33:13 – 16, “Hear, ye that are far off, what I have done; and, ye that are near, acknowledge my might. The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings? He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly; he that despiseth the gain of oppression, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his

eyes from seeing evil; He shall dwell on high: his place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks; bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure."

Philip C. Bennett