

Glad Tidings

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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The Power of Persuasion

(Jerry Fite)

Christianity is a militant religion. Paul said he and his fellow Christians were dedicated to “*casting down imaginations, and every high thing that is exalted against the knowledge of God, and bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ*” (2 Corinthians 10:5). Militancy is about combat. The Christian is about casting down man’s thoughts which are against God. Militancy is about aggression. The Christian is about conquering the minds of man by bringing every thought into obedience before Christ. Militancy is about war and Paul says the Christian is in one. But he tells us the following about the Christian’s warfare: “. . . *we do not war according to the flesh (for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but mighty before God to the casting down of strongholds)*” (2 Corinthians 10:3-4). Christianity is militant, but its weapons are not swords, guns, or rockets, nor are they whisperings, backbitings or slander.

The power of bringing into captivity the thoughts of man is

not through force at the end a gun barrel, or a beheading sword. Men are captivated through persuasion. They are won, not forced.

One arsenal in the Christian’s weaponry is Truth. The message of God which the Christian communicates to man is absolute truth (John 17:17). It has the power to set man free from sin and set him apart from the condemned world (Jn. 8:31-32). Its penetrating power sinks deep into our hearts and accurately discerns the character of our thoughts (Heb. 4:12). Often when man has walked the way of the world, experiencing the reality of the Devil’s lies and man’s pseudo wisdom, truth rings with a winsome sound. The Christian must continue to ring out the message because often the war for a man’s mind is won only after many battles with lies.

Another powerful weapon is fulfilled prophecy. Jesus did not merely come into this world, He came being born in the small town Micah said the governor of God’s people would be born (*Mi-*

cah 5:2, Matthew 2:5-6). Jesus came of the seed of David, who was prophesied hundreds of years before to receive an eternal kingdom (2 Samuel 7:12, Acts 2:30). Jesus did not merely die, he was raised from the dead, just as David had predicted in the Psalms (*Psalms 16:10, Acts 2:31*). Promises written down hundreds of years before concerning one, and then fulfilled perfectly can persuade an honest heart that the one highlighted to submit to is of God.

The lives of faithful believers are powerful weapons of persuasion. The combination of truth and men and women willing to die for that truth no doubt worked on the mind of the persecuting Saul as goads pricking his conscience (Acts 26:14). People, seeing the good works of professing Christians can change the mind of even an enemy, and win them to Christ (*I Peter 2:12*).

The Gospel is at our fingertips. May we absorb its truth, learn of its fulfilled prophecies, and live accordingly to its precepts as we strive to win over the minds of men for Christ.