

July 2014

Dear Brethren:

With God's Spring festivals already behind us, we now look forward to very joyous fall festivals just a couple months from now. These feasts that God commanded us to keep remind us always of God's plan of salvation process. Being called now in this wonderful plan of our Creator is not as easy as we might think, especially because we must qualify during this time of turmoil and difficulty. Our Lord Jesus Christ said:

Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat. Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life (Matthew 7:13–14).

We have so many adversaries that hinder us. These insidious enemies to our calling are threefold: self, society and Satan. All through Scripture we see God's people battling on these three fronts. Paul describes the war in his members—his inner struggle—as he combatted his sinful nature that warred against his converted nature. He writes:

For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin. For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not: but what I hate, that do I. If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good. Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me (Romans 7:14–17).

Then in his message to the Galatians he said:

For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would (Galatians 5:17).

The Apostle Peter said:

Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul (1 Peter 2:11).

Our corrupt modern society overwhelms the untrained and poorly equipped Christians. But faith in the real Jesus Christ enables us effectively to combat and overcome the world (1 John 5:4). This is not a war with people but with an evil system which defies God and His way of life. Carnal human society is hostile to the Lord of Hosts.

Paul tells us that we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against a spiritual host of wickedness in heavenly places. Our conflict is not with other people, but with fallen angels who hate God and His Church and seek to thwart God's plan of salvation (Ephesians 6:12).

The Apostle Paul admonishes us to prepare for this battle:

Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God (Ephesians 6:13–17).

Christian salvation is the helmet. It protects our thinking, keeping our ideals and values in proper perspective. Salvation is the very reason for God's plan and we should want to qualify and join the family of God.

The sword of the Spirit is the Holy Bible, the Word of God, where His will is written. Brethren, if we try our best to do our part in obeying the will of God, God will not fail to do His part in helping us to do those things that we cannot do for ourselves.

Your Brother in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mario Y. Roque'.

Mario Y. Roque

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jon W. Brisby'.

Jon W. Brisby