

Do You Have the Will?
Part 2
Slide Notations

Do we have the will to deal with the small things that lead up to large failures?

Small things? This week, Stef approached me w/a curriculum problem... Group we have used for years released next season: "God's Dojo!" For most churches, small thing that would allow Martial Arts influence! "Most parents accept it simply as a sport!" Wrote the group a note. Their reply:

"Our only source of truth is the Holy Bible. We teach that and only that. We do not teach concepts of universal truth or even address what other philosophies may espouse. We teach the Bible and we point children to the Bible for answers in life. In the United States, most martial arts programs are treated as a sport. Children and adults alike are taught technical skills without any time spent on religion at all much like you would see with a basketball team or a football team. For us, the idea of setting a character series in a martial arts tournament was based on the idea of a sports competition similar to traditional or winter sports..." (4 self-deceptions/1 unfortunate truth)

More than one source; teach more than just the Bible; this one is the source for universal truth; In America most people do treat it just as a sport (but that doesn't mean that's all it is! Not just a sport; self-reliance religion complete w/worship robes!); regardless of the name or the absence of religious training, they are worshipping. In the Dojo w/God-reliance!

Leading to Large Failure... Whether on the door, the wall, or in the basement... there's a Yin-Yang associated with Asian Arts... "The symbol is called the Tai-Chi. The Tai-Chi is from the I-Ching. The I-Ching is the greatest foundation of Chinese philosophy..."

The Philosophy... "Heaven was created by the concentration of Yang, the force of light, earth was created by the concentration of Yin, the forces of darkness. Yang stands for peace and serenity; Yin stands for confusion and turmoil. Yang stands for destruction; Yin stands for conservation. Yang brings about disintegration; Yin gives shape to things..."

System of belief filled with confusion!

System of belief guided largely by our own thoughts...

System that offers an easier way/ moldable way...

When a young person's faith doesn't perform as he thinks it should... and there's an easy or hard way; what will they reach for?

Perfectly Clear... Nothing simple about martial arts except people who ignore truth... Allowing another god in the house! **Ex20** As kids grow and learn to take things in their own hands, exposure to self reliant beliefs will defeat them!

"Others may, I cannot!"

Small thing? Jennifer Knapp, releases new album as gay Christian artist, sings... "Sorry I ever gave a d-- / Sorry I even tried to waste all the better parts of me / On not just anyone who came to mind." And "Inside," where you sing, "I know they'll bury me before they hear the whole story... /Who the h--- do you think you are?"

Is it just a small thing that a gal who wants to shine for Jesus lives and speaks out of darkness?

Perfectly Clear... Some will disassociate her character from her performances... Some will listen to her music and buy her rationalizations... Some who will ask, 'how can it be wrong if it sounds so right?'

"Others may, I cannot!"

Small thing? "True Blood" is "Twilight" for adult consumption only. And this season, the show is amping up the sex quotient w/rocking new adventures..." "Now that the people of Hot Shot are were-panthers, and Sookie is a fairy, all that's left is to discover exactly what kind of witch Holly is, and whether she has anything to do with whatever flavor of demon Jesus might be.

Is it just a small thing for believers to be undiscerning of spiritual undercurrents?

Perfectly Clear... Some will not discern the difference between Frankenstein/Freddie, Frodo/Potter, Lugosi/Pattinson...All fiction/fantasy! Some will watch and miss the non redemptive story lines, the dark side; lust, control issues; blood and Savior parodies... (even like them)

"Others may, I cannot!"

Asides... NY Times: The American Clergy is suffering burnout. The fundamental problem is congregational pressure to forsake one's highest calling. Pastors live to help people grow spiritually, resist their lowest impulses and adopt higher, more compassionate ways. But churchgoers increasingly want pastors to soothe and entertain them. As a result pastors are constantly forced to choose between paths of personal integrity and greater job security. As religion becomes a consumer experience the clergy become more unhappy and unhealthy! Americans now sample, dabble and move on when a religious leader fails to satisfy for any reason. Pastors are no longer expected to offer moral counsel or deliver sermons that make the comfortable uneasy. Church leaders who continue such ministerial traditions pay dearly. Such congregations don't realize pastors don't sign up to be soothsayers or entertainers; they believe they are called to shape lives for the better and that involves helping people to do right even when right is hard! When they are being true to their calling they urge Christians to do the hard work; reconciliation with others, sharing in the suffering of others, seeking their relief and at their very best they lead where people aren't asking to go because that's how people grow and how holy community gets formed!

"Others may deviate, I cannot!"

What is happening @ Life... "Do we have the will to challenge and change what we're doing?" To be summarily morphed into the image of His dear Son! **R8.29** "Do whatever it takes to follow after God and fulfill His will!" Learn to streamline the process!

(Sigmoid slides of "Flat-line faith" and "Incline faith" and learning to use the sigmoid approach to straightest possible faith)

(Sigmoid slides w/life of Joseph) All of us have sigmoids; identifiable seasons in our lives.

(Sigmoids slide with our lives! Must learn to recognize: points of tension/deceleration; Pockets of turbulence: time to submit and obey; the point of danger (of falling back down to ground zero where we must begin all over again – we decline pity and refuse defeat). And the swing point of growth and renewal, of going on with God!

On the rise to growth... Ever been on an adventure and hours just flew by? Rising line of a sigmoid! Can't get enough of God! Word alive/prayers active! Want to tell everyone about what's happening! Don't even notice your enemies faces! Not everything running smoothly but it doesn't stop/change you!

Tip off to descent/deceleration... Not feeling “upward” movement, forward momentum... Troubled, doubtful, chaotic; “is there any reason to keep going?” Bored, “is this all there is?” Dissatisfaction; “what more can I do? More to give!” Freefalling/driftng...

In the Turbulence... Ever been at work, an hour to go, seems like eternity? THAT’S IT! Same time value, different perspective! Disoriented; right path? Decision? Feel discouraged/disappointed... Weary... *Season to submit/obey...Prepare for the swing-up!*

So... Do You Have the Will?

To rise up from the Grave? Easy to play dead/let someone else do the work!

To stand in the light? Light of His word/all else darkness!

To be a new creation? Put off the old man and put on the new?

To be one with Him? Nothing more important than Him!

To come awake with Christ? To live His new life/way!

DO YOU?