



# Grace Martial Arts Fellowship Newsletters

2000



Grace Martial Arts Fellowship began in 1990, went online with a website in 1995 and began publishing newsletters to the Christian martial arts community in 1998.

Because of the quality of information found in those early newsletter articles and the fact they are no longer available online, we've decided to re-publish many of them in the coming weeks and months. Our hope is that a new generation of Christian martial artists will be blessed by the wisdom of those who were on the path before them.

# **GMAF Newsletter**

## **JANUARY 2000**

Welcome to the GMAF Newsletter! We pray it will encourage you in your Martial Arts and Outreach for Christ.

### **THOUGHTS FROM THE MASTER**

*“Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.”*

Jesus Christ

*“For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light.”*

The Apostle Paul

### **WISDOM NOTES**

*“Our God is a God who saves; from the Sovereign Lord comes escape from death.” (Psalm 68:20)*

## **CHRISTIANITY AND THE MARTIAL ARTS**

Here are some thoughts about this important subject from a GMAF member.

“I find no conflict of any kind between my faith and my involvement in the martial arts. I look at it as an opportunity to develop friendships, get in shape, take care of this body that God has given me, and learn techniques that may allow me to protect myself, someone I love, or even a total stranger someday if the need presents itself. In fact, I met one of my most cherished friends and brothers in Christ as a result of starting to study the martial arts.

Our Master said in Luke 22:36, “He said to them, “But now if you have a purse, take it, and also a bag; and if you don’t have a sword, sell your cloak and buy one. ” This verse tells me that Christ is clearly in favor of us having the ability to defend ourselves. I cannot count how many times the Israelites were involved in warfare, and the battle we fight with Satan and his demons is compared to a war in several places as well; see 2 Cor 10:1-6, 1 Peter 2:11, and Ephesians 6:10-18 for examples. In the last passage listed here, interestingly enough, the apostle Paul compares the spiritual preparation a Christian goes through to the armor and weapons carried by a Roman soldier.

I do study two of the most violent arts I know of; they are jujitsu and kung fu. My jujitsu instructor is an ordained Christian minister and my kung fu instructor has told me openly that he will not force me to learn

anything I am uncomfortable with. However, I feel that as long as one distances him/ herself from the esoteric, spiritual side of the martial arts as much as possible, there is no problem in studying them. I am not deeply involved in the spiritual side of the arts, and my exposure to that has been limited strictly to the practice of chi kung exercises.”

Donald R. Holmes II

Here is an interesting story Bill Pitcher sent to us. The spiritual point is clear.

“I read recently the story of a 10-year-old boy who decided to study judo despite the fact that he had lost his left arm in a devastating car accident.

The boy began lessons with an old Japanese judo master. The boy was doing well, so he couldn't understand why, after three months of training, the master had taught him only one move.

“Sensei,” the boy finally said, “shouldn't I be learning more moves?”

This is the only move you know, but this is the only move you'll ever need to know,” the Sensei replied. Not quite understanding, but believing in his teacher, the boy kept training.

Several months later, the Sensei took the boy to his first tournament. Surprising himself, the boy easily won his first two matches. The third

match proved to be more difficult, but after some time, his opponent became impatient and charged; the boy deftly used his one move to win the match.

Still amazed by his success, the boy was now in the finals. This time, his opponent was bigger, stronger, and more experienced. For a while, the boy appeared to be overmatched. Concerned that the boy might get hurt, the referee called a time-out. He was about to stop the match when the Sensei intervened. “No,” the Sensei insisted, “let him continue.”

Soon after the match resumed, his opponent made a critical mistake: he dropped his guard. Instantly, the boy used his move to pin him. The boy had won the match and the tournament. He was the champion.

On the way home, the boy and the Sensei reviewed every move in each and every match. Then the boy summoned the courage to ask what was really on his mind: “Sensei, how did I win the tournament with only one move?”

You won for two reasons,” the Sensei answered. “First, you’ve almost mastered one of the most difficult throws in all of judo. And second, the only known defense for that move is for your opponent to grab your left arm.”

The boy’s biggest weakness had become his biggest strength.

We don't often view our weaknesses in the same way, but we should. I am reminded of the time that Paul prayed fervently for God to remove some affliction unknown to us, what he called a "thorn in the flesh." Refusing to remove it, God said to Paul, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my strength is made perfect in weakness." (2 Cor. 12:9).

That seems to make no sense, and yet we see throughout the Bible how God is able to work despite the weaknesses of men and women, showing forth his power — David with his small stature against Goliath the giant, Gideon a man of no significant background leading a greatly outnumbered band of men, Jesus taking on humanity in the form of a helpless baby. In fact, the greatest demonstrations of God's power have come when men and women have felt the weakest. Remember that the next time you feel inadequate."

*"Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me....For when I am weak, then I am strong." (2 Cor. 12:9b-10).*



## **BUILDING BODY, MIND AND SPIRIT**

“Mokuso.” “Muk Nyum.” “Meditation.” Many people say it is a vital part of martial science. Some call the martial arts “moving meditation.” Many young students are told meditation is important to achieving “enlightenment.” Zen meditation includes focusing thoughts on a single point, repeating a sound or word, praying to deities and practicing martial arts. What should Christians do when the teacher calls them to meditate? God has not left us to wonder! He has instructed us in the deepest form of meditation.

First, a little background on meditation. The idea of the word in the Bible is “to consider, weigh or ponder over something so as to be able to perform well.” Meditation comes from words that mean “to care for, to concern oneself, to speak to oneself.” What should a Christian martial artist consider, weigh or ponder? What should we care for and concern ourselves about when we meditate? What should we say to ourselves as we meditate? God’s Word gives us the answer.

Joshua was one of Israel’s greatest leaders and warriors. He and the army of Israel killed thousands of enemies and conquered more than 30 kingdoms. How did Joshua do it? Before Joshua fought his battles, God told him what to do. Here was Joshua’s secret.

*“Be strong and courageous, because you will lead these people to inherit the land I swore to their forefathers to give them. Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the law my servant*

*Moses gave you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you go. Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.” Joshua 1:6-8*

When we meditate, we can and should meditate (consider, weigh, ponder) on God and His Word. Consider a verse or principle of God’s Word. Think about it, ponder it, weigh it in your heart and mind. Ask God’s Spirit to reveal deeper insight to you as you meditate on Him.

Other parts of God’s Word tell us the same thing.

*“But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night.” Psalm 1:2*

*“I meditate on your precepts and consider your ways. I delight in your decrees; I will not neglect your word.” Psalm 119:15-16*

*“Though rulers sit together and slander me, your servant will meditate on your decrees.” Psalm 119:23*

*“I lift up my hands to your commands, which I love, and I meditate on your decrees.” Psalm 119:48*

*“May the arrogant be put to shame for wronging me without cause; but I will meditate on your precepts.”* Psalm 119:78

*“Oh, how I love your law! I meditate on it all day long.”* Psalm 119:97

*“I have more insight than all my teachers, for I meditate on your statutes.”* Psalm 119:99

*“My eyes stay open through the watches of the night, that I may meditate on your promises.”* Psalm 119:148

What else about God can we ponder during meditation? His Power, His Majesty, His Great and Mighty Deeds!

*“I will remember the deeds of the Lord; yes, I will remember your miracles of long ago. I will meditate on all your works and consider all your mighty deeds.”* Psalm 77:11-12

*“Let me understand the teaching of your precepts; then I will meditate on your wonders.”* Psalm 119:27

*“I remember the days of long ago; I meditate on all your works and consider what your hands have done.”* Psalm 143:5

*“They will speak of the glorious splendor of your majesty, and I will meditate on your wonderful works.”* Psalm 145:5

*“I lift up my hands to your commands, which I love, and I meditate on your decrees.”* Psalm 119:48

The greatest truth we can meditate upon is God’s Unfailing Love.

*“Within your temple, O God, we meditate on your unfailing love.”*  
Psalm 48:9

The Apostle Paul directed Pastor Timothy in the art of Christian meditation. It is an excellent guide for us.

*“Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all.”* 1 Timothy 4:13-15

This concept gives new meaning to the idea of “meditation” as a Christian martial artist. When it’s time to meditate, consider the height of Truth in God’s Word. Weigh the depth of the Mighty Deeds of His Hands. Ponder the length and width of His Unfailing Love for you and others. See God seated on His Heavenly Throne. Hear His Loving Voice. Feel His Grace and Mercy on your life. See Jesus on the Cross. Hear His Words of forgiveness. Feel the pain He experienced on your behalf. See Jesus rise from the grave. Hear His Words of Love for all who would follow Him. Feel the riches of His Grace.

Should Christian martial artists participate in meditation? Absolutely! To the Praise and Honor of God our Savior!

May our prayer be that of the Psalmist.

*“May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, O Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer.”* Psalm 19:14

# **GMAF NEWSLETTER**

## **FEBRUARY 2000**

Welcome to the GMAF Newsletter! We pray it will encourage you in your Martial Arts and Outreach for Christ

### **THOUGHTS FROM THE MASTER**

*“An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale’s belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here.”*

*Jesus Christ*

*“And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment; That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ; Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.”*

The Apostle Paul

## WISDOM NOTES

*“The words of a man’s mouth are as deep waters, and the wellspring of wisdom as a flowing brook.” (Proverbs 18:4)*

## CHRISTIANITY AND THE MARTIAL ARTS

Sa Bom Nim David Havard sent this to us recently. It carries a powerful punch.

“The real key to your influence with me is your example, your actual conduct. Your example flows naturally out of your character of the kind of person you truly are – not what others say you are or what you may want me to think you are. It is evident in how I actually experience you. Your character is constantly radiating, communicating. From it, in the long run, I come to instinctively trust or distrust you and your efforts with me.”

This says so much about the true influence we have on people. Our influence is so much more than words. It’s about the Life of Jesus Christ influencing others through our life. It’s about the love we have for people, how we treat them, how we respect them. Each of us influences dozens of people in our families, our classes, our neighborhoods, at school and work. They watch us. They hear us. They see how we deal with life. They compare our words with our actions. Unkind actions, bad attitudes, sharpness in reacting to difficult situations, are a negative part of what makes up the influence we have on people. If our Christian

words conflict with our behavior, the influence could be negative on the people God has given us to serve. As we allow God's Spirit to live through us, speak through us, love through us, act through us, respond through us ... our influence becomes holy and life-changing.

Why are Christians left on Earth? Why don't we go straight from receiving God's forgiveness to being in God's presence? Why stay on this wicked planet for one more second than is necessary? We can worship God better in Heaven than we can on Earth. We can enjoy other Christian's fellowship better in Heaven? What's the reason for hanging around here?

*"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."* 2 Corinthians 5:17-21

God has chosen to give every child of His the "ministry of reconciliation." That's a main reason why we don't fly off into space the instant we receive Christ as our Savior. Christ lives His Life through us and



reconciles other sinners to Himself as we share Him with our friends, family, neighbors, co-workers, students, teachers and anyone else we meet along life's road. God does many things for us and through us while we're on Earth, but the ministry of reconciliation is certainly a top priority. Christians find great joy in sharing Christ and seeing others come to Him as we pray for them and point them to the Only One Who can save their souls."

Here's another wonderful note from David Havard. It may be something you can use in your ministry.

"The maker of all human beings is recalling all units manufactured, regardless of make or year, due to the serious defect in the primary and central component, or heart. This is due to a malfunction in the original prototype units, resulting in the reproduction of the same defect in all subsequent units. This defect has been technically termed, 'Sub-sequential Internal Non-morality,' or more commonly known as S-I-N, as it is primarily symptomized by loss of moral judgment.

Some other symptoms are:

1. Loss of direction
2. Foul vocal emissions
3. Amnesia of origin
4. Lack of peace and joy
5. Selfish, or violent, behavior
6. Depression or confusion in the mental component

The manufacturer, who is neither liable nor at fault for this defect, is providing factory authorized repair and service, free of charge, to correct this SIN defect, at numerous locations throughout the world. The number to call for the recall station in your area is: P-R-A-Y-E-R.

WARNING: Continuing to operate the human unit without correction voids manufacturer's warranty, exposing owner to dangers and problems too numerous to list, and will result in the human unit being permanently impounded.

For free emergency service, kneel and call on the name of J-E-S-U-S for prompt assistance at any location worldwide.”

# **GMAF NEWSLETTER**

## **APRIL 2000**

Welcome to the GMAF Newsletter! We pray it will encourage you in your Martial Arts and Outreach for Christ.

### **THOUGHTS FROM THE MASTER**

*“Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known. Therefore whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness shall be heard in the light; and that which ye have spoken in the ear, in closets shall be proclaimed upon the housetops.”*

Jesus Christ

*“We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification. For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me.”*

The Apostle Paul

## WISDOM NOTES

*“My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother: For they shall be an ornament of grace unto thy head, and chains about thy neck.”*

## WHAT'S CHRISTIAN ABOUT CHRISTIAN MARTIAL ARTS?

Someone recently asked us that question and it led to a lengthy and interesting discussion. That was not the first time we've heard the question. Many Christians, including pastors and youth and children's workers, wonder about the wisdom of teaching martial arts to Christians. They have even bigger concerns about including martial arts in a church or evangelism program. Many Christians do not believe Christianity and martial arts can co-exist. They ask how something as gentle as Christianity can be part of a violent fighting art.

We will share some thoughts about answering this question in the next three GMAF newsletters. We would also love hearing your ideas about how to address this concern. We will include your thoughts in upcoming newsletters.

“Let's begin by looking at Christianity. What is it? Christianity is The Way, The Truth, The Life. It is Christ. It is Christ in us. We are not Christians because we attend church or because we repeated a prayer after someone years ago or are followers of some way of acting or believing. We are Christians because we are in Christ and He is in us. How does

that happen? How does someone go from not being in Christ to being in Christ? How does someone change from not having Christ in them to having Christ in them? What do we have to do to make that happen?

Nothing! We do nothing. God does everything. The Apostle Paul wrote Christians in Ephesus that they were “dead” in trespasses and sins. He wrote that all people are by nature “the children of wrath.” Dead people don’t do anything to gain life. They are dead and under the wrath of Almighty God. The only way a dead person can become alive is if a Living Person with Power over Life and Death gives the Gift of Life to the dead. That’s what happened to Christians. “But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.” Sounds great, but what did WE do to get this Great Gift? “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.” Nothing! We did nothing. My first Greek teacher, and every Greek teacher I’ve studied since, told me the grammatical construction of Ephesians 2:8 includes both “grace” and “faith” in what is “not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.” The Grace that saves me belongs to Christ. The Faith that saves me belongs to Christ. Christ’s Grace and Faith awaken the “dead in trespasses and sins” and lead them to believe in Him. We have nothing of which to boast. Christ did it all. He showered us with His Love and Grace and was Faithful to do the Will of His Heavenly Father. We trust

what Christ did and said and receive the Gift of Eternal Life freely. That's why it's Grace (unmerited favor) and not earnings (what we deserve).

Paul wrote the Romans that not one person from the human race was righteous, "no, not one." He said no one "seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." Wait a minute! I know lots of nice people who do good things for others. All I have to do is pick up a history book and read about all the wonderful people who have graced the face of the earth with their good deeds and law-abiding behavior. How can Paul say no one "doeth good?" What does he mean by that? Paul means that "by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin." God's Law is not how we know whether someone is good enough to go to Heaven after they die. God's Law shows everyone they are not good enough to stand in God's Presence, let alone remain with Him forever. Isn't that a pretty hopeless thing to say? Not at all. Read on. "But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe; for there is no difference: For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Being justified by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus. Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? Nay: but by the

law of faith. Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.” Christianity is all of Christ. He did everything. We did nothing. Christ receives all the glory. We receive all the spiritual blessings. I’d say that’s a great deal.

Even though we did nothing to deserve or earn salvation, God gave it to us “freely.” What we have now in Christ is “spiritual identity.” We were spiritually dead prior to God’s Gift of Eternal Life. The best a dead person can do is have a physical identity; a body lying in a coffin. They have a name, an address, a history, but they have no “real” identity because they are dead. They have a tombstone identity, but no living identity. Paul visited Athens, Greece centuries ago and came across a group of people who were searching for their true identity through philosophy, learning and knowledge of the world. They were constantly looking for some new idea because they had found no identity, no satisfaction in anything they had heard before. Paul addressed those gathered at the famed Mars Hill and said this about Christ Jesus: “For in him we live, and move, and have our being.” That is the primary essence of Christianity. It is all about The Person of Jesus Christ. Everything else surrounding our relationship to Christ is secondary. That includes what we “do” for Him. Our identity is not in what “we do,” but in who “we are” in Christ. Luke, the great Christian historian, gave us a beautiful picture of that truth in the story of Jesus, Martha and her sister Mary. Jesus visited the sisters in their home. Martha was very busy serving Christ and others with Him (“But Martha was cumbered about with much serving”). Mary sat at Christ’s feet and listened to Him speak (“heard his word”). Martha finally had enough of her sister’s inattention

to the details of serving Christ and other guests and complained: "Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me. And Jesus answered and said unto her, 'Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.'" What a powerful lesson about the primary thing, the needful thing, in a disciple's life. First and foremost we are "in" Christ and He is "in" us. Service is important, but it is secondary to Christ-relationship. We first, last and always "belong" to Him. In Him we live and move and have our being.

Christianity is not gentle in the way many people think of gentleness. Christianity is not weak. It is not afraid. It does not look the other way when wrong is done. Christianity is Christ living His Supernatural Life through us. That is a Strong and Courageous Life. But didn't Christ say "Blessed are the meek, merciful and peacemakers?" Yes, He did. Well, then, how can a meek, merciful, peacemaking Christian take any part in fighting arts? That question, while well-meaning, comes from a misunderstanding of Christ and of what we call martial arts.

Christ is, was and will always be a Great Warrior for that which is Right. Who destroyed the earth and all but seven people with a horrible flood because of the terrible sins of the human race? Christ Jesus our Lord. Who destroyed hundreds of thousands of Israel's enemies through bloody battles because they were infected with sin and opposed the chosen of God? Christ Jesus our Lord. Who will destroy millions of people at the Battles of Armageddon and World End because of their



allegiance to sin and Satan? Christ Jesus our Lord. Christians who see Christ as a mild-mannered religious leader Who would never do harm to anyone in the name of righteousness and justice are not seeing God's Son clearly. He is a Mighty God capable of Great Terror and Destruction upon those who oppose Him.

Christ is "Balance." He is Perfect and Balanced in all He does and says. He is Meek and Merciful. He is The Peacemaker. He is also The Almighty God of Heaven Who spoke the world into existence and will speak it out of existence one day. Christ had the Power to destroy every soldier who dared arrest Him. Christ demonstrated a small piece of His power when He answered "I am He" and the soldiers fell backward to the ground. Christ could have called angels to destroy everyone in Jerusalem, but He didn't. Christ went to the Cross of His Own Will and Determination because that was the Way, the Truth and the Life for His future "children of Grace." Christ has All Power and knows how to use it. Christ is the Great Protector and Defender of His people. He prayed to His Father that He had "kept" (tereo – preserved, protected) His disciples. Christ asked His Father to "keep them from the evil." Paul wrote the Thessalonian Christians that God would "keep" (phulasso – guard, protect, keep safe) them from evil. Paul wrote the Corinthians that True Love "beareth" (stego – protects, preserves by covering) "all things." Christ, Who is Love, Protects. He also Defends. Isaiah wrote that God would send Israel a Savior and a "great one" (riyhl – defender) "and he shall deliver them." The Old Testament teaches us that Christ "defends" His people and the cause of the fatherless and widows. Christ's Nature is to Protect and Defend the weak and needy. He has

used many ingenious methods in doing that through the millenia, but His Nature is unchanged.

Many people, some of them Christians, also misunderstand “martial arts.” They believe it is a “fighting” or “killing” art. Martial arts is a “protecting” and “defending” art. The primary purpose of martial arts is to “stop conflict.” The spirit of a martial artist is to stop conflict and defend those unable to defend themselves. Soldiers and police exist in society to “protect and defend” the innocent. Most soldiers and police officers hope they never have to use their skills to injure or kill another human being. They learn many ways to stop conflict without hurting people. Martial artists do the same thing. We train in a variety of defensive skills. So why do some Christians have a problem with Christian martial artists when they don’t have a problem with Christian police officers or soldiers? Many Christians have told us it’s because of the Eastern influence on martial arts. Others have said it’s because of the emphasis martial arts has on teaching “maiming and killing” techniques. Whatever the reason, some Christians think we’re wrong in what we do to practice, teach and train others in the martial arts. How do we respond? What do we learn from these concerns?

[More on this topic in the next newsletter]

# **GMAF NEWSLETTER**

## **MAY 2000**

Welcome to the GMAF Newsletter! We pray it will encourage you in your Martial Arts and Outreach for Christ.

### **THOUGHTS FROM THE MASTER**

*“Do ye enquire among yourselves of that I said, A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me? Verily, verily, I say unto you, That ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy.”*

Jesus Christ

*“For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.”*

The Apostle Paul

## WISDOM NOTES

*“Praise ye the Lord: for it is good to sing praises unto our God; for it is pleasant; and praise is comely.”*

## WHAT'S CHRISTIAN ABOUT CHRISTIAN MARTIAL ARTS?

Last month we asked the question “What’s Christian About Christian Martial Arts.” Here are some of the answers we received.

“What would make a Christian martial art is the goals, intentions and actions of the people involved. Learning to fight is not inherently sinful, your motivation to do so could be. Learning martial arts from the point of self defense, exercise, or just 'cause you think it's an interesting hobby is perfectly OK. Learning them so you can be a 'tough guy' or to serve your own ego can be a problem. If combative training was sinful then no Christian could be a police officer, corrections officer, or soldier. As with all things not directly addressed in scripture, the intention of the believer's heart would determine if an activity was offensive before God.”

“As an instructor and participant in the arts since I was six (well, maybe not instructing since then), I have some very definite views on the Christian in the Martial Arts. First and foremost, there is a very large difference in defending you or your family's life, and turning the other cheek. Almost every time I discuss this topic in depth with a non Martial Artist, the conversation will turn to the believers need to be 'non-argumentative' or combative. The subject of witness is always brought

up as well. The inference, of course, is that the Christian Martial Artist is somehow compromising his or her witness by participating in an activity that is contrary to Scriptural doctrines and teaching. I can only surmise that this goes back to the common understanding of the attitude of meekness, and whether or not training in a combative art is or is not in opposition to this. Most people, Christians included, think that being meek is synonymous with being timid or 'whimpy'. Nothing could be further from the truth. The Greek word that is used for the word 'timid' is the same one that is used for the breaking of a wild stallion to the bit! What a great word picture! The Christian, new in Christ, is like an animal which (to us) has enormous power, and is brought under a master's control. It does not in any way change the fact that it has tremendous power. We, as Christians are precisely like the horse, full of the power of God, but brought under His control and guidance. Whimp, indeed! God gave us a spirit of power, a sound mind, and bodies that are His dwelling place. In no way does training to protect that temple in a way that is glorifying to Him, compromise a Christian's testimony. Sorry for preaching, but that is what I do for a living, and I get carried away on this topic. Don't even get me started on the discipleship opportunities afforded a Christian instructor by a student's long term training in the Arts. Anyway, if I rambled, I am sorry. I have so much to say, and so little space to get it out. Hope I made some sense :)"

"Actually it was Hinduism, Judaism, Confucianism, Buddhism, Daoism, Christianity, Islam. If you learn your discipline correctly, you will discover that the question is the other way around. The discipline of the arts will strengthen your faith in God."

“Just another thought to answer the question of how does Christianity mix with a violent fighting art? Answer: The arts are not violent, period. It’s Hollywood and the Media that show violence and even glorify it, and many are deceived into thinking that’s what the arts and/or guns are all about.”

### **Defending Like Christ**

One of the more popular movements among Christians today is “What Would Jesus Do?” (WWJD) Would Jesus defend an innocent person who was attacked by someone who meant them great harm? How would he respond to someone who attacked Him? What would Jesus do in the face of injustice? How would He deal with an enemy who meant harm to members of His family? We don’t have to go far to find the answer.

*“Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him...And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war...And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God...And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army...And the beast was taken, and with*

*him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him...These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh.”*

Jesus Christ is a Warrior of the Highest Order and Greatest Skill. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, taught hundreds of thousands of Israelites across the centuries how to wage war against the enemies of God. Reading the exploits of David’s Mighty Men in 1 Chronicles reminds us of the outstanding skills of their Martial Instructor. One of them killed 300 enemy soldiers at one time armed with only a spear. Now that’s a martial arts warrior! In the future, Christ will fight Earth’s final battles with the Sword of His Mouth (The Word of God). He will kill hundreds of thousands and possibly millions of heavily armed soldiers with His Sword.

Jesus is also the One Who told those who would follow Him:

*“Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God...Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also...Ye have heard that it hath ben said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you.”*

Jesus also used physical force to drive out all who were buying and selling in the Temple. He overturned the money changers' tables and the benches of the people selling doves. "And said unto them, It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves." Jesus defends and protects what is His.

Jesus had the power and skill to destroy every soldier who came to arrest Him. What did He do? He went with them like a Lamb to slaughter. Why? Because it was His Will. He came to Earth to die in our place. Christ took upon Himself the sins of the world and shed His blood for our forgiveness and righteousness. He gave Himself over to the soldiers for our benefit.

What do we learn from Christ's Life about what He would do about using physical violence to defend and protect the innocent? We learn there is a time and place for fighting and for making peace. There is a time for defending and a time for sacrificing. Jesus Christ has the Power to create and destroy. He is the Lord and the Savior. He is the Master and the Servant. He is the Warrior and the Sacrificer. He always does the Right thing in any situation. We learn to do the same as we cooperate with His desire to live His life in and through us.

How do we decide how to react to the variety of challenges we'll face as Christian martial artists? Watch for some ideas next month. Please send us your ideas and we'll include them in the next GMAF newsletter.



## **Martial Arts Has Hidden Meaning?**

We came across this article recently on a web site. I'll reprint a portion of the article, GMAF's e-mail response to the site's webmaster and then responses from other Christian martial artists from an on-line discussion group.

"The martial arts aren't just physical exercise, they're Zen Buddhist meditation techniques, warns a minister who was involved with them for 20 years. ...Ed Hird practiced karate, sometimes three times a week, and was so enthusiastic that he recruited other Christians to join him, he said in an article in *Anglicans for Renewal Magazine*. He is rector of St. Simon's Anglican Church in North Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, and chairman of Anglican Renewal Ministries of Canada. ...But he thought twice when his sons wanted to take taekwondo, a martial art similar to karate, as part of their Christian school gym class last spring. He began to research the history of taekwondo to discern its purposes, and agreed to present his findings to the principal and the school board. ...He read "dozens of pro-martial arts books," and for several weeks asked questions of a number of taekwondo and martial arts experts from North America and other parts of the world on Internet chat forums, he told *Religion Today*. ...What Hird found surprised the 45-year-old, who had been involved in martial arts from 1971 to 1992, and had dabbled with hypnosis and astral projection before becoming a Christian in 1972, he said. The research led him to believe that taekwondo and other martial arts are "far more than just physical gym exercises," but actually are seemingly innocuous doorways into non-Christian religions. ...

Taekwondo and martial arts are 'Zen Buddhist meditational techniques designed to bring a person into the experience of satori, or Buddhist enlightenment,' Hird said. They can be traced to Bodhidharma, a 6th century Buddhist monk who taught his disciples sitting meditation and moving meditation, or the martial arts, to obtain spiritual enlightenment, he found in his research. ...The sitting meditation commonly done in taekwondo and most martial arts is an essential part of the training, done before and after class to clear the mind of all thought and relax completely, according to the book *Official WTF Taekwondo*, Hird said. ... Synchronized breathing is a key to both Buddhist and Hindu meditation, he said. "In contrast, biblical meditation is meditating on God's written Word the Bible, rather than meditating on the empty mind" by using breathing and visualization techniques. ...The ritualistic patterns of motion in the martial arts also concern Hird, he said. Many of the patterns are "rooted in semimystical Taoist philosophy and their deeper meaning is said to be far more important than the mere performance of a gymnastics series of exercises," Hird said, quoting taekwondo author and instructor Eddie Ferrie. ...Westerners can be naïve about the "very subtle" influences of martial arts, and lack the experience to notice their "hidden religious nature," Hird said. But there are some obvious clues, he said, including the Ying-Yang symbol that appears on "even many innocuous-looking taekwondo websites and brochures." ...Some Christians practice the martial arts for exercise, or even as a way of evangelizing, but don't really know what they are getting into, Hird said. "If it works they don't ask questions about what it means." ...Eastern religious techniques often are portrayed as neutral so anyone from any religion can use them, "but in fact there is a lot more than meets the

eye,” he said. Christians “sometimes are seduced,” he said. ... Practitioners can try to ignore the spiritual dimension of the martial arts, but spirituality is their ultimate purpose historically, Hird said. He noted that The Encyclopedia of New Age Beliefs considers the martial arts as “forms of spiritual education that function as means toward self-realization or self-enlightenment.” ...Martial arts are “a Trojan Horse in the house of the Lord, eroding the spiritual barriers between Zen Buddhism and the Christian Gospel, and potentially leading vulnerable children and teens into the early stages of Eastern occultism,” Hird said. ...As a result of Hird’s research, “our Christian school board decided to no longer offer taekwondo or other martial arts,” he said.

### **GMAF Response**

“I read your article about martial arts with interest. I understand the Rector’s concern. I once struggled with the same concerns. That’s one of the reasons I now believe strongly in Christian involvement in martial arts. If Christians pull out of everything that has any history with non-Christian values or emphasis, we’re out of everything. Satan has infiltrated this world; every inch of it. Satan uses music, movies, television, radio, newspapers, magazines and the internet, among many other forms of communication, to impact the beliefs of non-Christians. Do we pull out of all forms of personal and mass communication because some of it has been used to promote ungodliness? Of course not. Our battleground is in the heavens and on the earth. We battle spiritually while in our bodies on this planet. We fight against Satan through earthly situations and devices. A television set does nothing until

someone programs and transmits a signal to it and someone else turns on the set and watches the program. Television, radio and other communication devices are not evil. They are boxes with wires and electronic pieces that send and receive sound and pictures. The same is true with martial arts. It is not evil in itself. A punch is a technique of the hand forming a fist and moving toward a target at increasing velocity until impact. If the person punching intends the punch for good, it is good. If he intends it for evil, it is evil. The punch has no religious significance whatsoever. It is a rapid movement of the hand, wrist, arm, shoulder, back, chest, hips and legs. Intent adds purpose to the movement.

Christian martial arts instructors have a wonderful opportunity to share Spiritual Truth with students, Christian and non-Christian. Rather than pulling out, we need to be jumping in with all the strength God gives us. We are the counter-measure to what Satan has done to the martial arts.”

### **Discussion Group Responses**

“Sorry to be a little forward, but that article was just inane! It completely misses the ENTIRE point of the Christian Arts. The whole concept is to take all of the negative aspects that have previously been FORCED into the various defense systems, and then claim them for Christ, changing false philosophies into solid Truth. I am sure that Mr. Hird is a good and well meaning man, but it is beyond my imagination that anyone involved in the Arts as a Christian for twenty years could ever believe as he does. If the school was teaching eastern meditational practices, that is the

individual instructor's fault. He should not be teaching in a Christian institution. To then extrapolate that one case to infer that all MAs are "trojan horses" into our faith is absurd. In writing my dissertation on the very subject of the MA's history, and its use as a ministry tool, I can(after exhaustive research) assure you that the Arts and Meditational practices were not originally (nor ever were for that matter) one in the same. They were never made with each other in mind, and can be easily separated. They nearly 'grew up in the same neck of the woods'. Of course the eastern religious influences are found in the Arts-they were for centuries, almost exclusively practiced by people who believed in both! This can be, and is, the case with almost anything that is created. If I, and my Christian circle of friends were to create a completely new system of our own, devoid of any religious overtones, and practice amongst ourselves, it would obviously eventually take on our personal ideas and concepts. It is only natural. Does this make the Art and the religion inseparable? Of course not. Could someone take the exact set of moves, and put an entirely new philosophical ideology to it? Yes. This point is almost never advanced by Christians, and is vital. We want to believe so badly that MAs are no good. I am just about on a personal quest to rectify this incorrect, and illogical thinking. So there, there are my two (or is it twenty?) cents worth. "

"This can be a long subject, so I'll just hit the high points. This is based on Japanese traditions because I know far more about them than Chinese. Buddhist influences exist in Japanese arts simply because Buddhism is a large part of Japanese culture. Buddhist philosophy was appealing to the Samurai because of the way it approaches living life to

the fullest, and it's simple 'just do it' attitude. To a warrior who could face death at any time, it was a very attractive philosophy. As warriors taught the younger generations, this philosophy went along with the skills of war. When American servicemen began learning the arts after WW II, they went along with the Buddhist ideals for no other reason than it was taught to them along with martial arts. They didn't know any better. Another reason it stuck around with the arts when they became transformed to the modern Budo forms is that some concepts are easier to explain to someone native to Japan or Okinawa because it uses commonly understood ideas. One quick example is the concept of 'Mushin' or no-mind. Part of this concept deals with acting independent of conscious thought. Supposedly, if you practice meditation and work hard you can develop the ability to react to an assault separately from your conscious mind. Sounds real mystical huh? Except most people do this every day repeatedly. It's called muscle memory. Drive a car? When was the last time you had to think 'Pull my right foot up, move the foot over six inches to the left, then press down evenly on the brake pedal.' No? You 'just do it'. You have performed the action so many times the procedure is hard wired to your body. You didn't have to spend years meditating and performing sensitivity exercises. The founder of Aikido, Morihei Ueshiba, absolutely hated using any Buddhist references in teaching Aikido (he was a devout Shinto). But he understood that using Buddhist terms was a good way to get the point across to students in his culture. Now we have the fields of physiology and sports medicine to accurately explain how and why the body does things in certain ways. Using Buddhist explanations isn't necessary in our country. But it remains because most martial artists don't really know any better. Part

of Christian martial arts should be finding and explaining this to people. Not in a confrontational way, but in a manner of education. ”

# **GMAF NEWSLETTER**

## **JUNE 2000**

Welcome to the GMAF Newsletter! We pray it will encourage you in your Martial Arts and Outreach for Christ.

### **THOUGHTS FROM THE MASTER**

*“Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them. I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.”*

Jesus Christ

*“See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, Redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is. And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.”*

The Apostle Paul



## WISDOM NOTES

*“He that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed.”*

One of the primary benefits of children, teens and adults studying martial arts with Christian instructors is walking the path with wise men and women. So many people today are walking in the wrong direction because they have become companions of fools. They will be destroyed unless they learn God’s Wisdom.

## WHAT’S CHRISTIAN ABOUT CHRISTIAN MARTIAL ARTS?

Last month we asked the question “What’s Christian About Christian Martial Arts.”

Here is one answer.

By Bob Orlando

<http://www.orlandokuntao.com>

As a Christian and a martial artist, I am often asked two questions regarding my martial arts study and my faith. From nonbelievers (those who do not subscribe to “Biblical Christianity”) I am asked how I reconcile the apparent conflict between martial arts training and Christ’s admonition to turn the other cheek. My Christian family, on the other

hand, want to know how I handle the religious, philosophical, mystical, and metaphysical aspects of the art. The first question reveals the general misunderstanding of Christ's teachings so common among nonbelievers. The second reveals a similar lack of understanding on the Christian's part.

Although the "turning the other cheek" question is raised most often by my non-Christian friends, it is just as misunderstood by my Christian brothers and sisters. Since Christians have the greater difficulty with these issues, I will address them from the Christian perspective using frequent biblical references and examples. I will begin with what was for me the tougher of the two questions.

A brochure from a martial arts publishing firm described well what most of the world believes about Christian participation in the martial arts. It said, "Kung-fu teaches that turning the other cheek to those whose ways of life are set in strength and violence is wrong. Such a passive attitude encourages lawlessness and injustice."

The suggestion is that those who believe in "turning the other cheek" believe in voluntarily accepting violence and injustice. Further, such a position is considered wrong and contrary to the philosophy of kung-fu. Since the idea of "turning the other cheek" is from the Bible, are we to believe that there is a conflict between Christian teaching and the study of martial arts? Is the Christian attitude toward physical violence to be a passive one? The essential question is really whether there is ever justification for inflicting injury, or even death, on another human being.

That is the primary issue because other issues like pacifism, the morality of war, capital punishment and the like, are actually derivatives or corollaries of that primary issue.<sup>1</sup>

The idea of turning the other cheek, if not one of the more difficult teachings of Jesus to understand, is certainly one of the more difficult ones to observe — providing it is to be taken without qualification. From the gospel of Matthew, Chapter 5, verses 38 and 39, we read the following:

*“You have heard that it was said, ‘An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.’ But I say to you, do not resist one who is evil. But if anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also.”*

There are two ways we can interpret the command to turn the other cheek. The first is to interpret the text literally, asserting that it means exactly what it says. This would impose a duty of nonresistance on all men in all circumstances. You cannot, however, require the literal acceptance of verse 38 without also requiring the same of the other verses in that chapter — such as verses 29 and 30. Verse 29 reads, “. . . if your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out,” and verse 30 adds, “. . . if your right hand causes you sin, cut it off.” Taking these verses literally, without qualification, can quickly lead one to institutionalized confinement! No. This literal, unqualified interpretation seems untenable.

The other way to interpret the text is to say that it means exactly what it says, but with an understood reservation for those cases that everyone

would naturally assume to be exceptions. For example, when I tell my children to be good, I do not have to tell them all of what that includes — i.e., don't burn down the house, don't put the neighbor's car in the lake, and so on. Those things are understood. This is a normal interpretation. C. S. Lewis, a popular Christian theologian, put it like this:

*“Does anyone suppose that our Lord’s hearers understood him to mean that if a homicidal maniac, attempting to murder a third party, tried to knock me out of the way, I must stand aside and let him get his victim? I think it impossible that they could have so understood him. I believe the meaning of the words was perfectly clear — insofar as you are simply an angry man who has been hurt, mortify your anger and do not strike back. If, however, your motives are other than egoistic retaliation, then not only are you free to protect yourself and others; rather, it is your responsibility to do so.”<sup>2</sup>*

But can we find any Scripture or biblical examples to confirm this? Yes. Look at Jesus' life. Jesus lived what he preached. He never returned evil for evil; he never retaliated (although he certainly possessed the wherewithal to do so), but did he always “turn the other cheek?” In at least one case, he did not.<sup>3</sup>

The 18th chapter of John's gospel records Jesus' arrest and trial before both the Jewish and Roman courts. In verse 22 of that chapter, Jesus is struck with the palm of the hand by one of the officers of the Jewish religious court for answering the high priest in what the officer thought was a disrespectful manner. In verse 23 Jesus responded, “If I have

spoken wrongly, bear witness of the wrong; but if rightly, why do you strike Me?”

The officer could have struck him anywhere, but a slap across the face is a common response to disrespectful speech. Assuming that Jesus was slapped across the face, we find no evidence of his voluntarily offering his other cheek for more. On the contrary, he asks why he deserved such unjust treatment.

In the book of Acts, Chapter 16, we find that the apostle Paul took a similar stand. After being beaten and cast into prison unjustly, the Philippian magistrates decided that they would release Paul and his companions and forget the matter. To this Paul responded as follows in verse 37:

*“They have beaten us publicly, uncondemned, men who are Roman citizens, and have thrown us into prison; and do they now cast us out secretly? No! Let them come themselves and take us out.”*

Clearly, Paul accepted no such injustice. This refutes the literal interpretation and supports the normal interpretation. The actions of Jesus and his apostle Paul indicate that there are times when the believer can and should resist evil and NOT offer the other cheek.

The scriptures contain still other examples that support this. Paul, writing in the first epistle to Timothy, Chapter 5, verse 8 charges me, as a husband and father, with the following responsibility:

*“If any one does not provide for his relatives, and especially for his own family, he has disowned the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.”*

Provision means more than just food, shelter, and clothing. It also includes safety, security, and protection from harm. Jesus, when telling his followers that they should always be ready for his return, illustrated his point by saying that his return would be as a “thief in the night”; that is, unexpected. In Matthew 24, verse 43, he adds, “But know this, that if the householder had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have watched and not have let his house be broken into.”

While this verse refers directly to believers being ever ready for the Lord’s return, it also clearly demonstrates that a man was rightly expected to defend his home and family from harm. There is one more, lesser known, verse we should look at. In the moments before Christ’s arrest in the garden the following exchange took place between Jesus and his disciples:

*“When I sent you out with no purse or bag or sandals, did you lack anything? They said, ‘Nothing.’ He said to them, But now, let him who has a purse take it, and likewise a bag. And let him who has no sword sell his mantle and buy one. (Luke 22:35-36)*

Moments later, as Jesus is arrested; Peter uses his sword to defend his master. In John's gospel, Chapter 18, verses 10 and 11, it is recorded as follows:

*“Then Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it and struck the high priest's slave and cut off his right ear. The slave's name was Malchus. Jesus said unto Peter, ‘Put up your sword in its sheath; shall I not drink the cup which the Father has given me?’”*

Do these two accounts conflict? No. In the first account the Lord was telling his disciples that the time was coming when they would no longer receive hospitality and would have to provide for themselves including self- protection (the need for the sword). This does not conflict with John's account, because there Jesus does not tell Peter to get rid of his sword, but to put it in its sheath. The sword was, and still is, necessary. There in the garden, however, it was being used counter to Christ's purpose.

On the basis of Christ's teachings, is there really a conflict between Christian teaching and the study of martial arts? No. Is the Christian attitude toward physical violence to be a passive one? Again, the answer is no.

Discussions about turning the other cheek focus on the question of Christian participation in martial arts in general. What about participation in Asian martial arts? Questions about how Christians handle the philosophical and religious aspects of the art usually focus on certain

practices common to various traditional martial arts schools. However, before addressing specific questions, some background and history are necessary. We need to know what philosophical or religious aspects are inherent in Asian martial arts, why they are taught, and whether they are necessary for training.

Today, a number of people devote their lives to martial arts study primarily for reasons of self-development. Through their practice of the martial arts, they seek to attain some glimpse of the “wisdom of the East” as set forth in the various philosophies of Taoism, Buddhism, and Zen. Karate- do, for example, means the way of karate. It is a journey that begins with the physical and ends with the spirit. The goal is to develop the spirit. How? Through physical karate training. This parallels the path of hatha-yoga, with its goal of self-purification through physical application.

The incorporation of the contemplative, meditative, or philosophical aspects into the martial arts may have evolved as teachers began to see a need for morality in the art. As practitioners became increasingly capable of destruction, some form of control — some personal means of tempering physical conduct and actions — became necessary. Hence, moral codes like the Japanese code of bushido evolved.

For some, then, the martial arts offer a way that they hope will provide them with the wisdom to understand both themselves and the often unintelligible world in which they live. What they seek is a philosophy of life, a code to live by, a discipline — in an otherwise undisciplined world.



For the Christian, using martial arts study for spiritual self-development fails for two reasons. First, from a practical standpoint, there are a variety of other avenues available to the individual wishing to study Eastern culture, thought, or philosophy to formulate a life credo (and without having to break a sweat doing it, either). Second, and more importantly, Asian martial arts philosophy is deeply entwined in Eastern mysticism and religion. As such, it is incompatible with Christian beliefs. However the philosophical and religious aspects of the martial arts are not necessary for developing the physical skills the martial arts student is seeking.

Target shooting is, for many, an enjoyable pastime, but it is not without its dangers. Awareness and care are necessary to prevent injury. The same is true of everything we do, be it driving a car, cooking, using power tools — even watching television. Martial arts are no different. Christians must be aware of the inherent dangers in the study of Eastern martial arts; but that does not necessarily mean abstinence from physical martial arts training.

The Christian martial artist must remove the religious overtones that are frequently taught as part of Eastern martial arts. Instead, he should concentrate on skills that enhance mental concentration, improve sensitivity to differing degrees of threat, and increase awareness of the interaction between attitude and performance. This is learning the fine art of strategic thinking.

Specifically, the question I am most often asked concerns the practice of meditation. What does the Christian do when asked to meditate? First, the believer need not back away from meditation. There is nothing inherently wrong with meditation.

Scripture abounds with passages admonishing the believer to meditate on the Lord, meditate on his law, meditate on his promises, and meditate on his Word. Thus, when told to use class time to meditate, the Christian can do so. Not necessarily on what the instructor tells him to meditate on (if he tells him anything). Not with the aim of emptying his mind (as in Zen *mushin*) or looking within for some mystic power (such as centering in Transcendental Meditation), but purposefully and productively busying it focusing it outward and upward to the Creator God.

Throughout history, Christian symbols and quotations from the Bible have been manipulated and abused by many, including the occult, hate groups; even the news media. Should we abstain from displaying a cross because some hate group uses a burning cross to legitimize its actions? Should we avoid those verses from the Bible that have been misinterpreted, twisted, and perverted by those who would use them to serve their own purposes? No! Dr. Walter Martin, founder of Christian Research Institute, probably said it best. "The believer," he said, "should not surrender the tools of light to anyone simply because others have abused them and perverted their meaning."<sup>4</sup>

Alternatively, if the Christian is not feeling particularly spiritual during karate class, he can meditate on the techniques he is learning. Because of its use by New Age groups, visualization has been given an undeserved bad reputation. But using imagination to train physical skills does not violate biblical principles. So the Christian martial artist can use meditation time to rehearse what you were learning; mentally practice; see yourself having a great workout. Again, use meditation to focus your mind and attention in a positive and productive way.

Another question that arises from time to time refers to the practice of bowing. In many schools, everyone bows before entering or leaving the training area. This is done as a sign of respect for a place of learning. In most schools, the students and instructors bow to each other. In some schools, there is even bowing before the American flag (and sometimes before the flag of the country from which the art or the instructor immigrated as well). Finally, there are schools where it is customary to bow before a school shrine or altar. What are we as Christian martial artists to make of these customs?

Historically, bowing has been used to demonstrate an attitude of respect, reverence, and submission. In Oriental culture it is common for people to prostrate themselves on the ground before kings and princes. Such customs were also prevalent among the Hebrews.

However, bowing is just as frequently noticed in scripture as an act of religious homage. No mention is made of posture, so we have no clear instruction as to whether it is of any significance if someone bows with

his face to the ground (a common Eastern practice) or simply bows from the waist. This issue is not addressed because it is unimportant. It is not the posture that counts but the purpose.

Bowing, as an act of religious homage, is addressed extensively in the Bible, and there is no doubt that bowing before any idol, spiritual leader or guide, or representative of a false god is prohibited. Joshua, in his last words to the elders of Israel, said the following:

*“Do not associate with these nations that remain among you; do not invoke the names of their gods or swear by them. You must not serve them or bow down to them.” (Joshua 23:7)*

This theme is repeated throughout scripture, so it is clear that bowing as an act of religious or spiritual homage is prohibited.

So serious is this matter that the godly man finds even innocent association with such an act painful to his conscience. For example, Naaman is cleansed of his leprosy by God through His prophet Elisha. A highly regarded general of the king of Syria, Naaman says afterward that he will never again make burnt offerings and sacrifices to any other god save the Lord. However, he still has one problem. His master, the king of Syria, still worships his own god. The Syrian king was old and often took Naaman with him to lean on his arm when he went to worship. Naaman’s words to Elisha reflect his predicament. Consider the following passage:

*“But may the LORD forgive your servant for this one thing: When my master enters the temple of Rimmon to bow down and he is leaning on my arm and I bow also — when I bow down in the temple of Rimmon, may the LORD forgive your servant for this. Go in peace, Elisha said.” (2 Kings 5:18-19)*

Again, Naaman, was not worshiping this Syrian deity; his master was. He was not bowing down before Rimmon. He was only providing physical support for his master. However, Naaman found even this association was uncomfortable.

What seems clear from all of this is that the act of bowing itself is not the problem. Rather, it is the purpose of such an act. Biblically, bowing before lawful authority and spiritual leaders (like the kings and prophets) was an accepted practice. For that reason alone I think one would be hard pressed to convince an Englishman he should not bow before his monarch.

As for bowing before a school altar or shrine, if it is done as an act of obeisance or homage to some spiritual leader or guide, then for the Christian, the practice is prohibited and he must excuse himself from participation. If that is not possible (the bowing is required), then he should seek instruction elsewhere. There are many good schools where a Christian can train without having to involve himself in such practice.

Suppose that bowing before the school shrine is simply a cultural tradition, a sign of respect for a place of learning, or just recognition of the efforts of past teachers — without any religious or spiritual significance. Is that all right?

Every believer must answer that question for himself. The apostle Paul, in I Corinthians, Chapter 10, verse 23, makes it clear that “all things are lawful,” but at the same time, he says, all things are not “expedient.” There may be cultural standards to consider. For example, in our culture, drinking alcoholic beverages of any kind is generally frowned upon by many bible-believing Christians. However, our Christian brothers in Germany would not consider ordering a soft drink or iced tea with their meals. The Christian, then, must balance biblical truth with social standards, asking himself: Is it lawful? Is it expedient? If, in clear conscience before God, you can answer both of those questions affirmatively, then go ahead and participate.

In our school the only bowing we do is a type of mutual salute to begin and end our classes. It is not a bow of submission, obeisance, or homage. Rather, it is like an officer returning the salute of an enlisted man. With the words “Attention” and “Salute,” the teacher shows his respect for the students — they honor him by choosing to study and train with him. The students, in return, show their respect for the teacher as a worthy instructor and fellow student. It is, quite simply, mutual respect.

Finally, those who would tell us to separate ourselves from the study of Asian martial arts because of the general religious influences and overtones inherent there would do well to consider Christmas. Christmas is not held on Christ's birthday, but on the birthday of the sun. (December 25 was the first day after the winter solstice that the ancients could tell the days were getting longer.) The Christmas tree, the boughs of holly, the Christmas wreath, and the Yule log are all pagan traditions (and these are only a few). With that in mind, should not our response to the Christmas celebration likewise be abstention? No. As with everything we do in life, awareness and understanding are the keys.

The study and practice of martial arts, including Asian martial arts, offer the discerning believer an enjoyable alternative to conventional, and often boring, exercise programs. Further, they are a practical means of providing security for family, self, and home. If they are approached as outlined above, I find nothing in them that conflicts with biblical truth.

### **Notes and References**

1. While the scope of this paper is limited to addressing the question of how a Christian reconciles the biblical principle of "turning the other cheek" with participation in the martial arts, the answers given here have direct bearing on resolution of the primary issue and, to some degree, the satellite issues as well.
2. C. S. Lewis, *The Weight of Glory and Other Addresses*. (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc. 1980), 49-50.

3. The fact that Christ was capable of resisting evil is important. A man of peace is not one who is incapable of resisting evil. Claiming to be a man of peace when incapable of resisting evil is merely compliance. Accepting evil, on the other hand, when one is fully capable of resisting or returning it is the true mark of a man of peace.
4. Moody Monthly magazine, December 1986.

### **The Breath of Life**

Jesus Christ is the “Cause” of all things. God’s Spirit inspired the Apostle Paul to write these words about Christ to the Colossian Christians. “For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.” (Colossians 1:16-17) The Apostle John wrote this about Christ. “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men.” (John 1:1-4) Jesus told Martha, “I am the resurrection, and the life.” (John 11:25) Christ told Thomas, “I am the way, the truth, and the life.” (John 14:6)

Jesus Christ is LIFE. LIFE is in Christ. Jesus created all living things with LIFE. How did He do it? “By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth.” (Psalms 33:6) “And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds of the air and all the creatures that move on the ground—everything that has the breath of life in



it.” (Genesis 1:30) “And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.” (Genesis 2:7) God created all things with the Breath of His Mouth. Within His Breath existed Life because God is Life. God formed the human being from the dust of the ground. Christ, Who is Life, breathed into the form’s nostrils the “Breath of Life” and the form became a living soul. It became Adam, the first human being. Job wrote “The spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life.” (Job 33:4) We are alive today because God breathed LIFE into Adam thousands of years ago. Our original life and continued life depends on the “Breath of Life” God breathed into Adam. That original “Breath of Life” of God sustains our life now. It is our original Chi. It is our source of life, power, energy and health.

All living things have “The Breath of Life.” If they did not, they would not be alive. Job wrote “If he set his heart upon man, if he gather unto himself his spirit and his breath; All flesh shall perish together, and man shall turn again unto dust.” (Job 34:1-15) God’s Breath is in every human being. Believers also have God’s Spirit in their breath. Job wrote “All the while my breath is in me, and the spirit of God is in my nostrils.” (Job 27:3) The Breath of God is in every animal and insect on earth, every bird above the earth, and every fish and creature in the lakes, rivers and seas. “The Breath of Life” is in every cell of our bodies. We have God to thank for it every day for our lives. Every living thing should worship God continually because He gives them “The Breath of Life.”

Paul explained this idea clearly to the people of Athens. “Him declare I unto you. God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; Neither is worshipped with men’s hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things.” (Acts 17:23-25)

Consider these things as you move and breathe during your martial workouts. We have a great Gift ... THE BREATH OF LIFE!

### **Defending Like Christ**

Last month we said we would share some ideas about how to react to the variety of challenges we’ll face as Christian martial artists. We have seen from the Bible that Christ is a powerful warrior (May newsletter). We have also seen that Christ is a Loving Savior filled with compassion. Christian martial artists have the opportunity to be “like Christ” by showing compassion and power in defending the innocent and doing what is “right.” Christ has the “Power” to destroy the world and anyone in it at any time He chooses. However, our Lord is also Loving, Gracious, Forgiving and Kind. God is Perfect Balance in all things. He is the True Grand Ultimate. He uses His Power with Wisdom to show Compassion. We can learn so much from Him about how to use martial abilities in our daily lives.

Many martial arts systems have a sequential use of force. We pray for God’s Wisdom as we face threat and danger. Here is one example of a sequential use of force. We would like to hear from you about how to include compassion as Christian martial artists.

1. Mental Defense (avoid conflict)
2. Speak Softly (turn away wrath)
3. Verbal Command
4. Defensive Posture
5. Run or Stun and Run
6. Physical Restraint
7. Temporary Incapacitation
8. Great Bodily Harm

The process of sequential use of force is based on Threat Levels. Our first defense is to avoid threat or conflict. That can include not going to places where conflict may occur. If we are faced with conflict, we can speak softly and attempt to talk our way out of the threat. If soft words do not calm the situation, the Christian martial artist can verbally command an attacker to stop. Once you have their attention, you may be able to use soft words to turn away their wrath. If a verbal command does not work, you can face your attacker and take a defensive posture. That may be enough to stop the conflict. If the attacker is in your third zone (several yards from you) and continues to come at you, you could move quickly in the opposite direction, but keep your eye on what the attacker is doing. If he runs after you, you may have to turn and move up in the sequential use of force. If the attacker moves rapidly into your second zone (3-5 feet from you), you may have to be ready to move quickly to defend against the attack. If the attacker enters your first zone (close enough to reach you with a grab, punch or kick), you may have to perform an escape or blocking technique followed by a controlling movement or counter strike or kick. Sidestepping or blocking an

attack followed by a stunning technique (punch, strike, kick) may give you the opportunity to leave your attacker behind. You are showing compassion to your attacker by leaving and not allowing the attack to escalate. You can also place the attacker in a physical restraint until they give up. If Stun or Restraint techniques do not stop the conflict and you are not able to leave, you may have to increase the sequential use of force by temporarily incapacitating your attacker. That may include a knockout punch, strike, kick, choke, etc. Again, you are showing compassion by not causing the attacker permanent injury. If your attacker means you great bodily harm and you are not able to stop the conflict in any other way, a Christian martial artist may have to make the difficult decision to cause the attacker great bodily harm first. That is an unfortunate circumstance that will cause the attacker and the attacked permanent problems (physical, mental and emotional in addition to possible legal problems). Causing permanent injury or death is the last thing a Christian martial artist wants to do.

### **Testimony of Danny Young**

*“And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto death.” Rev 12:11*

I came to know the Lord through the efforts of my mom. She would read me the Bible as a child, even though I had no clue as to what it meant. Whenever she asked me if I understood, I would just say yes to try and get her to stop reading to me. While I didn't really enjoy the reading, it planted an awareness of God in me at a very early age. I knew He was

there, it just never crossed my mind that He wanted to know me— and that I could know Him.

It wasn't until I was in the sixth grade that things started to happen. Things that would bring me to a personal and rewarding relationship with His Son, Jesus Christ.

My friend Tom Price invited me to go with him to a surf club meeting. What he neglected to say was that it was also a Bible study. It was the Disciples Surf Club, and it met in the home of a women named Barbara Plourd. The club members were surfer and non-surfer types from all walks of life who had committed their lives to Jesus. Every Saturday they departed from Thousand Oaks, Calif,(where I lived at the time) and went surfing in the Ventura County region. The surfing was a total blast! I went with Tom to several meetings, and for the most part thought that these people were a bunch of kooks. However, the surfing was fun, and I found myself compelled to go back for reasons that I could not fully explain at the time.

One night after Barbara finished her Bible presentation, she asked if there was anyone in the room who wanted to accept Jesus Christ as his Lord and Savior. All heads were bowed in prayer, and I kept thinking, "These people are crazy!" — yet my hand went up! Something inside my heart kept saying this was the right thing to do, but my mind was very confused. Someone saw my hand raised and came over to pray with me. That was the night I met Jesus. He came into my heart, and I have never been the same since.

No, I did not lead the perfect life. As a matter of fact, after the group fell apart due to problems among those in leadership, I did not live a Christian life at all for a time. During high school, I did many things that are opposed by Christianity. Yet, I knew that God was near and calling out to me to return to Him. I can even remember one time yelling out loud at God to leave me alone! (I am so thankful today that He did not listen!)

In my senior year at Thousand Oaks High School, around May of 1972, I clearly heard the Lord's voice speak to me. He said, " You have been messing around long enough, and I want you back. You need to decide what you're going to do." I didn't fall on my knees and have some dramatic repentance experience. I spent the next two weeks thinking about my life and what I wanted to do with it. The inescapable reality was that I wanted to know God. All the things that I had been involved with had led me to heartache and pain. My parents had divorced, and my family now consisted of just me and my dad. Loneliness is so overwhelming, yet God in His great love for us is always there. I knew this and needed it.

So one night in my bedroom, I rededicated my life to Jesus. His Spirit filled my room with His presence, and that was when my life was completely and forever changed. It has been a long process of change , but it has been more than worth it. The Lord has given me a wonderful life. My wife and I have been married for more than 21 years. I have three terrific children. I live in one of the most beautiful places on earth,

Colorado. I can stand on the deck of my house and see the Rocky Mountains.

There have been plenty of trials too. I have been unemployed as an electrician and have been in and out of the ministry due to people conflicts. (I have never been immoral). The church that we started here in Castle Rock went belly up four years later. All of my Pastor friends left me when I had to close the church. My son almost died when he was 3 years old. There have been times when I wondered if life could ever be “good” again. This thing I have found true. The Lord will never leave us , or forsake us. He has always been there in my times of trouble.

This one thing is clear, Jesus is always faithful – even when we are not. When all others fail, Jesus is still there. It is not my intention to claim that since I met Jesus I have had no problems or that my life is always a breeze. Neither do I intend to say that my life has been awful. The point of this message is to communicate that my life is just like yours — and you, too, can find the peace of God that has so enriched my life. God is so good! May you find the joy of the Lord. Let His joy be your strength as you walk down your path of life.

# **GMAF NEWSLETTER**

## **JULY 2000**

Welcome to the GMAF Newsletter! We pray it will encourage you in your Martial Arts and Outreach for Christ.

### **Thoughts from the Master**

*“They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.”*

Jesus Christ

*“For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.”*

The Apostle Paul

### **Wisdom Notes**

*“All the days of the afflicted are evil: but he that is of a merry heart hath a continual feast.”* Proverbs 15:15



## Be Still and Know

*“Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth.”* Psalm 46:10

The Psalmist wrote these words in the context of believers experiencing great trouble in their lives.

*“God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Selah.”* Psalm 46:1-3

Everyone I know faces tough times in their lives. That includes Christians and martial artists. What is the secret to being calm during the storms of life?

*“Be still, and know that I am God.”*

What does it mean to “be still?” The Hebrew words for “still” have the meaning of being “silent, relaxed, quiet.” Definitions include “to recline, cease from troubling.” What a wonderful word is “still.”

King David was a man of great passions: physical, emotional and spiritual. He faced thousands of enemies in his lifetime and killed many of them in hand-to-hand combat. David was a martial artist of great skill. He was also

a troubled man, like most men. The Old Testament writings about David give us great insight into how dependent on God he was during troubled times.

*“Hear me when I call, O God of my righteousness: thou has enlarged me when I was in distress; have mercy upon me, and hear my prayer. O ye sons of men, how long will ye turn my glory into shame? How long will ye love vanity, and seek after leasing? Selah. But know that the Lord hath set apart him that is godly for himself: the Lord will hear when I call unto him. Stand in awe, and sin not: commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still. Selah.”* Psalm 4:1-4

David’s advice during distress and trouble? “Commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still.” The word “commune” means to “speak with oneself, meditate.” David’s advice to God’s people who are going through tough times is to “meditate and relax.” The Hebrew concept of the “heart” was as the seat of feeling and affections in addition to the seat of intellect and included mind, purpose, intention, understanding, knowledge, insight, courage and spirit. David recommends that people meditate deeply in a private place (upon your bed) for a period of time that would allow them to “be still”.

About what should we meditate? “...know that I am God.” The word “know” in Psalm 46:10 means “to come to the knowledge of, by seeing, by hearing, and by experiencing.” How do we “see” God? How do we “hear” God? How do we “experience” God? “Be still, and know...” It is through quietness and relaxation of the mind and heart that we can “know” God. A

deep knowledge about God will lead us to understand that God “will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth.” We have nothing to fear from our enemies. God will be exalted among the heathen. He will be exalted in the earth. That is what we “know.”

David began Psalm 46 with “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.” David ends the Psalm with “The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge.” That was a great calming factor for David and the people of Israel. It should have a calming effect on us today.

One of the most difficult things for people to do today is relax and meditate.

People search for physical and mental relaxation through drugs, alcohol, sex, new age spiritism, escapism and other things that have negative results. Relax is a “secret word” in martial arts. We relax the mind, body and spirit before we practice. We learn that increased energy, power and speed come from being relaxed mentally, emotionally, physically and spiritually.

As martial artists we can translate that ability to relax and calm our mind and body into every area of our lives. We can teach others to do the same. What a Christian martial artist can do that others cannot is lead people to “be still, and know...God.” It is a privilege and responsibility we celebrate with thanks to our Heavenly Father Who has taught us to quiet our hearts and minds and experience His Love and Grace in all its fullness.

Our prayers are with you this month as you are still and know that He is God.

## **Former Victims in Christian Martial Arts**

By Sensei Charlaine Engelhardt

(Note: Our thanks to Don & Charlaine Engelhardt for allowing us to reprint this article from their Faith Fighters for Christ website at <http://www.angelfire.com/oh/ff4christ/>)

“Martial arts attracts all kinds of people. Each person has a specific reason for training. But one of the most prevalent types of people who show up for instruction are former victims-ranging from childhood abuse to domestic violence. These people are usually looking to keep the abuse from happening again. Some people bring their children in hopes that they will learn self-defense and confidence to avoid the problems of the parents. But Christian martial arts, because of the caring, accepting aspect brought by our relationship with Jesus Christ, definitely is an important avenue of healing for some former victims.

Former victims look for control over their own lives. Whether a person was abused as a child, mugged as an adult, or was brutalized by a spouse, someone who has been a victim lost a tremendous amount of control about themselves. Mental manipulation is also a very common abuse. This, first, brings a person to question one’s own judgement. It does not matter whether it is a one-time confrontation or several years of

abuse, there is now a lot of mental and emotional confusion, which distorts the person's "alarm system" for danger. Without that internal discernment coupled with horrible memories, the former victim is always on guard for his or her own safety.

Physical and sexual abuses stick in the memory of the survivor for the rest of that person's life. He or she would do whatever possible to avoid having this happen ever again. Sometimes, a new student will come in actually wanting to be able to learn skills to exact revenge upon his abusers. There are women who will come into a karate school in order to learn how to keep their husbands from harming them. Many are either combative (reactionary) or very fearful. They simply want to gain control over their own bodies and lives.

Combatives and exercise are usually a stress release for survivors of abuse and/or assault. If the person feels the environment is a safe one in which to learn, then experimentation during instruction will happen. During this time, the survivor will be getting physical exercise that helps release pent up energy. Any reasonable workout routine will help, but martial arts was the choice of this person-probably the first independent decision made for a very long time. Being able to punch and kick, yell, learn joint locks and pressure points aids the survivor in working through some emotions that are either explosive or have been repressed. For anyone who has lost control of one's life, there is a tremendous amount of tension and energy released.

Everyone needs to be loved and accepted. Failure to thrive in infants is known to end the lives of countless babies. But I dare to say that many youth and adults are simply empty shells walking around, trying to get through what life throws at them. Without being encouraged or lifted up, most give up. However, when the survivor finds acceptance and encouragement at a Christian martial arts school/ministry, this person has the opportunity to blossom. The love of Christ exhibited in the instructors and other students fill up that empty area in this student's life. If a school is performance-based and the instructor is out to make a buck, then "failure to thrive" continues. This is not to say that everything the student does or says is acceptable. But that the person is always acceptable, regardless of the baggage that comes in. The behavior changes over time. Love and acceptance is crucial to the successful growth of the survivor. The survivor then becomes a Victor in Christ.

### **Signs of Concern**

Reading the signs of former abuse or assault is important in reaching these hurting people. Whether you are a survivor, an instructor, or an interested student, this checklist will be valuable to your understanding:

Either very shy, not looking anyone in the eye for any length of time, or very outgoing to flamboyant, using eye contact as a control measure.

\* Either eager to learn and to please or "already knows everything there is to know about karate".

- \* Lack luster in the workouts and wants to “hide” behind others or boldly placing oneself in front and center of everyone for attention, trying to impress anyone who will pay attention.
- \* Very jumpy at loud noises and and skittish in confrontation during sparring or self-defense. Or the survivor is not startled by sounds that catch the attention of most other people and are overly aggressive in confrontation during sparring or self-defense.
- \* Tends to fixate on self-protection. Personal habits are to an extreme in the area of personal safety than the normal, or personal safety is disregarded as if the person wants to be attacked.
- \* Will at some point insist that the techniques cannot possibly work, challenging the instructor to demonstrate it in supposedly realistic conditions. Some will go so far as to “attack” the instructor or senior student, disregarding the safeties that must be in place for training. This is very dangerous!
- \* Some “check out” during an aggressive bout, which is a survival mechanism to protect the person’s emotional and mental state. This person could be injured and never feel or acknowledge it until the stressor is over. This is called disassociation.
- \* Some all of a sudden get glazed over eyes and flail at the opponent. This is usually a flashback-mentally the student is in another time and place that reminds them of some former attack.

This is not an exhaustive list, but it should serve as a helpful guide. Survivors usually suffer from post traumatic stress disorder, also known as shellshock. They operate in extremes, which is why these bullet points are listed with “or” on most of them. Many do not know what it

means to have balance in life because it was never exemplified. Some lost balance in their lives because their sensibility and discernment was called into question; everything in his or her life's paradigm was harshly tested.

### **Have You Been A Victim Before?**

If this list describes you and you realize you have been a victim, then seek sound Christian counsel. Talk to your pastor or to a trusted Christian friend. Ask them for information regarding a licensed clinical Christian counselor or for a support group in a church that has a good reputation. Go to a good Christ-centered church for Sunday school and worship. Surround yourself with loving, caring people, not those who hurt or manipulate you. Be teachable in your martial arts school, provided that the instructors are trustworthy. If not, then find another school. Also, remember that not everyone is perfect. Do not feel jaded because the instructor, senior student, or someone else you look up to makes a mistake. Everyone is a sinner and saved by grace. Stick with those who try hard to live by God's standards and are also teachable. You are too valuable to live the life of a doormat.

### **Students and Instructors Can Minister to Former Victims**

So what can you do to minister to people who have been hurt so badly? It depends on what role you play in your school/ministry. If you are another student, befriend new students when they come in. Everyone needs to know they are welcome regardless of their backgrounds. Find



one person that displays these symptoms and care about them. Listen to their concerns. Encourage them. Do not let them bully you or someone else. Point them to the Lord through prayer, Scripture, and your own life's example. Help them with their techniques that are tough for them to learn. Your friendship is the most important thing you can give a survivor.

If you are an instructor, there is a lot more that rests on you. Survivors will either distrust you or put you on a pedestal-the only way happens to be down, by the way. It is never good to be any student's buddy. But you can become a mentor or set them up with other students as mentors. Show the same interest you would to anyone else in your class. Keep firm, but healthy boundaries set-and enforce them graciously. Stop or reset spars when flashbacks occur or when they look overwhelmed. These students need to be able to regroup their thoughts and composure. Give them responsibilities with which they can succeed. Adjust these responsibilities as their abilities improve. Always show the Bible as a standard for all of life and Jesus as Savior and Lord in your own life. Point them to good, solid churches for guidance and direction. Nothing speaks louder than the example of someone who is a role model. What they see in you they will want to imitate.

This article is the result of my own experiences as a student and instructor, as well as from research done for my college English paper regarding biblically-based counseling being best for domestic violence survivors.

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## **My Cup Has Overflowed**

We thank Soke Karl Marx for forwarding to us this wonderful poem.

*"I've never made a fortune and it's probably too late now. But I don't worry about that much, I'm happy anyhow.*

*And as I go along life's way, I'm reaping better than I sowed. I'm drinking from my saucer, 'Cause my cup has overflowed.*

*Haven't got a lot of riches, and sometimes the going's tough. But I've got loving ones around me, and that makes me rich enough.*

*I thank God for his blessings, and the mercies He's bestowed. I'm drinking from my saucer, 'cause my cup has overflowed.*

*O, Remember times when things went wrong, My faith wore somewhat thin.*

*But all at once the dark clouds broke, and sun peeped through again.*

*So Lord, help me not to gripe about the tough rows that I've hoed. I'm drinking from my saucer, "Cause my cup has overflowed. If God gives me strength and courage, When the way grows steep and rough. I'll not ask for other blessings, I'm already blessed enough.*

*And may I never be too busy, to help others bear their loads. Then I'll keep drinking from my saucer, "Cause my cup has overflowed."*

### **Here's To Common Sense**

Thanks to Pastor David Havard for sending this to us.

*"Today I am mourning the passing of an old friend by the name of Common Sense.*

*Common Sense, AKA C.S., lived a long life but died from heart failure at the brink of the millennium. No one really knows how old he was, since his birth records were long ago lost in bureaucratic red tape.*

*He selflessly devoted his life to service in schools, hospitals, homes, factories and offices, helping folks get jobs done without fanfare and foolishness.*

*For decades, petty rules, silly laws and frivolous lawsuits held no power over C.S. He was credited with cultivating such valued lessons as to know when to come in out of the rain, the early bird gets the worm, and life isn't always fair.*

*C.S. lived by sound financial policies (don't spend more than you earn) and reliable teaching and parenting strategies (the adult is in charge, not the kid).*

*A veteran of the Industrial Revolution, the Great Depression, and the Technological Revolution, C.S. survived cultural and educational trends including feminism, body piercing, whole language and "new" math. But his health declined when he became infected with the "If-It-Only-Helps-One- Person-It's-Worth-It" virus.*

*In recent decades his waning strength proved no match for the ravages of overbearing federal regulations. He watched in pain as good people became ruled by self-seeking lawyers and enlightened auditors. His health rapidly deteriorated as schools mindlessly implemented zero tolerance policies. Reports of 6 year old boys charged with sexual harassment for kissing a classmate, a teen suspended for taking a swig of mouthwash after lunch, and a teacher fired for reprimanding an unruly student.*

*Finally, C.S. lost his will to live as the Ten Commandments became contraband, churches became businesses, criminals received better treatment than victims, and federal judges stuck their noses in everything from Boy Scouts to professional sports. As the end neared, C.S. drifted in and out of logic but was kept informed of developments regarding questionable regulations for asbestos, low flow toilets, “smart” guns and mandatory air bags.*

*Finally, when told that homeowners association restricted exterior furniture only to that which enhanced property values, he breathed his last breath.*

*C.S. was preceded in death by his parents, Truth and Trust; his wife, Discretion; his daughter, Responsibility; and his Son, Reason. He is survived by three step-brothers, Rights, Tolerance, and Whiner. Few attended his funeral, because so few realized he was gone. “*

# **GMAF NEWSLETTER**

## **AUGUST 2000**

Welcome to the GMAF Newsletter! We pray it will encourage you in your Martial Arts and Outreach for Christ.

### **Thoughts from the Master**

*“For as the lightning, that lighteneth out of the one part under heaven, shineth unto the other part under heaven; so shall also the Son of man be in his day.”*

Jesus Christ

*“Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses. I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and before Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession; That thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ.”*

The Apostle Paul

## Wisdom Notes

*"A sound heart is the life of the flesh: but envy the rottenness of the bones."* Proverbs 15:15

## Restore the Joy by Sensei Mark McGee

Almost three decades of pastoring and counseling Christians have given me the opportunity to see deep into the hearts of God's people at many stages of their lives. Most new believers have a great joy in their hearts because of the salvation God gives them in Christ. That joy continues for a time, but often lessens as the young Christian battles daily with the world, their flesh and the Devil. The battle wears on them. Sin scars them; sometimes hardens them.

King David experienced many joys in his life. He also experienced heartache. David sinned against God and man, so the Lord sent Nathan the prophet to confront David about his sin. David's reaction was what it should have been.

*"Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me. Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest."* Psalm 51:1-4

Some Christians react to confrontation of their sin by denying it. Others get angry with the person who confronts them. Some hide. Some want to die. God confronts His children because He loves them. It's not because He wants to embarrass or punish us. He wants us to acknowledge our sin and change our behavior. We have a great advocate on our behalf. His Name is Jesus. Christ died so we do not have to die. Christ exposed sin so we do not have to hide. Christ poured out His righteous anger on sin so we do not have to be angry. Christ finished the payment for sin so we do not have to deny it. We believe and receive. We believe in the power of Christ's Sacrifice and receive Christ's Life.

Every child of God has experienced the terror of sin in their lives. We all have said with David:

*"Make me to hear joy and gladness; that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice."* Psalm 51:8

Sin in a Christian's life steals their joy and gladness. They feel as if their bones are broken. They feel deep pain inside their bodies. They feel a million miles away from God. They want the pain to stop. They want the joy of their salvation restored.

*"Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit."* Psalm 51:12



That is the prayer of our hearts when we face the sin in our lives. We want to feel like we did when salvation was new and fresh. We want God to restore that feeling; we want Him to restore the joy we had once with Him. We need Him to uphold us with His Spirit.

The result of that desire and prayer is that God will restore us to the joy we had before. He will uphold us with His Spirit. God's ministry of restoring our joy has many benefits. We are happy again. We are productive. We are back on the path. We are also ready to minister to others in a deeper way.

*“Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit. Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee.”* Psalm 51:12-13

It's wonderful to see how things change for Christians who acknowledge their sin to God and are restored to joy. They serve God and others with renewed vigor and vitality. They are able to share with the lost in a new and powerful way – “and sinners shall be converted unto thee.”

That is one of our primary goals as Christian martial artists. We want to see sinners converted to Christ. The joyful servant will bear more fruit than one who has lost their joy because of sin in their lives. An amazing truth about sharing Christ from a joyful heart is that the ministry of sharing multiplies our joy.

*“O Lord, open thou my lips; and my mouth shall shew forth thy praise.”* Psalm 51:15

## **What's The Matter LORD? "You Are Karl"**

### **Part One by Pastor Karl Marx**

"Well here I am, at the computer again. This time what I have to share may be of use to other folks as well as it is for me. I have thought something was missing in my career for many years now. To tell the truth I just found out my problem has something to do with Pride. What Pride? I've thought that was in the past, I don't have any of that stuff anymore! Ha! Pride, and a liar to boot. Let me begin back in the days of old. I had the impression that to be worth something, a person had to be a somebody.

My dad Twain P. Marx had been a somebody, He was ranked third in the World, in the early 1920's as a professional boxer. My Uncle Paul C. Marx was one of the best boxers that ever graduated from LSU in Baton Rouge Louisiana. My cousin Donald Marx became a Doctor of Chiropractor, and his brother Paul is a Lawyer, all earned the hard way. I am so proud of them. As for me, well I never felt worthy of much, I had been left behind in a boarding School in Lake Charles Louisiana, at about 10 or 11 years of age, I think? By my mom and step-dad, I felt abandoned, hurt and angry. They had no other choice, we moved so often I had a very difficult time keeping up in school.

I made up my mind then that I would become a "Big Shot" as we used to say back then. No one would ever leave me again. Ha! Was I ever in for a rude awaking. My goal in life was to become a very important man

one-day. To that end I made myself into the man I wanted to be. But Not what the Media respected. Like the song goes, “I can’t get no satisfaction” Ha!

It is my little opinion that Martial Arts need a new vision. It is apparent to any open-eyed individual that the ranking system builds too much pride, and puffed up egos. I see many Christian Martial arts instructors getting caught up in the occult aspect of what I myself have been guilty off. Pastor, Martial Art teachers are not exempt from this danger, and many are crossing over the line into the “Pride Side.” Most of these well meaning persons, in attempting to keep out of the occult part of martial art training without very much real knowledge and skill, make up something of their own. In doing this, they look into an oriental dictionary and find an appropriate Christian translation. Then they name their style something like Ohai-Do. Which according to them means The Way of the Lord. Of course these names are bogus, I don’t know what or if there is such an oriental term.

Then come the Associations. Next in line is the promotions. This starts out innocent enough, but who really had or has the authority to make such high rank promotions? How many years has Christian Martial Arts been organized? Is there really anyone truly qualified to promote someone with less than 25 years experience in these Arts to 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th 9th and even 10th degree? My question is why do we have to have all these titles, and high ranks? My excuse was that since the World appreciates this kind of hero worship, that IF I were to become

FAMOUS, God could use me as a tool in getting young and old alike to desire to hear what I had to say about Jesus Christ.

So I trained hard, and my students trained hard. Keichu-Do students won many titles, State, Regional, National, World, and even Junior Olympic Gold and Silver Medals in competition. My being the First American to be promoted to the rank of 10th Dan, by an Organization outside of my own, can be challenged, there are after all, a lot of diploma mills out there. And is my own really legitimate? I question that myself sometimes. I don't want any bogus rank. But I was promoted to 10th Dan way back in the Early 70's, that is a fact. But again SO WHAT? Who really gives a hoot? Does that fact make me any better than any one else? Of course not. So why did I spend so much time fretting over the stupid thing? WAAA! I didn't get recognized at this event or that convention. Wow! What a wimp!

The World didn't even recognize Jesus Christ; for crying out loud, so who the heck do I think I AM? But not having the good since God gave me to use properly I didn't let my Creator do what he wanted to do. The problem was that I did it the easy way. I became the first Cajun from Louisiana to form a self-defense system. Then I claimed what I actually believe; to be the first American to start his own style without having studied and earned a black belt from an Oriental Karate martial art. I later studied and became a black Belt in Judo.

I accomplished a great deal of feats that no one has yet reached, yet I was ignored by the black belt magazine publishing Hall Of Fame, in 1979. They left that year blank even though many of my friends and students, including public politics were with me. The whole story is not necessary, however I should have won. Ha! but they left the slot open and chose no one, rather than give it to me. Here I am the first American to have done what I did and Bruce Lee is the best thing since Jesus Christ in the Martial art world. Keichu-Do has been around publicly for 40 years this year 2000. Our 40th anniversary and do I get a story in Black Belt magazine. NAAAA!

My story is not about what I should have been, but how I hindered God's blessings in my life. I was so busy striving for fame and glory that I completely missed my chance to allow God to do His will for me. Yes I did earn the right to be better recognized by my peers, however my attempting to help myself instead of letting God caused a backlash.

I do not wish to expound on my few little accomplishments. The reason why is simple, my own egocentric pride is what I think has been holding back the Blessings God wanted to give me all this time. God has informed us in the Bible that if we obey His commands, He will lift us up to our peers and honor us in the eyes of man, not because of what we do but by His Grace and mercy, through Christ Jesus. My wanting to be honored by my fellow man was selfish, and as I Narcissistically looked at my, so-called feats at least in MY own eyes, I became more of a fool. Again the Bible warned me, not to be wise in my own eyes, to think of others as better than myself, Ha! My vanity would not allow me to do

that until recently. Just this month of July in the year 2000 The Holy Spirit showed me what was going on in my life and ministry. I am learning that to receive all that God has to offer we need to step back, let go and let God do his will in us.

The more we try to help the Lord the more we interfere, and interrupt, His plans. Just like a football game, when the coach sends in a play if the captain or quarterback doesn't respond correctly the plan may go bad. As martial artist we have to give up all the hype, and high rank, pride, and ego stuff. Most of us are just making a fool of ourselves anyway, Masters and Grandmasters, Soke's (founders) Ha! It actually takes around 25 years to really master most styles, very few true masters of a traditional style would ever consider starting their own. That is paramount to being a traitor. Where do we get off creating our own style when it takes a life time to just learn the one we started with.

You can't blame me for doing that because I never studied or received a black belt in Karate. The problem appears to again be the old ego, and pride brothers. "The higher the rank, the bigger the head, the bigger the head, the smaller the brain." (KWM) Unfortunately most of the so-called Masters and Grandmasters, as well as the Soke's are a bunch of wannabe's. Many are too egotistical to learn a real Martial art, so they fumble up a conception of their own. Where is the integrity? Honor, Loyalty? Of the Bushido code of old? With this trend of unfaithfulness already in advance there is a group of highly intelligent Business minded individual who take advantage of the unsuspecting lesser knowledgeable, in the marketing and business area of their field. These

super businessmen could care less about Martial Artist being loyal to their instructors, and style heads.

The truth is these businessmen appear to be stealing the money from rightful individuals. Shame on you fellows and you know who you are. While you profess to teach others how to retain their students, and you do give great business advice, you also want the dojo owners to give you incredible fees for your service. I have no problem with you making a living. However stay the heck out of my business. You are infringing on my right to make a living by telling the World and my students that They don't need to pay me for the right to teach my family Art.

I do agree that there are a bunch of creeps, who take advantage of their students, however I am not one. I resent your implication that ALL of us are pseudo masters. I'm 64 years young and have been in the self-defense field all my life. From the day I was born my dad had me punching like a boxer, which he was, earlier in his life. I am willing to meet anyone of you in the ring to prove beyond a doubt in your mind that I am not a pseudo anything. Win, lose, or draw, I can guarantee, that you will never forget that you were in a real fight. Am I bragging? No! Just stating the Facts. Nothing personal! It's just another job to me.

Most of this Martial Art stuff is just a big ego builder anyway. Statements like "we will build your self-esteem, and self-confidence, are nothing but promises you can't keep. You can't make someone brave, or teach them courage, you teach them techniques that IF they work in a real situation fight or attack, then your student will feel good about his/her success.

Other wise they will most often wonder if they could really defend themselves. A lot of students want to believe and regardless of whether they can or cannot really defend themselves, they never the less believe they can, and in many cases get their butt's kicked in a fight. Most of the real fighters are not afraid to fight, it is not important if they win or lose, it's the fight that really matters. The thrill of danger, the chance to prove you got it! Man that's the high, the adventure, and a high adrenaline rush that is better than any substance abuse. I don't fight anymore because my life style has changed since I became a Christian. However my being a Christian and a Pastor, does not mean that now I forgot how to fight or that I lost the ability to defend myself.

I know I'm ranting, and raving, here, however I only wish to make my point clear. I don't like some desk jockey black belt salesman spouting off at the mouth, accusing me and other legitimate martial arts instructors of all being pseudo masters because we have a franchised system. It's OK for our students to Pay you large sums of money to tell them how to teach and manage their dojo. Ha! Anyone with a lick of business since is taught by his or her Sensei how to do that.

Your rotten propaganda cost people like me a hundred thousand dollars a year. Don't build you house on another man's foundation, is a warning from the Bible. I used to have connections with the COMPANY! But my Boss is MUCH bigger than all the companies put together. I work for Almighty God, Jesus Christ and The Holy Spirit. I'll stay out of your business; just YOU stay out of mine. OK! ENOUGH of that! My situation is that I wish to make it known that we are all guilty of teaching PRIDE to



our students. Not a good kind of pride of accomplishments for a job well done, but a Pride of ” since I am higher in rank than someone I have the right to make them do pushups whenever I want. I’m a higher rank so others have to bow to me type of rotten attitude pride, and ego.”

[We will publish the next part of Pastor Marx’s article in an upcoming GMAF Newsletter.]

### **Class Games**

“We play a relay race. Team of 4 or so. 1st they run to the 1st kick pad and do 10 front snap kicks with each leg. Then they run to the next kicking pad and do 10 down (ax) kicks with each leg. Then they run back and tack the next team mate and then he starts. We also play “Simon Says” using stances and blocks. Push-ups are used when they mess up.

We have all students line up in 1 line in sitting stance. The person at the end of the line crawls through each students legs and then rejoins line at the front. We save the largest kid for last (my 12 yr old son). When he goes throug he can’t get under the little 5 yr olds legs and the all end up in a pile laughing. This is a good sitting stance practice.

I need some more games. Anyone have any games maybe in a circle?”

**David Lieder**

“We had a game similar to David’s, but in a horse stance, and the last person in line army craws under the legs, not to touch the sides, and to not use their feet. They must use all upper arm strength to do this. It does work on the muscles for a horse stance.

We also would play stance drills in the dark, all lined up side by side, and then shut off the lights. We then would move, on instructor’s count, moving forward in that stance, and see who could end up straighter. If you ended leaning in one direction, in the end, that meant your other side was just a little weaker, but could be worked on.

We also sometimes did stump the student, which wasn’t a game outside karate teachings, but worked as a game as well. Students sit down, instructor call on a kid, and says, do such and such, form or self defense set, and they do it. If the student doesn’t know it, they sit in a hot seat, waiting to do it again. In the mean time, the kid that went first, calls on someone, and chooses something for them to do. Of course, the requirement had to be something on their belt level or below. The game goes till everyone can get it done, best to do it first. Sometimes, if a student is laughing at the stumped student, they are chosen to do something, to see if they really know their stuff even more.

Sometimes too, not as games, but for fun, we’d allow kids to tumble on the mats, such as simple techniques, such as cartwheels, tuck rolls, shoulder rolls, and similar ones. Kids also loved having the long jump competition, and the high jump competition as well.”

## Vicki

“Once you get new students in the door, how do you keep them there?”

“Being honest with them and sincere. I try to make them feel important to the class, not just another person in line. I try to give them individual attention. Learn their name quickly and the names of their family and friends that come with them. Show them that you are consistent with your beliefs. Never try to appear “better” or “smarter” than anyone just because you are the instructor. Let them see that you are “real”, not someone who thinks they are something because of the color of cloth they wear around their waist. ”

# **GMAF NEWSLETTER**

## **SEPTEMBER 2000**

Welcome to the GMAF Newsletter! We pray it will encourage you in your Martial Arts and Outreach for Christ.

### **Thoughts from the Master**

*“These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.”*

Jesus Christ

*“Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.”*

The Apostle Paul

## Wisdom Notes

*“The righteous is delivered out of trouble, and the wicked cometh in his stead.”* Proverbs 11:8

### In Times of Trouble by Sensei Mark McGee

The Bible makes it abundantly clear that God’s children will experience times of trouble. One of the picture ideas of the Hebrew words for “tribulation and trouble” is of a person being in a narrow place and pressed hard on all sides. Have you felt that in your life? I’m sure you have because God said that everyone would experience tribulation and trouble in their lives. Some Hebrew words for “trouble” carry the idea of being seized suddenly with fear, to tremble and be terrified, to shake by a sudden impulse, to be confused, to be agitated, burdened and distressed, to be bent down, bowed, depressed with calamities, to be cut off. Every man and every woman has been troubled.

Jesus cared deeply for His disciples. He spent more time with them than anyone else on earth. Christ gave them insights into life that no one else knew until the disciples began sharing those insights after the Lord returned to Heaven. Shortly before Christ went to the Cross to die for the sins of humanity, He told His disciples that He had spoken to them that they would have peace in Him. Jesus went on to say, “In the world ye shall have tribulation.” (John 16:33) The Greek word for “tribulation” means a pressing, a pressure, anything which burdens the spirit. It means to suffer affliction, to be troubled because of sufferings due to the pressure of

circumstances or the antagonism of others. The Greek word is similar to the Hebrew word in its picture of someone in a narrow situation being pressed hard on all sides. Christ told His disciples they would have that kind of trouble in the world. That's a fact. Write it on a piece of paper and tape it to your refrigerator door: you will have trouble in this world.

What do we do about it? Complain? Fret? Freak out? Get angry? Quit? Leave this world? Those are some options, though poor choices for God's children. Christ told His disciples, "but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." That's what we do; we depend on Christ and His peace. "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace."

"But," you ask, "how do I experience Christ's peace when I'm pressed upon hard in all directions?" Good question. The answer is easy to say but hard to do: "Trust God."

What good is our Faith in Christ if we lose it when things get a little tough, or when things get a lot tough? We say we "believe" in Christ. What does that mean? It means we completely rely on Him, not ourselves. We don't trust anyone or anything other than Christ. We don't look to our families or our friends or our jobs or our recreation or anything else to give us peace. We look to God! He is our Peace. "But," you say, "my life is falling apart around me, how do I trust God in the middle of disaster?" That's exactly when we NEED to Trust in God; when we are bowed by pressure and affliction. When our strength runs out, we're ready to depend on God's Strength. When I am weak, He is Strong. No one is closer to you in times of trouble than Christ Jesus our Lord. Most of us have seen the picture of the

footprints in the sand and the question from a child of God about why they see only one set of footprints during some of the Christian's most troubled times. We remember with tears in our eyes the answer from our Heavenly Father that it was during those most difficult times that Christ picked us up in His Arms of Peace and carried us through tribulation.

*“Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort, Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so also our consolation also aboundeth by Christ. And whether we be afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation, which is effectual in the enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer: or whether we be comforted, it is for your consolation and salvation. And our hope of you is steadfast, knowing, that as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so shall ye be also of the consolation.” 2 Corinthians 1:3-7*

I believe God placed a special burden on my heart about this. I've felt deeply about it for some time now. That's always been God's way of telling me He has some children in trouble who need support and encouragement. If you are feeling pressed about on all sides, if you are distressed and troubled, hear God's Gentle Voice speaking to you right now. He will support you during you these times of trouble. He will carry you through to Victory. He will give you His Peace which passes all understanding. Our prayers and our love go with you.

## **What's The Matter LORD? "You Are Karl"**

### **Part Two by Pastor Karl Marx**

Wow! Have I told you that God is about to Bless me again? On Sept 22-23 I will be inducted into the Texas LIVING LEGENDS at the Houston Southwest Hotel. God has been faithful and true. I owe it ALL to HIM. To be in the same company of the greatest Martial Art people in the World is indeed a Honor. Such dignitaries as: Mr Texas Himself Grandmaster Allen Steen, Fred "whirlwind" Wren, Bill "Super foot" Wallace, The absolute Queen of point karate, Ms Linda Denley, Roy Kurban, George "Master of ceremonies" Minshew, Jim Harrison of the good old bare knuckles days, as well Grandmaster Jack Hwang, Dr Maung, Ray "Harley Biker man" Mcallum, Grandmaster Pat Burleson. This is just a few of the REAL LEGENDS, I'll very humbly be in their company.

6th Dan Director of this entire event is the incomparable GARY LEE, himself a NBL World Champion. After all my fretting, complaining, and other prideful unchristian like poor behavior, it took my being able to sacrifice all my so called titles, and my willingness to let go of my wants, and allow God to give me what HE WILLED concerning my needs, so to speak. I realized I didn't NEED any titles or atta boys I just Needed God. So all the poor me stuff, about how and why ( I ) wasn't recognized by my peers, was for nothing, besides they, who in reality were not even in the same Class as these magnificent, TEXANICANS. ( a definition coined, I think, by Chill Wills Jr ). I am invited to join them at this most prestigious event and National Tournament. And I can assure you, I



definitely feel out of my league. God must be teaching me to not depend on pleasing man, and seeking man's esteem. But to totally rely on God and HE will esteem us in the eyes of man through Jesus Christ.

That is a Biblical statement found in Scriptures. So after reading my first part last month, does any one see any difference in my attitude? I would like to get some feed back from all of you out there. Don't be fearful of hurting my feelings, you won't. I just love the truth. Your council is welcomed. Tell me like it is! And if this is a little confusing please forgive me, my mind is not where it usually should be. I had some kind of allergic reaction last night and had to be taken to the emergency hospital. That's twice in a month, ain't insurance great. I think it was just the Lord giving me a test run. Ha! I can just hear Him saying to me, relax Karl it isn't your time yet, this was just a test drill, like in the military. HA! God does have a since of humor.

Be Blessed those of you who take the time to read what I write. I hope I haven't offended anyone, however if what I say is from God ( I HOPE ) and is the TRUTH, then I don't apologize for God's Word, I just say "GET A LIFE" Sucker! What you see is what you get! HA! just kidding, saint's. The Lord Bless you all.

Just me and Jesus, getting along. In Christ I am, HIS servant. Old Soke  
Karl W. Marx Sr

## **Greetings Fellow Warriors by Shidoshi Russell**

Recently, I have been asked by several people why I participate in the Martial Arts. Is it a hobby? Is it for the physical exercise? Is it to build self-confidence? Questions such as these cause me to reexamine my true motivation and ask myself; Why do I spend so much time in practice, training, and teaching? Is it really worth all of trouble, disappointment, and time away from my family?

If training in the martial arts was indeed simply to better myself and my ability to protect myself I would have to say that it is NOT worth all the blood, sweat, and tears. Why should I place such demands upon myself and commit to countless hours away from the comforts of my home and family?

Then I think wait a minute... I am part of an outreach ministry. My time spent in training in the martial arts is not about me... it's about reaching others for Christ! The Christian Martial Arts Fellowship's primary goal is multi-fold: To evangelize and bring lost souls into the Kingdom of God; To build and develop disciples for Christ; And to train and equip those disciples to bring others to Christ and repeat the cycle. Our secondary goal is to produce world-class, professionally trained martial artists.

While Christ preached to the multitudes and thousands followed His earthly ministry, our Lord literally poured Himself into lives of the twelve disciples. I relish the "insiders view" we enjoy while reading the words Jesus spoke only to His chosen few.

In today's fast-moving culture, the responsibilities of life can at times seem overwhelming. In my 30 years as a Christian I have witnessed countless warriors who, though once on fire for Christ, suffered burnout and have abandoned the battle. Burnout is many times due to a lack of depth in one's Christian walk. Improper discipleship will no doubt produce a shallow- rooted believer. As we serve God and work diligently to bring others to Christ, we must acknowledge the fact that our commission from Jesus does not end with soul winning.

Years ago while I was attending Indiana Bible College several of us "preacher boys" would have monthly soul winning contests. While winning souls is an admirable goal for anyone, we foolishly placed complete focus on people "praying the sinners prayer". We carelessly abandoned the newly reborn soul, forcing them to fend for themselves against Satan who we know to always be lurking and waiting to attack. My heart sinks when I think about how many young Christians never grew and blossomed as a dedicated believer as a result of my lack of discipleship efforts.

Sometimes in our zeal to "save the world for Christ" we develop improper attitudes mingled with unattainable goals and expectations. When we demand too much of ourselves and others we tend to produce very little spiritual fruit. If one believes that he has the sole responsibility of reaching the world or perhaps just his own city, town, neighborhood, or block he may tend to accomplish very little since such demands made on any single person are rarely productive.

Paul's exhortation in 2 Timothy 2:2 is a very simple formula for reaching others. Rather than trying to reach every person, Paul teaches that we should focus on reaching a few and developing them in the processes, principles, and practices of our faith. A person adequately developed in his faith will inevitably touch the lives of others... drawing them to Christ. Those he reaches will extend what they received to others over whom they have influence, et cetera.

I am convinced that the reason for our lack of witnessing to, and the discipling of, others is primarily due to the insecurities we feel in our own person, walk, and faith. Every believer undeniably has areas of his life concerning which he feels conviction, dissatisfaction, or a sense of failure. Such issues often cause the believer to falter in his walk, to be opaque in his testimony, and to draw back when confronted with the opportunity of witnessing. Discipling others requires transparency in one's walk. Failure to be transparent can result in a superficial, artificial, and non effectual witness.

Transparency requires one to openly be what he is. Obviously, none of us relishes the idea of openly exposing the inner dysfunctions of life. This, however, is a vital part of the discipling of others. To be a discipler predisposes that we not only recognize our frailties, but that we be determined to address them. Therefore, an essential part of discipling is that we recognize our failures, be willing to be transparent about them, and to not only show our disciples that we are willing to address them but the process by which we go about it.

Such a process is the only logical way that the Apostle Paul could openly invite others to emulate his life as found in Philippians 4:9. This is the only convincing way to demonstrate our spiritual determination to those we are attempting to disciple.

If we carefully read 2 Timothy 2:2 our job is much larger than to simply make DISCIPLES of new believers... we are to make DISCIPLERS of them. Those whom we influence with the gospel are to be so convinced, converted, and committed that they will see every contact as a potential mission field. They will then begin their own process of so developing the spirituality of those persons that those persons in turn will do the same for others. This is the discipleship process as commanded by Jesus and defined by Paul.

The martial arts while appealing to most, doesn't interest everyone. Martial arts does however attract an interesting kind of person that by other means may have never darkened the door of a church.

You are part of an exciting, cutting-edge ministry. Bottom line... the CMAF exists to glorify God, bring souls into His Kingdom, to produce not only disciples for Christ but disciple-makers! (now don't you feel better about having to execute those 500 front snap kicks?!)"

**Shidoshi Russell**

Here is a new article from our friends at Faith Fighters for Christ Christian Martial Arts Ministry! We thank the Engelhardts for sharing this with us.

### **Martial Arts Ministry As Small Group Ministry by Charlaine & Don Engelhardt**

Hanging out your sign with a Christian emblem or name does not a martial arts ministry make. Martial arts ministry happens when Christ is at the center of all that happens within the group of people in your school. One manner of doing this is using the small group concepts that are utilized within churches to help cement relationships of the group members with the Lord and with each other.

#### **What is a small group?**

Small group ministry, also called cell groups, is an extended ministry of your church. There are several types you may be able to think of, such as recovery groups, prayer groups, home Bible study groups, discipleship groups, etc. These are considered a direct ministry of your church because they either happen within your building or are located off-site, but have the same accountability within your church's administrative structure. Indirect ministries of your church are the ministry of individuals from the church, but are not official ministries of the church. Such things as a prayer and Bible study time during lunch at work, Moms in Touch, and other small groups lead by individuals and/or couples by the leading of the Holy Spirit are indirect small groups.

There are different ministry goals of small groups. Recovery groups are specialized to meet very specific needs of the group members. They also remain confidential in their discussions, which means that “what is said there stays there” for the protection of the members. No one new is allowed to come in after two or three weeks. There are also less specific groups where the focus is Bible study and prayer, as well as a good time talking with each other. They are not usually confidential unless someone specifically asks for something to not be shared outside. More general groups do not officially close, allowing new people in either anytime or at intervals. Human nature has a tendency to close a group because of the comfort level, but will begin regrouping and gaining a different identity over time. Small group dynamics are based around building strong bonds within the membership.

There are elements that are specific to small groups making them relationship-building ministries. The aspects of small groups that are present at every meeting are: Prayer, Bible Study, fellowship, service, leadership- mentorship, multiplication, and guidelines for effective operation. Those things that build relationships with God are: prayer, Bible study, fellowship, and leadership-mentorship. The ones that build human relationships are: Bible study, fellowship, service, leadership-mentorship, multiplication, and guidelines for effective operation. The focus of the group determines how much of each of these is utilized. For example, with a prayer and Bible study group, prayer and Bible study get the majority of time and attention, even though all the other elements are present. Recovery groups are primarily focused on service and Bible study, but again the other elements are still present. They just do not get

equal time and attention. One of the most important factors in all of this is that everyone who has the need for the focus of the group is welcome. The only thing that could cause them to be put out of the group is breach of trust. All of the aspects of small groups must be in use or the group will fail.

Martial arts is a natural setting in which to place the small group ministry aspects. Since traditional martial arts, operated like that of the Asian countries, is primarily based on Zen and Taosim, most of the small group aspects are all ready there, but with Eastern religion. There is order and structure with rules for belonging to the group. There is a defined leadership set-up.

Martial arts ministry is more than teaching techniques. Unfortunately, balance is not always kept in martial arts ministry. It does not matter whether your school is in a church, a commercial school, or study/fellowship group after karate class in a secular school, keeping balance with the techniques as well as the ministry aspect is of primary importance. Remember, most of us practice arts that were originally intertwined with Zen, Taoism, and/or Shintoism. There was balance for them because their belief system was a part of all they did in life. Unfortunately, American Christians compartmentalize different aspects of their lives. This sort of lifestyle makes balance difficult. Our entire workout time in class should be a form of worship to God. There should be an aspect of thanksgiving and praise to God internally as we punch, kick, block, etc. When we invite God into our classes, being an integral part, then can we begin to balance ministry with our training. Our first



focus is on God, then on others, and finally self. This order must be kept for effective ministry.

## **Types of Martial Arts Ministry**

There are several types of martial arts ministry: church-based, commercial school, outreach/support in a secular school, associations, and tournament circuits. This article is focused on the first three types because this is in our realm of understanding and small group ministry needs consistent, regular meeting times. If you have figured out how to use small group ministry through associations and tournament circuits, let us know. Each group will be different because it will reflect the personality differences and spiritual gifts of the leadership.

The church-based or youth center-styled martial arts ministry is actually the easiest to set up in small group format. The primary group of people who will have an interest in Christian martial arts in a church are Christians. The main ministry focus becomes discipleship, even though evangelism will be greatly emphasized. Many of the church-based groups are either family-oriented (ours runs ages 10-adult) or youth-oriented (a friend has his aimed at ages 12-18). There is structure set with the protocol and heirarchical structure that is found in martial arts classes, but some things may be different like a salute rather than bowing, using Mr. or Mrs. instead of Sensei or Sifu , and bowing to the room or pictures may be deleted. Usually there are devotions or Bible study as a break from intense physical activity. Fellowship time occurs before and after class as students gather and part. Outreach happens

when new students come in, but mostly through demonstrations and seminars. One problem in the general martial arts world is that these types of groups are seen as having substandard skills and believe there are too many inadequate black belts coming from these settings. Reality is the majority of ministry instructors are very conscientious about the art they pass on to their students. We have found that it is very difficult to get Christian students to be bold, developing a reasonable amount of aggression because of fallacies passed down through well-meaning Christians. This is quite a challenge for this type of instructor to work with. (In our opinion, secular martial arts classes are a problem in the church. They should not be allowed to use the church space. These tend to add confusion in the church's teachings.) There should only be Christian-based teaching in the church, which the small groups ministry format can aid.

Many instructors use the commercial school to reach people for Christ while they pass on the benefits of their systems of martial arts. This is the environment in which they have come to know and love karate, judo, jujitsu, kempo, and others. But this is more difficult setting to bring in small group ministry aspects. However, it is not impossible. Some schools have Scripture verses to memorize, others use creeds to remind the class whom they serve. Some pray as a group. Yet others offer Bible study and fellowship time after or between classes. Some instructors have parties, fellowship times in the evenings after classes, or special gatherings. During the instruction time, the students learn how Christians should respond in confrontations, whether or not to use lethal force, or the wonders of God's creation of the human body. There are

always rules and guidelines to be followed with the consequences for those who choose not to cooperate. These things are all aspects of small group ministry in a commercial martial arts setting.

Christians in secular schools do minister to other students in their classes. They usually are able to reach out because of instructors who are willing to accept that these students have problems observing some protocols and teachings. Their witness is a relationship-based evangelism. Some obtain permission from instructors to hold Bible study and prayer after class. These become a small group since they meet the needs of other Christians in the class for fellowship and prayer support. They reach out to non-Christians by acceptance in the group, giving them an opportunity to learn about the Lord. Small group ministry for martial artists in secular schools, although we do not have experience with it, many others have told us is a growing trend in ministry.

### **How Do I Begin?**

The first place to begin is with your own life. It is impossible to minister effectively if your own spiritual life is anorexic. Martial artists who come to Christ after they have been in training tend to have more trouble integrating Christian teaching into their art. People like ourselves who come into martial arts after having been Christians for a while have less trouble because the secular teachings are scrutinized through Scripture and the leading of the Holy Spirit. Some things will come through from their secular training, but these martial artists are also more open to constructive criticism. Be sure to participate in Sunday school and

worship in a vibrant church. Some churches offer lay leader training that may be beneficial to you. Prayer and devotional time is your intimate time to converse with the Lord. It becomes a two-way communication that flows, permeating your entire life. It is also very important to have the majority of your close friends, especially for martial arts that some are Christian martial artists. You can share common cares and concerns as well as help each other with problems. If you do not have this type of relationship available, Christian associations can help fill that area for you. A healthy Christian lifestyle will be reflected in your ministry.

The next natural step would be housecleaning your system. Most martial artists teach as they have been taught. This is true in ministry as well. For example, our instructor had transliterated the Bushido concept as the way of the Christian warrior. A wise Christian brother in our church who had been in Japan during WWII came to us concerned about this term on a newsletter we put out. When he explained the Bushido mindset he encountered first-hand in Japan, we realized that we needed to examine what we had been taught more closely. Our instructor had been teaching us from a Christian perspective, but he trained in a traditional secular school before he was a Christian. This was some baggage he passed onto us, which we needed to examine. You can get help with housecleaning from our article "A Little Bit of Sin is Never In". Also, talk with others who have been ministering for quite a while. They can help you, too.

The last step of the process is to build a Small Group Framework. Write out your class format step by step. List the elements of small groups and prayerfully examine the two in order to determine how this will work for your ministry. For secular school students, simply check for interest level and find an appropriate Bible study area and curriculum. Get permission from your instructor to hold such a group after class. If he will not agree to this, you may want to start a small home group for classmates. Then just begin. Your pastor or a Sunday school teacher may be able to help you with either of these types of groups. Get the resources you need, whether it be Scripture memory cards, web articles, or study guides. Gather ideas from others as you go and share your successes with others in martial arts ministry. The Lord will bless the heartfelt, Spirit-led ministry you do.

Resources: Turbo Small Group Leadership Training Manual, Getting Together by Em Griffin, and Small Groups class at Winebrenner Theological Seminary in Findlay, Ohio. There are several fine books in small group ministry at your local Christian bookstore.

Special thanks to Royal Reynolds, President of Koininia Fellowship of Martial Artists; Fred Murphy, President of Black Belts of the Faith; Lou Blizzard, head instructor of Lion Fist Kempo; Jeff and Diane Goodwin, head instructors of Family Martial Arts and Fitness; Rick and Pam McDowell, head instructors of Defiance Christian Martial Arts; Dr. Daryl Covington, founder of Wha Moo Do and Hall of Fame inductee in the United States Martial Arts Association; Herschel Schenk, Head instructor of Awase Kenpo Kai; and David Clinard, President of Fellowship of

Christian Martial Artists. We also thank the many brothers and sisters in Christ who e-mail us, sharing with us how the Lord is using them in martial arts ministry. May the Lord bless you abundantly!

## **Class Games**

Here are some more martial arts games for children students from Sa Bom Nim Connie Gulick.

Here are some circle game ideas:

For younger children (or even a mix), we circle up with a little space between each other (about a foot), kneel down with our faces on the floor, then one person from the circle gets up and bunny hops (two feet at once) over each person. Ideally, the better students will be managing one hop between each person without pause, but the beginner students sometimes have to manage other ways. If the student is particularly small, she may hop over with one foot at a time, or put her hand on the person's back, or even go around. I don't know why, but the kids love it.

Another one we call "Circle of Doom." One person is "it" and in the center. The people around number off in order. I call out numbers at random and the person with that number can do a pre-arranged attack to the person in the center (for example, we can say all attacks must be a round kick). If "it" has trouble knowing where the attack is coming from, we have the attacker yell BEFORE moving. You may also add a punch to the block.

A third idea is “Pass it on.” I start with a kick (for example) to the person to my right who must block it then turn and do the same kick to the person to his right, so the kick gets passed on. As we do better and pick up speed, I vary it by reversing directions, changing techniques, etc. The ultimate variation is to — once passing a kick to the right — start a different technique to the left. Talk about challenge!

Connie

# **GMAF NEWSLETTER**

## **OCTOBER 2000**

Welcome to the GMAF Newsletter! We pray it will encourage you in your Martial Arts and Outreach for Christ.

### **Thoughts from the Master**

*"My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work."*

Jesus Christ

*"For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God."*

The Apostle Paul

### **Wisdom Notes**

*"In all labour there is profit."* Proverbs 14:23



## **Unto Good Works by Sensei Mark McGee**

Why are we on Earth? Why aren't we with Christ our Lord and Savior? What reason do we have for continuing life on this planet after we've tasted the Love and Grace of Almighty God and been given the desire for a Heavenly home?

God made it clear through Paul's letter to the Ephesians: "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not by works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." God wants us to "W-O-R-K." What does that mean?

It means serving God while on Earth. It means spending our time, talent, energy and money to do what God wants done. What is it that He wants? Jesus said it well: "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work." Christ is the Greatest Example of a Person committed to doing God's Work. It was Christ Who told His followers to do as He did. God wants us to do His Will and finish His work. We are saved with a view toward doing good works.

God wants people saved. He wants them to grow in spiritual knowledge and wisdom. He wants them to obey His Word. He wants people to love Him above all others. God inspired thousands of words so we'd know His Will and what He wanted us to do. It's not a mystery. It's not something we have to think about for years until something finally becomes clear to us.

God wants us to be busy doing His work. Study God's Word, find out what God's work is, then do it.

The Apostle Paul wrote many words about Christians busy doing God's work. Paul was another excellent model for us of a Christian who was committed to doing the work of the Lord.

Paul spoke highly of the work of God and Christians who did the work. "Greet Mary, who bestowed much labour on us." (Rom. 16:6) "Salute Urbane, our helper in Christ." (Rom. 16:9) "Salute Tryphena and Tryphosa, who labour in the Lord." (Rom. 16:12) "Timotheus my workfellow, and Lucius, and Jason, and Sosipater, my kinsmen, salute you." (Rom. 16:21) "For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building." (1 Cor. 3:9) "Now if Timotheus come, see that he may be with you without fear: for he worketh the work of the Lord, as I also do." (1 Cor. 16:10) "I beseech you, brethren, (ye know the house of Stephanas, that it is the firstfruits of Achaia, and that they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints,) That ye submit yourselves unto such, and to every one that helpeth with us, and laboureth." (1 Cor. 16:1-16 ... what an interesting concept of being "addicted" to serving others!) "Whether any do enquire of Titus, he is my partner and fellowhelper concerning you." (2 Cor. 8:23) "Yet I supposed it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother, and companion in labour, and fellowsoldier, but your messenger, and he that ministered to my wants." (Phil. 2:25) "And I intreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those women which laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellowlabourers, whose names are in the book of life." (Phil. 4:3)"And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which

labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake." (1 Thess. 5:12-13)  
"Paul, a prisoner of Jesus Christ, and Timothy our brother, unto Philemon our dearly beloved, and fellowlabourer." (Philemon 1:1)

Paul encouraged all believers to be involved fully in the work. "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." (1 Cor. 15:58) "For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ...From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love." (Eph. 4:12,16) "For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God." (Col. 1:10) "And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ." (Col. 3:23-24) "If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work." (2 Tim. 2:21) "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." (2 Tim. 3:16-17)

Paul wrote that every Christian's work will be tested. "Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire." (1 Cor. 3:13-15)

I cannot find anywhere in Scripture where God commends laziness or lack of direction on the part of His people. From the beginning of time, God has always had specific and important work for believers. He made it clear to each one, equipped them for the work and expected them to do it. Our time is no different. True, we are under Grace and not under Law. However, that changes nothing in God's desire for His children to be busy doing good works. We don't "have" to do it as far as Law is concerned, but God's Grace works in our hearts to make us "want" to do His work. It is not a difficult thing. It is a work of Joy! We are not saved by works, but we are saved with a view toward good works. We have Christ, Paul and thousands of saints before us as examples of what God wants His children to do. It's called "G- O-O-D W-O-R-K-S" and "S-E-R-V-I-C-E." Work is not a bad four-letter word. It is a great OPPORTUNITY to be part of the Amazing Grace of God in our communities and countries. The work of God leads to the salvation of souls, the saving of marriages, the strengthening of young lives, the morality of leaders, the direction of nations.

Paul felt the Grace of God so deeply that he sometimes referred to his ministry as a "debt" he owed. May we feel the Love and Grace of God that deeply.

*“I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians, both to the wise, and to the unwise. So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also. For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, the just shall live by faith.”*

## **The Battle**

We receive many e-mails from Christian martial artists battling with whether to continue or return to martial arts training. Here is a recent question and answer that you may find helpful as you minister.

“Brethren,

I’ve attained to the rank of brown belt in Chinese Kenpo (Villari style) but haven’t seriously trained for over a year and a half because of the battle of: is it of God? It’s of the devil, Is it of God? It’s of the devil, it’s rooted in the occult, take the occult out of it and still do it, Will God approve? Hmm. This mind game never ends. I just need to settle it and move on. I’d like to reach 1st Dan anyways, but...”

Many of us have had similar struggles. The physical and mental aspects of martial arts are positive because they are in agreement with the way God built us. The challenge is the spiritual aspects of martial arts. Christians cannot participate in the non-Christian spiritual beliefs. We just can’t. It’s against what we believe. I don’t participate in what’s against God’s Word.

We can understand that Taoists and Buddhists practiced and taught some of the martial arts we study, but also understand that we don't have to be Taoists or Buddhists to practice and teach the arts for health and martial results.

God made the body to move. He gave the body and mind the ability to heal itself of much of the damage from living. The Bible has many insights into the body's self-healing properties. God also taught His people through the centuries how to wage war and protect themselves and their property when necessary. Moving the body for health and self defense is not anti-Bible. What's anti-Bible is believing something that is anti-Bible. What is anti-Bible is anti-God. What is anti-God is not from God. We won't believe or practice anything that is anti-God.

Is the art of Kenpo from God? Did God invent Jujutsu? Did He create T'ai Chi Ch'uan? We know He didn't. We know the names of the men and women who created and innovated various martial arts styles. Did God create a particular swimming stroke or high dive form? No, but what's wrong with learning how to swim or dive? Nothing, unless we believe that a particular swimming or diving system forgives us our sins or makes us like gods. I don't believe that martial arts practice can forgive my sins or make me into a god. I believe it's good for health and self defense. I believe God forgives me and will make me like Christ in Heaven.

The fighting arts are much older than Karate and Kung Fu. Even T'ai Chi, as old as it is, is fairly young when compared with the fighting arts of the Lamech clan or the family of Nimrod, "who grew to be a mighty warrior

on the earth,” or the Canannites, the Ludites, the Anamites, the Lehabites, the Casluhites, the Hittites, the Jebusites, the Amorites, the Hivites, the Arkites, the Sinitets, the Girgasihtes and the Israelites.

Fighting has been around a long, long, long, long time. The defending of life, family and property goes back thousands of years. Many of these families, clans and nations tied their fighting with their religious beliefs, but that doesn't making the defensive martial arts wrong or unworthy to practice and teach. One of my Christian martial arts instructors said it well: “A punch in the nose is a punch in the nose. Your religion has nothing to do with whether you can block a punch or not. It's a mental and physical skill.”

I hope this helps. My prayers are with you.

## **100 Things That Are Free To Us By Christ**

submitted by Edward Yarber

1. ACCEPTED ————— EPH. 1:6
2. ALIVE WITH CHRIST ————— COL. 2:13
3. ASCENDED ————— EPH. 2:6
4. ADOPTED ————— GAL 4:5
5. AMBASSADORS ————— 2 COR. 5:20
6. ACCESS ————— ROMANS 5:2 & EPH 2:18
7. ALL THINGS ————— I TIM. 6:17
8. ANOINTED US ————— 2 COR. 1:21
9. APPREHENDED ————— PHIL. 3:12

10. APPOINTED ————— I THESS. 3:3
11. ATONEMENT ————— Rom 5:11
12. AUTHORITY ————— TITUS 2:15
13. ASSURANCE ————— I THESS. 1:5
14. ABUNDANCE OF GRACE ——— ROMANS 5:17
15. BAPTIZED ————— I COR. 12:13
16. BLESSED ————— EPH. 1:3
17. BURIED ————— COL. 2:1
18. BELOVED ————— ROMANS 1:7
19. BUILDED TOGETHER ——— EPH. 2:22
20. CALLED ————— ROMANS 8:30
21. CHOSEN ————— EPH. 1:4
22. CIRCUMCISION ——— COL. 2:11
23. COMPLETE ————— COL. 2:10
24. CONFORMED ——— ROMANS 8:29
25. CRUCIFIED ————— GAL. 2:20
26. COVERED ————— ROMANS 4:7
27. CONFIRMED ————— I COR. 1:7,8
28. CLEANSED ————— EPH. 5:26
29. CREATED ————— EPH. 2:10
30. CONQUERORS ——— ROMANS 8:37
31. CROWNED ————— 2 TIM. 4:8
32. DAUGHTERS ——— 2 COR. 6:8
33. DECLARED ——— 2 COR. 3:3
34. DELIVERED ——— 2 COR. 1: 10
35. ELECT OF GOD ——— COL. 3:12
36. ENRICHED ————— I COR. 1: 5



37. ESTEEMED ——— PHIL. 2:5
38. ETERNAL ——— TITUS 1:2 -15
39. FAMILY——— EPH. 3.
40. FELLOWHEIRS ———EPH. 3:6
41. FELLOWCITIZENS ———EPH. 2:19
42. FELLOWLABOURERS ——— PHIL. 4-13
43. FELLOWSERVANT ——— COL. 4:7
44. FELLOWSOLDIERS ——— PHIL. 2:25
45. FORGIVEN ——— COL. 2:13
46. FREEMAN ——— I COR. 7:22
47. FURNISHED ——— 2 TIM. 3:17
48. GLORIFIED ——— ROMANS 8:30
49. HABITATION ——— EPH. 2:22
50. HEIRS ——— ROMANS 8:17
51. HOLY——— Col. 3:12
52. HUSBANDRY———1 Cor 3:9
53. INDWELL ——— Romans 8:1
54. INHERITANCE——— Eph 1:11
55. INSTRUCTED——— Phil.4:12
56. INTERCESSION——— Romans 8:26,34
57. FITLY JOINED TOGETHER——— EPH 4:16
58. JUSTIFIED——— ROMANS 3:24
59. KNOWN OF GOD——— GAL 4:9
60. LOVED——— EPH 2:4
61. MADE MEET——— COL 1:12
62. MEMBERS——— EPH 4:25-5:30
63. MESSENGERS ——— 2 COR 8:23

64. MIGHTY——— 2 COR10: 4/COL 1:29
65. MINISTERS——— 2 COR 3: 16, 6:4
66. NEW CREATURES——— 2 COR 5:17
67. PARTAKERS——— EPH 3:16/1 TIM 6:2
68. PEACE——— ROMANS 5:1
69. PLANTED TOGETHER——— ROMANS 6:5/EPH 3:20
70. POWER WORKING IN US——— EPH. 1:19
71. PREDESTINATED——— EPH. 1:5,11
72. PREPARED UNTO GLORY——— ROMANS 9:23
73. PRESERVED——— 2 TIM, 4:18
74. PURCHASED POSSESSION——— EPH. 1:14
75. QUICKENED——— EPH. 2:5
76. RAISED——— EPH. 2:6
77. RECONCILED ——— ROMANS 5:10
78. REDEEMED ——— GAL. 3:13
79. REGENERATION——— TITUS 3:5
80. RENEWED——— 2 COR. 4:16
81. RESURRECTED ——— ROMANS 6:5
82. RICH——— 2 COR. 6:10,8:9
83. RIGHEOUS ——— ROMANS 5:19
84. RISEN——— COL. 2:12,3:1
85. ROOTED——— EPH. 3:17/COL.2:7
86. SAINT——— ROMANS 1:7/1 COR.1:2
87. SANCTIFIED——— I COR. 6:11
88. SAVED——— EPH. 2:8-10/11 TIM. 1:9
89. SEALED——— I COR, 1:22/EPH, 1:13
90. SEATED——— EPH. 2:6

91. SOLDIERS ———- 2 TIM. 2:3,4
92. SONS——— ROMANS 8:14
93. STEWARDS——— COR. 4:1
94. TRANSLATED ———- COL. 1:13
95. TRIUMPH ———- 2 COR 2:14
96. VICTORIOUS——— I COR. 15:57
97. VOCATION ——— EPH. 4:1
98. WASHED——— I COR. 6:11
99. HAVE WISDOM ——— I COR. 1:30
100. HIS WORKMANSHIP ——— EPH. 2:10

How Many More Can You Fine?

# **GMAF NEWSLETTER**

## **DECEMBER 2000**

Welcome to the GMAF Newsletter! We pray it will encourage you in your Martial Arts and Outreach for Christ.

### **Thoughts from the Master**

*"They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick."*

Jesus Christ

*"Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others."*

The Apostle Paul

### **Wisdom Notes**

*"Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding." Proverbs*

## **“No Surprise” by Sensei Mark McGee**

Sin to the left of us — Sin to the right of us — Sin in front and behind — Sin above and below. Everywhere we look we see sin and sinners. We hear the shocking sounds of cursing mouths and lying tongues. Robbers and thieves wait around every corner for their next victim. Men beat their wives. Women murder their husbands. Children have sex with other children . Men and women live together without being married. Legal abortions kill thousands of babies. Divorce is on the rise. Government leaders lie, cheat and steal to increase their power. What’s gone wrong?

The events swirling around us every day should come as “no surprise” to students of the Bible. Satan’s power is growing. The Apostle Paul wrote the Ephesians more than 1,900 years ago that every person was born dead in trespasses and sins. All of us once lived our lives under the dominance of Satan. We made decisions based on the lusts of our flesh. We fulfilled the desires of our flesh and mind. What kept us from becoming just like everyone else around us was the Amazing Love and Grace of God. “But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved).” Even people who received Christ as young children had the terrible sin nature that could have led them into the depths of wickedness if they had become teens and adults without Christ. God’s Grace was just as amazing with a sinful little child as with the worst sinful adult you can imagine. “There but for the Grace of God go I” is a saying worth considering when we wonder how things in our community could have become so bad. Sinners have only one direction to go: “the course of

this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience.”

God does not want His children to participate in the sinful ways of this wicked world. In fact, God wants us to reprove them. “Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. Be not ye partakers with them. For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light: (For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;) Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord. And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret.” (Ephesians 5:6-12) God does not leave us wondering what the unfruitful works of darkness are. His Word gives us a long list. Here are several examples from Ephesians and Galatians:

- “putting away lying”
- “Be ye angry, and sin not”
- “Neither give place to the devil”
- “Let him that stole steal no more”
- “Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth” “grieve not the holy Spirit of God”
- “Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice”
- “Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred,

variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings.”

These are things we should reprove rather than do. That’s a good thing, but something we shouldn’t do is to believe that being fortunate enough to have received God’s Grace makes us better than those who haven’t. That’s a bad thing. The Love of God will grip our hearts and minds and constrain us to share His Love with those who are dead in sin. Sin is not pretty. It’s not easy to be around when you’ve spent years having little or no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness. A danger of being a “saint” is believing we are better than people who aren’t. That thinking can lead Christians to remove themselves from being around sinners. We learn what God thinks about that from the way He prayed for His disciples centuries ago: “I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.”

Christ wanted His disciples protected from evil as they went about ministering in the world. A key here is “As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. ” Christ wanted His followers to do just as He did. Christ spent more time with sinners than He did the religious and self-righteous. Christ ate with sinners, walked with sinners, talked with sinners, touched sinners, prayed for sinners, wept for sinners. Jesus Christ loves sinners. Sinners were why He came into the world. He came to change their lives through the Amazing Power of His Life. He sent His disciples into the world with that same purpose.

*“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God.” 2 Corinthians 5:17-20*

Every Christian has a ministry. It is reconciliation. We are ambassadors for Christ. We speak for Him on Earth. We are His representatives to all the people of this planet.

One thing we need to understand as ambassadors for Christ and ministers of reconciliation is what sin does to people as they continue in it year after year. We should not be surprised that sinners sin. We should not be repelled by it. We should go forward and serve God by telling sinners how they can be saved. Tell sinners how God saved you. That’s what Paul did. He told his story everywhere. He made sure everyone knew that he was the chief of sinners and had experienced the Amazing Love and Grace of Almighty God through His Son, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Paul pulled no punches. He did not pretend to be better than anyone. He was not surprised by the actions of sinful people. He understood. He knew what sin had done to him and what it did to others. Paul told the Ephesians to imitate God as children imitated their parents. “And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice



to God for a sweetsmelling savour.” Christ sacrificed Himself for sinners. Paul told Christians they should imitate that sacrifice. Paul went on to write that sin should not be part of a Christian’s life and that we should reprove the unfruitful works of darkness, but he always reminded saints of God to love sinners and to spend their lives in the ministry of seeing lost souls reconciled to God.

Let’s surprise some sinners in the coming year with our love and forgiveness. Let’s show the lost the Grace and saving power of God in the difficult days that are ahead of us. Satan’s power is growing. His hold on this planet is getting stronger. We may be living in the final days before Christ’s return. That possibility should push us forward with even more determination that we will serve God to the death if necessary. Satan is counting on Christians to grow weary, lose interest, give up. Let’s surprise Satan with our determination, our love, our desire to serve God and the lost. Great things are ahead for those who move with God. He is the Victor. “For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Romans 8:38-39)

## **New Beginnings by Pastor Don Engelhardt**

It is never easy to start a martial arts school. We have found ourselves starting from scratch more than we would like, but there are some benefits to starting over. If you visited our Service page, you probably noticed that we do not currently have classes in operation. In the relatively short time that we have been instructing, we are preparing to begin our third school.

We initially began a school in Findlay, Ohio while I was in seminary. We pattern our class after the class of our instructor. We used the same teaching style and very close to the same vocabulary. We discovered that the community was not the same as the community where we were trained and the teaching methods were not as effective with the people of the new community. We altered our teaching methods slightly and in the course of the first year, we had over fifty students, due to our situation, we needed to form a waiting list for the classes we were teaching at the time. During the three years in Findlay, we relocated the classes four times. We held classes in a church, the seminary, a storefront, and returned to the seminary. Our Findlay classes continued for a year after we moved an hour away. We constantly were evaluating our teaching styles and techniques every time we held a belt test. We determined what needed to be strengthened and would emphasize that during the period between tests, but found out rapidly that it is difficult to strengthen areas that were allowed to become weak.

By the time we closed the Findlay classes, we had begun a new set of classes at our church in Elmore, Ohio. We used the information we discovered from the experiences in Findlay when we started the class. Our teaching methods were changed and much of our focus also changed. The location of the class at the church was rural, but we were still able to develop in less than a year a class of twenty-five students. Again, we evaluated our teaching by the students' belt tests. There were still some weak areas, but we had seen a marked improvement.

God has called us to the Canton, Ohio area. This area has a strong presence of the PKC and there appears to be a high density of martial arts classes as well. There does not appear to be a need for another martial arts class in the community, but there appears to be a need for a martial arts ministry. So we are looking at a new start both in the church where God has led us and in martial arts ministry. With this situation of begin a new adventure in our lives, I have been thinking a considerable amount about "beginnings."

There are two books in Scripture that begin with "in the beginning." The first is Genesis that begins with the creation of the world. The second is in the Gospel according to John. Both of these books focus on beginnings. The book of Genesis tells of how humanity turned and started moving away from God and how the relationship between God and humanity deteriorated because of sin. It tells of how God slowed the ruin of humanity. In John, the creation of the world is also discussed. Here though the focus is not on the destruction of the relationship

between God and humanity, but instead the restoration of the relationship. This is a place where a true new beginning may be found.

This short segment of Scripture sets one of the foundational aspects of our faith. This concept, theologians have labeled the “Incarnation” or the combination of two natures. This is one of the primary passages that shows Jesus as both God and human. Looking at verse 14, we find that “The Word became flesh” and lived among us. This is a description what Jesus Christ did. He became flesh or in terms more common to us, He became human. Verse 17 confirms the Word being the person of Jesus Christ and not someone or some thing else.

Now, we can get a fuller picture of understanding by replacing “The Word” with “Jesus Christ” in this passage. It would then read something like this:

In the beginning was Jesus Christ, and Jesus Christ was with God, and Jesus Christ was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it.

Jesus is God and is life. Life begins with Jesus Christ for He is the source of life. Rejecting the source of life is to accept death in its stead.

You may meet up with people who have trouble accepting that Jesus Christ is both God and man, and say that He was either God in a human form or a man that was greatly endowed by God to do great wonders. Some say that Jesus is the Son of God, but that prevents Him in their mind from fully being God. Jesus has affected everyone who has met Him even those that rejected Him. “The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness did not understand it.”

It has always been interesting to me that the people who had the most knowledge about God rejected Jesus. Verse 11 tells us that He came to those who were His own, but they did not receive Him. These were the people who knew about Him and carried the responsibility to teach others about Him, but they missed Him and did not recognize Him.

We find in the 3rd chapter the phrase that is frequently quoted “you must be born again,” which confused Nicodemus. Jesus was speaking of a spiritual birth that would be the new beginning that we need as sinful people. The first beginning showed God’s justice and mercy through the law, but this new beginning is focused on grace and truth.

In the midst of this new start, we again renew our focus that it is necessary for individuals to have the new life that is found in Christ Jesus.

## **“Drawing Blood”**

We recently asked a question on the International *Network of Christian Martial Artist Forum* about Christians drawing blood during training or tournaments. Here are some of the answers we received.

“In our discussion of whether or not to draw blood, someone made a comment concerning getting hit. It was a very perceptive comment, and demonstrated the real-life nature of the author’s philosophy of martial arts. The comment went something like: If a student has never practiced full- contact, then they will probably lose a fight as soon as they get hit that first time.

This is a common point of discussion among those of us who are concerned with the street value of our techniques. How can we prepare ourselves for that first hit? Of course, full-contact sparring is just one way to get over the shock of initial contact in a fight. I’m curious whether or not anyone has any ideas about OTHER ways to prepare for this inevitable event. This might include “dragon breathing” “iron shirt” , etc... but I’d like to know how everyone deals with this in their own schools.

I’m afraid that too many schools teach the technique of “False sense of security.” This technique, of course, doesn’t usually work out very well on the street. It is also unnecessary since I’m sure there are many disciplines (aside from full-contact sparring) which can be utilized even among children to at least mentally condition and prepare them for being on the receiving end of a good sucker punch.

While I've come to realize that my school, for a variety of reasons (not the least of which being the age and maturity of my students), is often more physical than many others, I want to share a little truth I've found. In my school, and I know this will sound absolutely awful but bear with me, we actually make a jocular "celebration" of someone's "first blood." When someone gets hit really hard or knocked down hard, or gets a nose broken or something for the first time ever, we usually end class by getting a couple of cokes or ice cream or something and laughing it off. I've found that your students' devotion to the arts multiplies tenfold when they get over the double handicap of no contact. The two big problems I've found with students who have never actually been hit are:

1. They aren't scared ENOUGH of getting hit. They are unrealistic in their confidence. They believe that they will simply shrug off a solid punch to the face or something like it.
2. They are TOO SCARED of getting hit. They are not aggressive at all, and are handicapped by their own lack of ranging ability and lack of ability to close on an opponent.

I hope everyone will share their own ideas or observations concerning this age-old issue of "first contact."

This is the way I feel about Christians in the Martial Arts:

As a Christian, Christ lives inside your heart, your soul, and in everything you do. Because of this, you have the right to protect Christ. The reason why you have to protect yourself, is Christ is inside of you. Because He is inside of us, our main goal in life is to spread the word of salvation. In this world today, the world is not 100% safe. If we are faced with a threatening situation, we must defend ourselves, or we can no longer spread the word of salvation if we are dead. Therefore our main goal in life is destroyed.

I feel as if Full-Contact is too much just to train with. I don't like to hurt anyone, and I really do not enjoy getting hurt either. If I feel as if I want to hit full-contact, like that after a stressful day at work, I will get my punching bag, tie it to a tree, and use that to get out my frustration. This way, if I wanted to fight someone, it results in no person getting injured.

I do not like to draw blood, because I fear other people's blood with all the diseases out there. To many blood diseases out there can kill you if it mixes with pure blood. I know because my best friend has a blood disease, not AIDS, but is spread like AIDS and will kill you in many years ahead. A slow and painful death, sometimes, and other times a quick death. Some won't even know they are sick.

I used to spar in my old school with a head gear, arm/forum pads, shin pads, feet pads, and a mouth piece. My equipment was great for the light contact we used in our school. We used minimal contact and make



contact in proper places. No one got injured, unless they were goofing off, and walked into a punch, and their nose got the punch, or something like that.

I believe if you want to practice kicking, punching, or other techniques in full-contact, like that of the street, you can use heavy bags, punching bags, kicking bags, and even human dummies to practice your technique with, so that no one gets injured.

I feel as Christians we are all brothers and sisters in Christ, and I can not hurt family. ”

As we know the Martial Arts of almost any style can include some risks. I have been involved for over 28 years (no wonder they call me “Major Dad”). I do not purposely intend to draw blood, but it has happened, mine as well as theirs. In full-contact it can be brutal. I try my best to hit “target areas” for points to win the match, but do not try to cause someone to purposely bleed.

As a RN Nurse Practitioner always use universal precautions when around blood etc to protect against HIV, Hepatitis etc. ”

In my classes, our philosophy as Christian martial artists is one of civic responsibility. If you are going to study martial arts, it should be so that you can become a good fighter. This fighting ability should then be used to both defend yourself and those around you, not just friends and family, but all people around you. "Who is my neighbor?"

How does this fall out in sparring? My class, an old-fashioned Chinese style, tries to make sparring as real as possible. Full-strength strikes are not only encouraged but required. I have one student who is an adept boxer who has broken my nose and knocked me silly once. These are the risks. We say in class: "If you don't hurt when class is over, you weren't doing it right."

In sparring, we have only three rules: 1. No striking the knees from the front. 2. No striking the groin intentionally. 3. Both participants must agree on mutual rules before they begin.

We have no point areas. We have no illegal moves. We try to simulate true-to-life fighting as closely as possible in class. We compensate for the combative nature of our "sparring" by wearing significant pads. We wear chest protectors, shin protectors \*cloth\*, head gear, mouthpieces, cups, instep guards, forearm \*optional\* pads, open-finger gloves \*for grappling\*.

My beginning students begin with point-sparring (we call it “tag” in a less- than-affectionate manner), so that they can learn the valuable skills of ranging and control. Only approved students can go to full-combat sparring.

I recommend at least trying this style of fighting with your mature or older students. I have found that it is much easier for students to discover and capitalize on their natural talents and body-types when regularly practicing this style of sparring. I only teach high school kids and older, and I naturally wouldn't recommend this style of fighting for kids.

Ultimately, an instructor needs to keep in mind what his goals for class are. If you are a TKD instructor, then sports and athletic goals are paramount, and hard sparring is unnecessary. If you are a self-defense oriented school, however, I recommend full-contact continuous sparring... the more realistic, the better. On the street, there aren't any rules.”

“I have to disagree, but then again, we are all humans and are entitled to our opinions. If you agree to full contact spar, that is one thing, but if one has no clue that they have to fight full contact, then are required to do so, that is a problem. In my years of martial arts training, I never fought full contact. I don't' see the point of hurting someone to train. Bones are fragile, and you can break them over and over, but the more you injure yourself the more you will have a hard time recovering from them as well. I'm still young, to most people, and I want to remain that way. I do

not train just for self-defense real life practical situations. I trained for self-esteem, self-respect, physical and spiritual conditioning (spiritual because it was Christian based) and also for fellowship. The self-defense part of it just came with the requirements, and I have learned some real life practical techniques, even though any full-contact was never used. I myself can not hit someone full contact, just for a sport, or for practice. If I wanted to practice striking full contact, I'd use a dummy of some sort. I do not want to hinder my growing process, since I am still growing. I don't see the point of paying money to get hurt.

About that if you aren't hurt when class is over, that's an old saying. The reason why I say that, is some old stretches they did, cause done to hurt for weeks on end. They tore muscles, instead of stretching them, causing them to hurt. Body shots were allowed to areas that are tender, again causing pain. You can get a good work out and still do it right. Performing a new kick, or something at first may be "painful" if your muscle isn't conditioned to it, just as I was with some of my old requirements, but after a while you adapt, and then try to make it better and stronger. I can't fight full contact unless it was my life, and so far I haven't come to situation, and hope to never do so. Because of which, I have never broken a nose, or any other part of my body. I am however used to pain, because 3 years ago, I had my hips knocked out of line, due to a car accident. I don't want anything like that to happen again.

“As a Kenpo guy, we focus on street self-defense, therefore we avoid “tag”.

Naturally, some of my kids (I have 45 of them in the program, under age 12) want to do the tournament thing, so we occasionally run a sparring class to sharpen those skills. What is interesting, is that even with the limited sparring classes, the kids have really cleaned up at the few tourneys they’ve entered. Perhaps doing all the self-defense techs on each other has taught them effective ranging. Plus Kenpo does a lot of hand speed drills which helps too.

I’m 42 now but feel like a kid at times (usually before a good fighting session, not after!). Your fighting drills sound very effective. If you practice full bore, that is precisely what you will do in a real fight. If a student doesn’t know what it’s like to get smacked, they’re likely to freak out when they get popped in a fight. In a controlled environment, I think this is an absolutely critical training method! ”

“We use light contact with hand/feet protection; point sparring. Some of my more advanced & aggressive students are allowed to practice Olympic style sparring with full gear that is full contact but only to legal areas. ”

We don’t do a lot of sparring, but we drill the self-defense techniques on one another daily. We also utilize pressure-points both as control holds and strikes. Not much blood but some seriously dilated pupils and dizziness!

When we do spar, intermediate students and above, it's with padding and somewhat sporting in nature. I'm not a fan of sparring in that I am of the opinion that it can condition you to hold back on your power even in a "real world" situation. This position is supported by a wide variety of professionals (principally law enforcement & personal security specialists). If you do choose to spar, for competition, then train in that manner."

## **KEEP YOUR EYES ON THE GOAL LINE, NOT THE SCOREBOARD AND NOT ON THE TIME CLOCK**

**by Shidoshi Johnny Russell**

*"Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." Hebrews 12:2*

It's a big mistake for a martial arts contestant to watch the scoreboard, or the time remaining in the competition. In doing so if he is ahead, he will have a tendency to relax or be overconfident. If he is behind he will have a tendency to lose heart or to be over stressed.

Whether you are competing in Point Kumite, Tuite Submission Grappling, or Full-Contact Pankration, victory is determined moment-by-moment and inch-by-inch. The scoreboard or time clock in and of themselves never determine who wins or who loses; they only reflect the outcome of the game. The final score is never determined until the last whistle is blown. I have witnessed (and experienced) many competitions

that seemed all but lost. Then, when things seemed their darkest, a sudden chain of events caused the underdog to battle back and win; often in the last seconds of the contest.

In one's walk as a Christian warrior, the "scoreboard and "time clock inevitably reflect only public opinion and the current society in which we live. When that is so, he will tend to think that the champion in life is the one whose fans cheer the most and whose bands play the loudest. To be governed by the applause or the pundits of the world will bring any believer into the pits of defeat and despair.

Jesus could not, in fact- would not, let the recognition and approval of men determine His pursuit of His goals. He knew that the goals He sought were higher than men could conceive and the final score was not determined by human applause and/or achievement. He alone knew the cost to achieve them.

When He made His final entry into Jerusalem the crowds thronged His way, lining the road with palm leaves, and cheered Him as "the Son of David Who cometh in the Name of the Lord." It was not long until they were crying for the release of Barabbas and calling for the crucifixion of Jesus.

From the very beginning, Jesus kept His eyes on His goal. He refused to be defeated by Satan, distracted by men, diverted by public admiration, or to be disconcerted by shame and pain. He clearly knew what His

goal was to be and the necessity of keeping focused regardless of the ease or the rigor of the way.

As Christian warriors, we face the same temptations that Jesus faced. We must learn to look to Him and the goals He gives us as well as the example of achievement He gave.

There are many hazards that litter the way and encumber the traveler if one is to realize his objectives. Following are some issues that must be resolved if we are to overcome and achieve our goals.

1. Definition. Not everything is worthy of one's attention. Single-mindedness is a necessity and can only be achieved if our goals are clearly determined in advance. As we bring all of our thoughts and aspirations together and lay them before the Lord, only then can He may winnow them, salvaging those that fits the plans, and thus the goals, He has for our lives.

2. Destination. . A friend speaks of the cowboy who jumped on his horse and road off in all directions at once. One must know where he is going or he will never know when he has gotten there. We may be impressed with many human needs but must realize that a need does not constitute a call. One can only effectively minister where the anointing wherever the anointing is on him, and only there and then will he achieve the proper goals for his life.

3. Initiation. The hardest thing to do in life is to get started doing whatever it is that one seeks to do. To get in action often is a real chore,



thus procrastination is an ever-present enemy. There is no substitute for simply getting up and getting started.

4. Determination. After one gets started, the next most difficult thing is to stay in action. It is easy to be a great starter but never bring things into completion. It takes great resolve and determination to see things through to our determined objective. It is a matter of choice – one hour, day, or issue at a time.

5. Isolation. To achieve one's goals is an inner drive and, although it may include the participation of others, it is basically a lonely walk. Others are inevitably caught up in their own goals, aspirations, and achievements, and quite likely are not as excited as we are about our pursuits.. The closer we are to achieving our goals, the lonelier the task becomes. One, to successfully reach his goals, must be prepared, as Jesus was, to walk through his valley alone.

6. Realization. It is important to know when one has achieved his goals for if he doesn't know where he is going, how will he know when he gets there? Paul, regarding his own life, voiced it nicely when he said: "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing" (2 Timothy 4:6-8).

Living life at its fullest and reaching goals in life depend on our perspective, availability, and obedience to Christ. Necessary steps can be taken, our victory realized; however, only He knows the final score,

so we should keep our eyes on Him, and not the “scoreboard and “time clock of this present age.”

Peace to you warriors of the Cross,

Shidoshi Russell

(Thanks to Grand Master Karl Marx for sending us this article)

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