

STANDING ALONE

Matt. 7:13-14 says: *“Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.”*

A new Christian said, “I thought when I got saved it would be a bed of roses and soon discovered that there were some thorns out there.” The Christian life is a battle. It is like traveling the opposite way on a one-way street. A Christian who stands for right is like a salmon swimming upstream. Any dead fish can float downstream!

II Tim. 3:12 says: *“Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.”*

BENEFITS OF OPPOSITION

1. It gives patience. James 1:3 says: *“Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.”*
2. It produces growth. Ex. 1:12 says: *“But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew. And they were grieved because of the children of Israel.”*
3. It makes the heart better. Eccl. 7:3 says: *“Sorrow is better than laughter: for by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better.”*

FORMS OF OPPOSITION

1. **Friends** Amnon had a friend that corrupted him. Do not let friends hinder your growth for Christ.
2. **Family** Joseph was opposed by his brothers. David was opposed by his brothers. His brothers opposed Jephthah. His brothers and sisters rejected Jesus.
3. **Flesh** Our old nature opposes our Christianity.
4. **The devil**

There are people who watch your Christian life to see if it is genuine. Many are just waiting to see you “blow it”. How do people oppose your Christian life? Nehemiah’s book tells the steps in detail:

1. **Disagreements:** Neh. 2:10 says: *“When Sanballat the Horonite, and Tobiah the servant, the Ammonite, heard of it, it grieved them exceedingly that there was come a man to seek the welfare of the children of Israel.”*
2. **Laughing:** Neh. 2:19 says: *“But when Sanballat the Horonite, and Tobiah the servant, the Ammonite, and Geshem the Arabian, heard it, they laughed us to scorn,*

and despised us, and said, What is this thing that ye do? will ye rebel against the king?"

3. **Anger:** Neh. 4:1 says: *"But it came to pass, that when Sanballat heard that we builded the wall, he was wroth, and took great indignation, and mocked the Jews."*
4. **Criticism:** Neh. 4:2-3 says: *"And he spake before his brethren and the army of Samaria, and said, What do these feeble Jews? will they fortify themselves? will they sacrifice? will they make an end in a day? will they revive the stones out of the heaps of the rubbish which are burned? Now Tobiah the Ammonite was by him, and he said, Even that which they build, if a fox go up, he shall even break down their stone wall."*
5. **Talk:** Neh. 6:1-2 says: *"Now it came to pass, when Sanballat, and Tobiah, and Geshem the Arabian, and the rest of our enemies, heard that I had builded the wall, and that there was no breach left therein; (though at that time I had not set up the doors upon the gates;) That Sanballat and Geshem sent unto me, saying, Come, let us meet together in some one of the villages in the plain of Ono. But they thought to do me mischief."*

(Notice also Ezra 4:9, 23-24)

Do not be surprised if people are not as enthusiastic as you are about your decisions and stand for God.

REASONS FOR OPPOSITION

John 3:19-21 says: *"And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God."*

Your light is revealing dirt in the lives of others and they do not like what they see.

People used to tell evangelist Billy Sunday that he was rubbing the cat the wrong way (by preaching too hard). He replied, "Turn the cat around." Let the world turn around!

I Pet. 4:12 says: *"Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you:"*

Noah stood alone while the world rejected the truth. Job stood alone. The Hebrew children stood alone and would not bend or bow at the king's orders and did not burn. Daniel kept on praying and was cast into the den of lions. Paul faced all manner of hardships for the gospel's sake, most of them alone.

II Cor. 11:23-28,33 says: *"Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the*

Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches. And through a window in a basket was I let down by the wall, and escaped his hands.”

You cannot wait on the crowd to do right. You must learn to stand for God alone.

JESUS STOOD ALONE

Matt. 14:23 says: *“And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come, he was there alone.”*

Mark 4:10 says: *“And when he was alone, they that were about him with the twelve asked of him the parable.”*

Mark 6:47 says: *“And when even was come, the ship was in the midst of the sea, and he alone on the land.”*

Luke 9:18,36 says: *“And it came to pass, as he was alone praying, his disciples were with him: and he asked them, saying, Whom say the people that I am? And when the voice was past, Jesus was found alone. And they kept it close, and told no man in those days any of those things which they had seen.”*

John 6:15 says: *“When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone.”*

John 8:9 says: *“And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst.”*

Jesus spent his entire life fellowshiping with mere humans.

STAND ALONE

There will be times in your Christian life when it seems that no one understands, no one is on your side, and no one cares but you. You do not serve God because it is the popular thing to do - you serve Him because it is the right thing to do! There are some areas in which every Christian needs to learn to stand alone:

1. **Conviction:** This is a God-given, Bible-based belief. Find out what you believe in the Bible and stand for it. There are absolute “rights” and “wrongs” in the Scripture. Have some standards in your clothing, music, friends, television viewing, etc. Base your life on the Bible and not on what other Christians are doing. Bible readers have convictions.

2. **Compassion:** There are very few caring people these days. Jesus wept over Jerusalem. A Christian who stands alone will witness for Christ when seen and not seen. He will continue to win souls even when the excitement wears off.
3. **Power:** Few Christians truly get ahold of God anymore. Prayer has become a human routine among many believers. Where is the late night praying? A Christian who stands alone will seek God's power in prayer while others sleep.

The preacher, your Sunday School teacher, that godly friend will not always be there to pat you on the back when you do right - especially when it was hard to do right! That is where faith comes in - you must see the face of Christ and hear His "well done". You may feel alone, but you are not! Notice Heb. 13:5, which says: *"Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."*

ACTION UNDER OPPOSITION

What do you do when your Christianity is causing waves?

1. **Keep building:** Neh. 4:6 says: *"So built we the wall; and all the wall was joined together unto the half thereof: for the people had a mind to work."*
2. **Watch and pray:** Neh. 4:9 says: *"Nevertheless we made our prayer unto our God, and set a watch against them day and night, because of them."* Matt. 26:41 says: *"Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."*
3. **Keep your eyes on Jesus:** Neh. 4:14 says: *"And I looked, and rose up, and said unto the nobles, and to the rulers, and to the rest of the people, Be not ye afraid of them: remember the Lord, which is great and terrible, and fight for your brethren, your sons, and your daughters, your wives, and your houses."*
4. **Build and battle:** Neh. 4:16-17 says: *"And it came to pass from that time forth, that the half of my servants wrought in the work, and the other half of them held both the spears, the shields, and the bows, and the habergeons; and the rulers were behind all the house of Judah. They which builded on the wall, and they that bare burdens, with those the laded, every one with one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other hand held a weapon."* Do not lose the ground you have gained.
5. **Stay around red-hot preaching:** Neh. 5:1-2 says: *"And there was a great cry of the people and of their wives against their brethren the Jews. For there were that said, We, our sons, and our daughters, are many: therefore we take up corn for them, that we may eat, and live."*

CONCLUSION

A song was written many years ago called “I Have Decided to Follow Jesus”. Following are the words:

1. I have decided to follow Jesus,
I have decided to follow Jesus,
I have decided to follow Jesus,
No turning back, no turning back.
2. The world behind me, the Cross before me,
The world behind me, the Cross before me,
The world behind me, the Cross before me,
No turning back, no turning back.
3. Though none go with me, still I will follow,
Though none go with me, still I will follow,
Though none go with me, still I will follow,
No turning back, no turning back.

The story is told of an atheist giving a speech in a large auditorium to discredit the Bible and the existence of God. A capacity crowd was on hand. Concluding the speech, he dared anyone to stand and admit they believed in God and the Bible. The crowd was silent. Soon, a young teenage girl stood in the balcony and began to sing the hymn “Stand Up, Stand Up for Jesus...” Soon others stood with her and joined in. It was electrifying! Everyone was now standing and singing. The atheist quietly slipped out the side door.

Christian - STAND!

SOURCES:

The Best of Billy Sunday (Sword of the Lord)
Billy Sunday - The Man and His Message (Ellis)

REVIEW STANDING ALONE - STEP 23

1. A Christian travels the _____ way on a one-way street.

2. A Christian who stands for right is like a _____
_____ upstream.

3. Name three benefits of opposition:

4. Name four forms of opposition:

5. Name three ways people may oppose your Christianity:

6. What is the reason people oppose your Christianity? _____

Give the scripture reference _____

7. Name two Bible characters who stood alone for right: _____

8. You do not serve God because it is the _____ thing to do, you serve Him because it is the _____ thing to do.

9. Define conviction: _____

10. Does every Christian you know mean serious business for God?

11. Whose face must you look to when standing alone? _____

12. List two actions to do when under opposition: _____

13. Stay around _____ preaching.

14. Though _____ go with me, still _____

15. Name some areas in your Christian life where you need to be prepared to stand alone.

16. Have you ever stood alone for God before? _____

17. Where was it? _____

18. Is there someone you need to encourage who is standing alone for God?

19. List the names of some unsaved people who are watching you:

20. How many people did it take to make the difference at the atheist meeting? _____
What did she do? _____