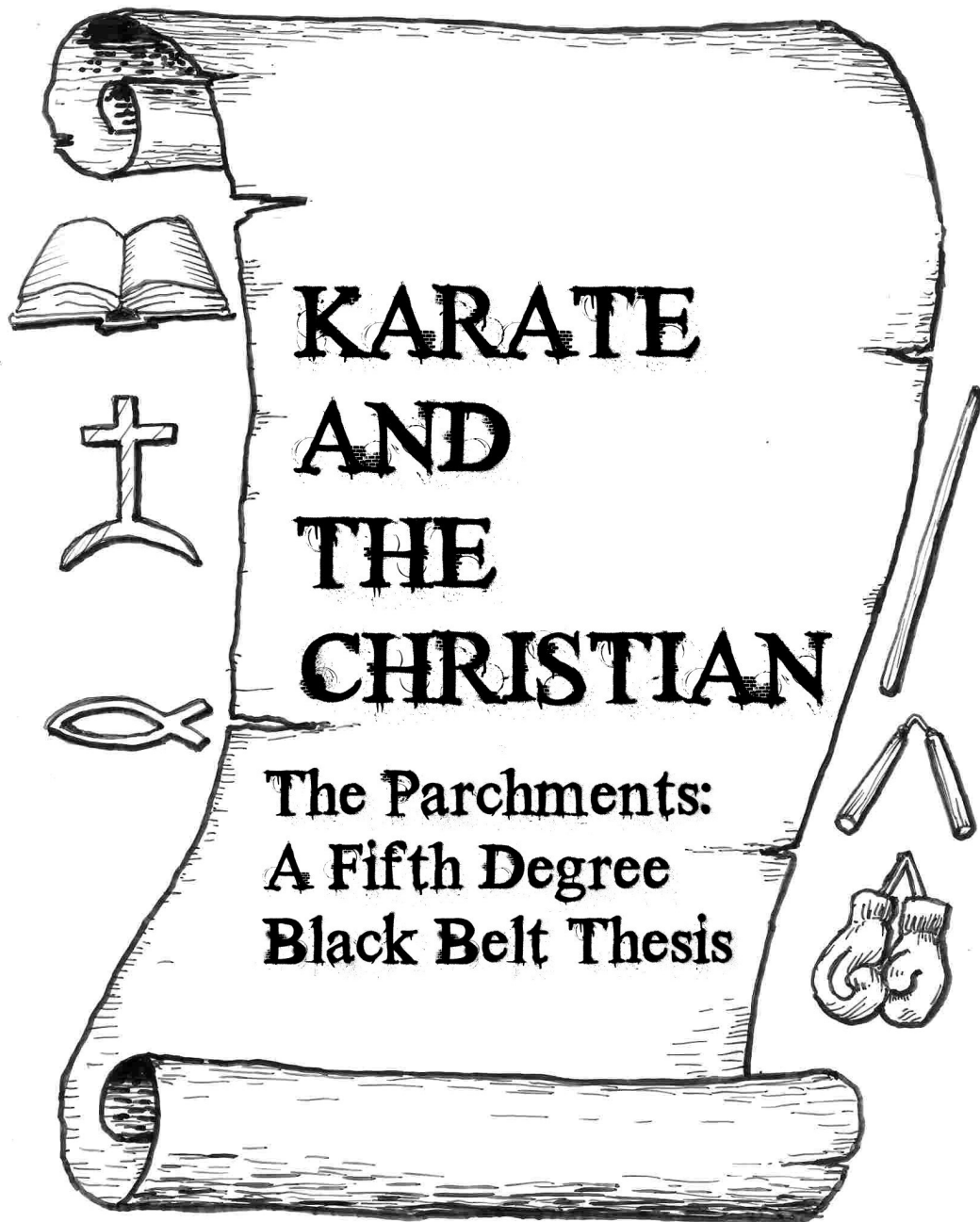


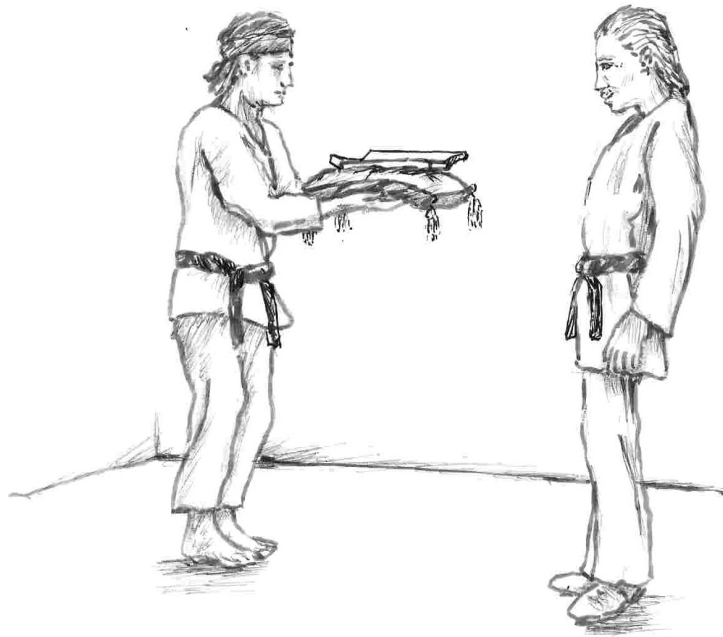


Author: Kenpo Master, Herb Patus

**Karate and the Christian:
The Parchments
A Fifth Degree Black Belt
Thesis**

This is my Fifth Degree Black Belt thesis to be presented to Grand-master Instructor (Tenth Degree Black Belt) Richard Willett, the head of our American Kenpo Karate Organization, in order to display the completion of my work.

I salute you, Sir.



Acknowledgments

I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to those who have made it possible for me to achieve my rank and goals in the Martial arts, and in my life.

Jesus Christ my Lord, God, and Redeemer: I thank Thee Lord for all that I am and have, and for the understanding that a man's wealth is not determined by how much he has, but rather how little he is satisfied with. I thank Thee Lord for Calvary and the Lamb's Book of Life.

Grand Master Instructor Dick Willett: Mr. Willett was one of the original lines of great instructors that came from the Tracy Brothers in San Jose in the 1960's. One of the first Kenpo instructors in the San Diego area, the studio that Dick started in 1967 still remains as active as ever. The influence that Dick had on many generations of black belts is unquestionable and many of his student's names are easily recognizable in the annals of competition. A great friend and premiere instructor, Dick was always there for all of us and to this day remains the central force in the Southern California region. A true innovator in his teaching skills, Dick was one of the first instructors to integrate the fighting principles of Joe Lewis into his teaching curriculum and was recently the fourth martial artist to be inducted into Joe Lewis' hall of fame. Thank you Dick for wise counsel. I never could have opened my first Kwoon without your help.

Master Instructor Michael Edward Roberts: Your inspiration and expertise has helped me over the years to learn the intricate art of Kenpo. Thank you for believing in me and pushing me in the right direction when I stumbled.

Master Instructor Todd McElhinney, whom I greatly respect: Thank

you Todd for always being there. You are an incredible Black Belt. Master Instructor Orned “Chicken” Gabriel: Chicken, thank you for showing me “I can,” even when I didn’t think I could. For explaining to me the true meaning of **Proverbs 23:7, “For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he.”** Webster’s Dictionary does not contain the words that can properly describe the appreciation that I have in my heart for all that you have done for me in my Martial arts career. To me, you will always be a champion.

SIFU (Third Degree Black Belt) John West: You are one of our tougher Black Belt fighters, and a good Christian man. Thank you for being a brother and a fellow soldier in Christ.

Pastor Bob Henson of Calvary Baptist Church in National City, CA: Thank you for the many years of your “flawless” teachings of the Holy Scriptures, for “rightly dividing the word of truth.” Thank you for helping me to better understand the meaning of love (although I must confess I’m still working on it). The Lord only knows what prison I would have ended up in had I not stopped by Calvary. Thank you for helping me to find “THE WAY”. May the Lord bless all of you at CBC.

As a result of combining my knowledge of Kenpo Karate with that of the Holy Scriptures I have come to the conclusion that any fool can go out and cause somebody pain and grief, but it takes a real man to reach out and help those who are hurting. The stronger you are, the more you can help. I strive to master these things so that I may better serve.

— The Author

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Editors: Thuy Salhi, Michael Roberts, Jack Cavanaugh, The Line Printing

Artists: Victor Ochoa

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John 15:19, “...because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.”

Proverbs 15:1, “A soft answer turneth away wrath....”

Psalms 144:1, “Blessed be the LORD my strength, which teacheth my hands to war, and my fingers to fight:”

Preface

I have studied and trained for over 20 years in the art of Chinese Kenpo Karate to receive my Fifth Degree Black Belt.

I began teaching at the rank of Green Belt. I have managed and owned successful Kenpo schools.

I do not hold any world titles in boxing or karate. I am a teacher. I am a skilled boxer, grappler, and martial artist; I teach them all.

I have trained as hard and as long as anybody who has ever put on a glove. I have paid my dues with blood, sweat, tears, broken bones, and countless hours of long study.

I have in my quest for true peace found that the physical part of training is not enough to fulfill a man's needs. Without a spiritual life he is truly lacking.

1 Timothy 4:8: “For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.”

Deuteronomy 8:3: “Man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live.”

I am a Bible-believing, “born-again” fundamental Christian. My fellowship is at a Bible-preaching fundamental Baptist church. The church is an important part of my life. I find the Scriptures to be interesting and even exciting. They seem to hold all the answers to life.

Teaching has been immensely rewarding to me. I have been able to share the things that have helped me so much in my personal

life and have a great joy in sharing the wealth of the Scriptures with others. I have found an incredible peace from combining the confidence of self-defense with the knowledge, comfort, and reassurances of the Holy Scriptures.

Whenever a person walked into my Kwoon (a Chinese word for karate school) it did not take long for them to figure out that the Sifu (black belt instructor) was a Christian. The walls were decorated with bamboo framed verses from the book of Proverbs. One wall was covered with a large mural depicting the two roads as described by the Lord Jesus Christ in the Sermon on the Mount: the narrow road that leads to great reward and the wide road that leads to destruction, which can be found in **Matthew 7:13-14**.

I had a tendency to enroll a large percentage of Christians. I was surprised to see the amount of confusion among many of them as to the matter of when to strike out in self-defense, and even more surprised to see how many of them felt that in order to be a good Christian they had to stand idle and allow someone to strike them several times before they fought back. Some were even taught by false teachers that a good man should not fight back in his defense for any reason and that God would take care of everything.

Over the last twenty years of teaching Kempo I have taught many students, and interviewed many more who never signed up for lessons. I wish I had a dollar for every question I have addressed on the subject of Martial arts and the Scriptures. I have heard the same questions over and over, and have made it part of my career to search for the answers to these questions:

Should a Christian fight back?

What about “turning the other cheek?”

What does the Bible say about self-defense?

Is it okay for a Christian to study a Martial Art?
What about bowing to idols, chanting, or calling the instructor master?
Are the teachings of Zen compatible to that of the Bible? Do they both take you to the same ultimate goal using different paths?
Can the teaching of a Martial art enhance one's spirit?
What is the difference between the soul spirit, Spirit, and senses?
How long does it take to become proficient at it?
How do I earn belts?
What is the difference between the many styles? Which one is best for me?
How about a cold beer after a workout, or a glass of wine to relax?

I have been burdened, or led by the Spirit, to compile this information and much more into book form. The time has not been right until now.

One of the qualifications in the Kenpo Karate Organization for the Fifth Degree Black Belt is to compose a thesis on any subject concerning the Martial arts. The subject that I have chosen is Karate and the Christian. The information to produce an adequate writing on this subject has quickly filled the maximum page limit allowed by our organization for the thesis and has now flowed over into its completed form.

It has been deeply fulfilling to me as a Kenpo Karate instructor, as well as a Christian, to write about some of what the Bible says regarding self-defense and the Christian. It is important for Christians to have a good understanding of what the Scriptures say about potential adversaries, and biblical options on dealing with them.

For non-Christians I pray they will have a better understanding of the "powers of right" that Christians possess, and how and why

they possess them.

The information that has been compiled into this book is for the Christian and non-Christian, The Karateka (student of Karate) and the non-Karateka. It is dedicated to those who are seeking to improve their lives in every way. I pray that some of your questions may be answered and that the spirit of discernment be with you as you read it in its entirety.

Herbert Lee Patus
Master Instructor (Seventh Degree Black Belt)
of American (Chinese) Kenpo Karate
Child of the Most High King

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Why I Choose the Teachings of the Bible Over Those of Zen

The Scriptures have withstood the test of time and have proven themselves righteous in the face of persecution time after time. History has recorded vast civilizations – such as the Babylonians, Persians, Greek, Roman, for example, and their mighty kings, who have accomplished much. These civilizations created kingdoms, and established shipping and trading empires of uncountable wealth. Empires that seemingly had no end. All of these empires have since collapsed, and those great wealthy kings have been forgotten. The names of God's mighty men of the Bible, though, seem to be in everyday conversation.

The Bible has made good to date its over two thousand prophecies and put egg on the faces of those who have tried to disprove its words.

The Bible says: Jonah ran from God rather than preach to the nation of Nineveh.

Science says: There is no such archeological finding to support this, and once again the Bible is false.

In recent years the ruins of Nineveh have been discovered and today the language of the Ninevites is being taught at the University of Egypt.

The Bible says: There was a miraculous pool of healing waters at Bethesda having five porches.

Science says: There was no such place.

The five porches have been recently discovered by archeologists once again proving the credibility of the Bible.

I have talked to those who have attempted to discredit the Scriptures and they tell me that the Bible is full of mistakes. However, they are not able to open the Bible and point the mistakes out specifically.

Unlike the generalizations of Nostradamus' predictions, the Bible's are precise.

When Columbus sailed in 1492 the world was thought to be flat, and it was dangerous to suggest otherwise. However, the prophet Isaiah (760-698 BC) prophesied the world to be round: **“It is he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth ...” (Isaiah 40:22).**

When the nation of Tyrus spoke against Jerusalem, God prophesied through Ezekiel (590 BC) that this great shipping port would be reduced to a flat rock and that fishermen would mend their nets there **(Ezekiel 26:4-5):**

And they shall destroy the walls of Tyrus, and break down her towers: I will also scrape her dust from her, (no stone will be left on top of another) and make her like the top of a rock (flat.) It shall be a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea (fishermen to repair nets while at sea): for I have spoken it, saith the Lord GOD: and it shall become a spoil to the nations.

Today the ruins of Tyre (Tyrus) are a flat rock used by fishermen to mend their nets in the midst of the sea.

Science does many wonderful works and has been a tremendous blessing to mankind, however even science rewrites their books every so many years in an attempt to get the facts straight.

Medical science at one time thought that sickness was a result of bad blood henceforth practiced blood letting. George Washington (our 1st President) died as a result of this ill-fated practice.

It was not that long ago that science predicted that if a man would propel himself to a speed of 40 miles per hour he would explode.

And how about evolution? Where di it all begin? Here science violates their own law of thermo dynamics stating that: Something cannot come from nothing. Even the U.S. patent office will nto accept a patent on perpetual motion.

Yet science teaches that the universe and energy was never created, but rather “always existed.” Science has many wonderful answers, but never really put their finger on the beginning of it all.

What about the missing link (residual remnants) in the evolution theory? Archeologists have a tendency to find a jaw bone of a monkey, construct it into some type of prehistoric man...then label it as a missing link in an attempt to establish evolution.

For instance the famous “Nebraska man” was taught in the science books and classes of our schools and universities for 44 years as a solid link in their evolution theory. It was later revealed that the entire Nebraska man was built around an excavated tooth fragment from a prehistoric wild boar (a pig).

Yes, even Darwin believed that the evolutionary process began with a creator.

Those who believed not in God will tend to lean toward an evolution theory of some type. Such is with Zen.

Unlike the teachings of Zen which believe that everything has come about by the way of evolution (how can something come from nothing?), the Bible has a more logical approach to creation:

“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth”(Genesis 1:1).

How can something come from nothing without a God?

Zen teaches reincarnation. This is the belief that one will have more than one chance at eternal peace.

The Scriptures tell us that we only have one chance at eternal life: that we accept Christ's work at Calvary while we are here.

It is strange that all those I have known that believe in reincarnation claim to have been someone important or famous. Nobody admits to being a snail or a slug in a past life due to "bad karma."

Since I have become a Christian there may be moments when I am by myself, but I feel in my spirit that I am never alone: God is always with me.

If one believes that there is a God who created the heavens and the earth and all therein, he must also believe that He is able to place His word in book form and give it to man. He said that He did and I have no problem believing it.

"The Lord gave the word: great was the company of those that published it" (Psalm 68:11).

"The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever" (Psalm 12:6-7).

"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" (Psalm 119:105).

My most valued earthly possession is my Bible due to all the markings and notations in it as a result of many years of study. My study Bible would be extremely difficult to replace. I maintain two copies.

Oriental Philosophy versus the Bible

There are many Christians that shy away from the martial arts because of what they believe to be pagan rituals and acts which accompany many traditional arts such as bowing to idols, chanting, or addressing the head instructor as master.

Basic oriental philosophy is that there is not one powerful omnipotent God as the Christian knows. Rather, there is a supreme spiritual law of nature (force) which has a way of bringing everything into harmonic balance.



The yin-yang symbol, which is often associated with the martial arts, is designed to display equal opposites. Notice that the dark areas share equal space with the light areas. The yin and the yang refer to equal but opposite forces. For example: positive and negative, or good vs. evil, male attributes and female attributes.

This philosophy accompanies them through life. The Oriental philosopher may suggest that we believe in the same god and that the yin and the yang is basically the same as the reaping and sowing taught by the Bible (**Galatians 6:7-8**):

Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

Yet, the truth of the matter is that if you were to ask him if their god came to earth in the form of a man (**Isaiah 9:6**):

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.” Isaiah 9:6

Or whether he died on the cross for the sins of mankind (**Romans 5:19**):

For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous (Adam sinned, Christ redeemed).

Then, you would no longer be speaking with him of a common god shared by all.

It is an important to ask yourself the question as to whether it is pleasing to God for one of his children to study a martial art (**John 1:11-12**):

He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.

To answer this, you would have to stay within the boundaries of Scripture.

The art of fighting, or self defense, is merely a study in the science of body mechanics. We should be able to pick and choose what we will from the world of martial arts. We should take what is beneficial and leave the rest.

It is not necessarily the art, but the instructor that teaches the art that makes the difference. Today in 21st century America, if you look hard, you should be able to find a proficient instructor who is a godly man that would be a Christian first and a karate instructor second.

Christian: Your Body Is a Temple It is Your Duty to Maintain It

When a man is born into the world, according to Scripture, he is not a child of God, but rather is considered a descendant of Adam, or a child of man (see **Psalms 53:2**), or a child of disobedience (see **Ephesians 2:2**), or a child of wrath (see **Ephesians 2:3**). In **Mark 3:28** Jesus refers to sinners as sons of men, *“Verily I say unto you, All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men...”*

There are many who believe the misnomer that all men are children of God and that God’s Spirit is in all men. This is simply not true.

In the **Gospel of John, Chapter 8**, Jesus addresses the Pharisees and tells them (v. 44):

Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.

Does this sound like they were filled with the Spirit of God? Jesus did not consider them to be children of God, so how could God be their Father? By nature man is born into a state of unbelief, you become a child of God by your belief (faith) in Jesus Christ.

“For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten

Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (John 3:16).

“He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him” (John 3:36).

You would never hear anything like this in a Zen class. In fact, they would strongly deny it.

As a child of God your body has become a holy temple which the Bible speaks much about. It is your duty to maintain and protect it.

In the Apostle Paul’s letter to the Corinthians (or the church of Corinth, who were already Christians) he spoke strongly regarding this matter:

Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are. (1 Corinthians 3:16-17)

What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s. (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)

Our bodies are important and worthy of protecting.

As Christians it is our duty to spread the good news of the gospel (the word gospel means good news). We don’t need a call, we have a command (Matthew 28:18-19):

And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

We cannot carry out this command if we stand still and allow somebody who is filled with the devil to harm us. We are not told by Scripture to remain idle while being stoned or beaten for the cause of Christ, but if we are....it is gain.

In the case of the apostles, they were, more likely than not, simply overpowered and then beaten. The days and times that we live in are perhaps the most vicious of any up to this time in history. Especially with terrorist attacks and the radical Muslim factions not respecting innocent life, it's them against us. We have all seen and or heard of the ruthless manner in which they deal with those they have deemed as enemies. If you are an American they would love to kill you. If you are a follower of Jesus Christ they would exceedingly rejoice in killing you. With people such as this running ramped in society it is best to have something for them, should they come your way. Learning self defense is a good idea for Christians and non-Christians alike.

Turning the Other Cheek

This is a subject that seems to cause much confusion among the brethren.

“But whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also” (Matthew 5:39).

The misinterpretation of this verse would have some to believe that a Christian should stand still and take a needless whipping... not so!

To enhance our understanding of this verse let us take a closer look at the English word smite, which has various applications. The

word smite, as used by the English translators, has a much broader meaning, or even a tendency to be a generalization, when compared to the Greek word that the English was translated from.

In **Luke 22:49** when Judas betrayed Jesus to the Roman soldiers in the Garden of Gethsemane there was much confusion and the disciples asked Jesus if they should smite with the sword. The English word smite was translated from the Greek word *patasso*, which means to strike either gently or fatally with a hand or a weapon, a single blow.

In **Acts 23:2** when Paul stood before the Sanhedrin, the high priest Ananias commanded the men that stood beside Paul to smite him on the mouth. Here the English word smite was translated from the Greek word, *tupto*. This word accents power, form, hard, such as to pound, thump, beat, or trounce. It could also mean repeated blows.

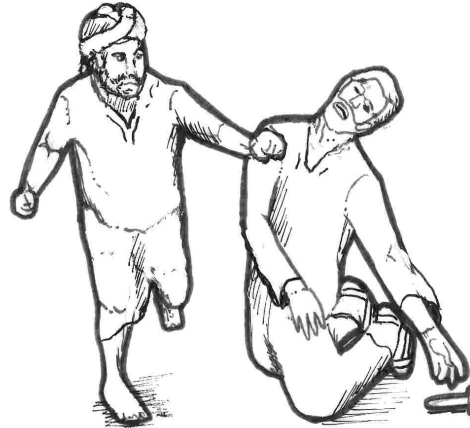
In **2 Corinthians 11:20** Paul was speaking of some of the cruel hardships which he had suffered for the sake of Christ including being smitten on the face. Here the English word smite was translated from the Greek word *dero* which means to flay, scourge, strip, tear or remove skin; to thoroughly beat or pummel. We know that Paul had suffered many terrible beatings and at one time was even left for dead.

Although the English translators used the word smite in reference to Christ's statement regarding the turning of the cheek, the Greek word used is *rhapizo*. This word stems from a prime root word *rhepo* which means to let go or to allow to fall; to slap with an open



hand (opposed to a closed fist). So the meaning of the word smite in this case would be a light slap. I'm sure that the Lord would also desire us to turn the other cheek in regards to a verbal insult of any kind. I do not think that the Lord Jesus had in mind as he spoke of turning the other cheek that we should allow someone to knock us physically to the ground and then stand up so that he can do it again.

Remember that Jesus also used other closely related phrases such as ***“walk the extra mile”*** and stressed to us to be ***“long suffering”*** with one another.



The interpretation of turning the other cheek could mean like counting to 10 where there is no immediate reaction, and is an act of control not anger. This provides the attacker or aggressor another chance to stop. Non-aggressive behavior prevents a lot of disputes, while aggressive behavior only accelerates it.

Jesus left instructions with the disciples concerning self defense. These instructions apply to us today as well. Jesus and his disciples were in the Garden of Gethsemane shortly after the last supper (Luke 22:36):

And he said unto them, When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye any thing? And they said, Nothing. Then said he unto them, But now, (this also means today) he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise his scrip (money): and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one. For I say unto you,

that this that is written must yet be accomplished in me, And he was reckoned among the transgressors: for the things concerning me have an end. And they said, Lord, behold, here are two swords. And he said unto them, It is enough (sufficient).

We know that they had two swords among them at that particular time. Peter had one because when the soldiers arrived to arrest Jesus, Peter cut off the ear of Malchus, the servant of the high priest. **“Then Simon Peter having a sword drew it, and smote the high priest’s servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant’s name was Malchus” (John 18:10).**

When Jesus told Peter in **Matthew 26:52**, *“Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.”*

He was not demeaning self defense, but was merely reminding Peter that the penalty for taking an innocent life (in that day) was death. After all, under Roman law, Malchus was an innocent man who had done nothing worthy of death. Here Peter was using the sword in an offensive manner, rather than deffensive.

In our previous verse (**Luke 22:36**) Jesus was telling his disciples to arm themselves with the most powerful weapon available to them during that time. In today’s vernacular, he would be telling them to get a gun for protection.

We are told to provide for our own, **“But if any provide not for his own, and especially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel (unbeliever).” (1 Timothy 5:8)** Notice that the words “his own” is used twice. The first time it refers to his Christian brethren, the second time to his own house. The needs in this verse would cover all of his family’s needs. This includes providing protection for them. How can a man protect his

family unless he is strong and wise?

Wisdom comes from knowing and understanding God and his word —

Psalm 111:10: “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom...”

Proverbs 2:6: “For the LORD giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding.”

Matthew 7:24: “*Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock.*”

2 Timothy 2:15: “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”

The strength would come from having the ability or means available that would enable a man to protect his family to any extent necessary, including taking the life of an adversary in order to survive. Should this moment ever arrive, karate (empty hand: hand without a weapon) would be advantageous to know and could even be a deterrent to trouble. Often the world mistakes meekness as a sign of weakness, so it is wise to stay prepared.

As a martial artist and a Christian I have experienced trouble when I least expected it, usually while minding my own business. But after taking a stand and applying a few well-placed hand and foot combinations, more often than not, the attitude of the troublemaker quickly changed. There is an old saying that holds a lot of truth: “Line backers and professional boxers don’t get mugged.”

Yes, a state of readiness is always a good idea!

Can you imagine how the Lord would feel if a man would stand idle and watch his family being physically abused in the name of turning the other cheek?

Not only should a man defend the members of his household but, I **Timothy 5:8** says, “...but if any provide not for his own...” meaning that he should also take a stand for his Christian brother should it be necessary, as it was for Abraham.

Abraham (called Abram at the Time) Defends Lot

Abram kept his household servants in a constant state of readiness, and came to Lot’s aid and fought for him (**Genesis 14:14-15**): **And when Abram heard that his brother was taken captive, he armed (to fight) his trained servants, born in his own house, three hundred and eighteen, and pursued them unto Dan...he and his servants, by night, and smote them...**

Not only did Abram fight for his brother, but also for the people that were around him: **“And he brought back all the goods, and also brought again his brother Lot, and his goods, and the women also, and the people” (Genesis 14:16).**

Defend Yourself or Be Killed

One afternoon after work, I stopped at a local market for a quick orange juice, as I often did. This time there was a large crowd of people gathered. As I drove up I saw an ambulance and several police cars driving away. The sidewalk was covered with blood.

I asked one of the locals what had happened. He said that it was the darndest thing he had ever seen. A young teenage girl was walking down the sidewalk in broad daylight on a busy street. A man walked

from around the corner, saw her, tore her clothes off and began to assault her sexually.

He said a large crowd began to gather and watched for the longest time. Finally, an older man perhaps in his late 50s or early 60s attempted to pull the attacker off of the young woman.

According to a witness the attacker then turned on the Good Samaritan stabbing him repeatedly and violently, “perhaps as many as one hundred times.” The whole time the poor old man was crying out for Jesus to save him until he spoke no more. The man was killed.



There is no doubt in my mind that if that man was a child of God he is in heaven this day, but the point being is that Jesus did not reach down at that instant and remove the knife-flailing attacker.

Had I came by a few moments earlier (which the Lord also did not see fit to be) I would have assumed that the man was under the influence of a dangerous drug and would have proceeded accordingly. If I had to take the life of the assailant in order to defend this innocent woman, I would have done so without hesitation.

There are those that revert totally to the Lord's promise from the Sermon on the Mount (**Matthew 6:30-33**):

Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

These people feel that they do not need to exercise an abundance of physical or mental exertion in order to fend for themselves, and that God will take care of their every whim, need or desire (God should not be thought of as a "genie in a bottle"). History is filled with instances of good Christians, in various situations, which have suffered an early, brutal death because of their lack of knowledge and/or skills in the area of self defense and for whatever reason God did not inter-

vene.

Yes, we can depend on all the promises of God's word, however the Bible also teaches that we are to do all we can with all we have, and if that is not enough then he will step in and do the rest (if it be his will). I believe that when a farmer prays for a crop of corn, the Lord expects him to say amen with a hoe in his hand.

If this man, a Christian I pray, would have been strong (perhaps even a basic knowledge of martial arts MAY have saved him), he could have continued his scriptural duties which would have given him an even greater reward in heaven while maintaining a fuller natural life on earth: **"The wicked worketh a deceitful work: but to him that soweth righteousness shall be a sure reward." (Proverbs 11:18)**

"Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour." (1 Corinthians 3:8)

(Please note that in this verse the apostle Paul was speaking to born again believers at the church of Corinth and that their labors had nothing to do with their "earning" salvation, for salvation is a gift free for the asking)

To be point blank about the situation, this disgusting attacker, which had no apparent regard for basic human rights or life, should have been sent home to see his father the devil rather than a good Christian man being sent home early to be with the Lord. Although it was a remarkable deed, which this Good Samaritan performed, he did not go out kicking and punching... he just went out. There is no greater sacrifice than to give your life to save another, although, chances are that this Good Samaritan had no idea that by stepping in to help this young woman, it would have cost him his life. The bottom line is...be prepared.

Yes, the Bible does provide for a child of God to defend himself and his house, both Old Testament and New Testament.

“If a thief be found breaking up, and be smitten that he die, there shall no blood be shed for him.” (Exodus 22:2)

Here Jesus compliments a strong man armed: *“When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace.”* (Luke 11:21)

The New Nature Is a Factor to Be Considered

The God-fearing Christian, by his new Christian nature, will place a higher value on human life than on his worldly goods and should make his judgments accordingly. This is not the case with the unsaved man (2 Peter 1:3-4):

According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

Paul speaks of the nature of the “born again” Christian, before he came to Christ (Ephesians 2:2-3):

Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air (the devil), 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.

We Are to Be Meek but Strong: Jesus the Example

We are to be meek. The Bible says: ***“Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.”*** (Matthew 5:5)

Being meek does not mean being weak. The Bible says that Moses was a meek man, yet we know that he killed an Egyptian with his bare hands. ***“Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth.”*** (Numbers 12:3) Jesus described himself as being meek. Should we not strive to be like him?

“Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.” (Matthew 11:29)

In this verse Jesus not only calls himself meek, but he also calls for all men to establish a personal relationship with him. ***“Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.”*** (Matthew 7:7-8) His truths shall not be hidden from those who seek.

That relationship with Jesus Christ is what Christian Joy is all about. (See **Matthew 11:28-30, John 6:38, John 10:2-4,7**)

The Greek word for meek, *praus* simply means: gentle, humble, mild, and meek. I have heard that a good definition for meekness is power under control.

Although Jesus was a meek man by self-description, he was strong and courageous as he walked into the temple and drove out the moneychangers with a whip, which he had made with his own hands.

The First Purification of the Temple

And the Jews Passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem, And found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting: And when he had made a scourge (whip) of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables. (John 2:13-15)

Many Bible theologians believe that the Scriptures indicate that this driving out of the moneychangers happened not only once, but twice.

The first time, Jesus drove out the moneychangers. The second time the Scriptures recorded that he drove out the moneychangers, and those that bought.

The Second Purification of the Temple

“And he went into the temple, and began to cast out them that sold therein, and them that bought; Saying unto them, It is written, *My house is the house of prayer: but ye have made it a den of thieves.*” (Luke 19:45-46) (For the second purification of the temple see also, **Matthew 21:12** and **Mark 11:15-18**).

Please keep in mind that the crowd of people which bought was greater in number than those who sold, yet there was no mention of chasing out the crowd that bought in the first purification of the temple.

To substantiate the two purifications of the temple further, there are elements of timing involved in the Passovers, which indicate two purifications.

Longsuffering: The Parallel to Turning The Other Cheek

We today as children of God are told by Scripture to be long-suffering:

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith.” (Galatians 5:22)

“I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love.” (Ephesians 4:1)

“Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness.” (Colossians 1:11)

“Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering.” (Colossians 3:12)

Long-suffering, taken from the Greek word makrothumia, means long amity, forbearance, fortitude, long-suffering, and patience.

Once again the Scriptures (the Apostle Paul) are referring to Christians as being long-suffering.

When the term “TURN THE OTHER CHEEK” is used, there are those that would think that one must either continue to turn the other cheek until the person doing the hitting gets tired, or the one that is turning the other cheek drops. I do not believe that this is the true intent of the Scripture.

Nobody believes more in the meaning of “TURN THE OTHER CHEEK” than our precious Lord and Savior Jesus Christ;

after all they are his words. However, even Jesus himself turns the other cheek...to an extent.

We as modern day Christians are also to turn the other cheek... to an extent. Or perhaps another way of phrasing it is, “to be long-suffering.”

We know that Jesus did not turn the other cheek in the temple, as a matter of fact, he became quite angry and became physically violent with those that violated his Father’s house (although there is nothing in Scripture to indicate that Jesus had ever struck anybody).

As strong, just, loving, merciful and holy as Jesus was and is, he had and has no intention of being a doormat to those who are of the devil.

“Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.” (Matthew 7:6) Does this sound like a nonstop turning of the other cheek?

“And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet.” (Matthew 10:14) Does this sound like turning the other cheek until you drop?

When Jesus addressed the Scribes and the Pharisees (the law-makers and religious leaders) who scorned and rejected him, he did not turn the other cheek; but instead took a strong stand:

O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. (Matthew 12:34) (See also Matthew 23:23-26.)

Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city. (Matthew 23:34)

This happens to God's preachers today.

“Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?” (Matthew 23:33)

So you see, Jesus himself takes a stand at some point.

“Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision” (Philippians 3:2). Here the Scriptures speak of those who preach a false gospel.

“But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.” (Galatians 1:8)

“If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema (accursed).” (1 Corinthians 16:22)

“For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.” (Revelation 22:18-19)

These are the words of the long-suffering and even the long-suffering will take a stand. In this case the Lord Jesus Christ takes a stand against those who reject him or his work, and does not exercise the turning of the other cheek at all.

I have often heard people say that if God were a loving, long-suffering God then why did He command His people (the nation of Israel) to kill every man, woman, child and beasts of the Canaanite religion **(Deuteronomy 7:2-3)?**

The very fact that God did command this of His people demonstrates an act of love and mercy, for these heathen tribes were merci-

less, ruthless butchers that sacrificed humans on their pagan alters to their false gods.

Our just, loving, heavenly Father had to sit up in heaven and look down as these heathen sacrificed their first born sons and virgin daughters, some tribes even cutting out their hearts and organs to offer their false gods which did not even exist. Another ungodly practice which the Canaanites performed was called a “foundation sacrifice.” When a family was getting ready to build a house they would sacrifice their youngest child and place his body inside one of the walls. This was supposed to bring a more prosperous life to the rest of the family that lived in the house.

Although the worship of the pagan god Baal and his goddess wife Ashtoreth were among the primary gods worshipped, there were perhaps hundreds of other gods that were also worshipped and/or received sacrifices.

Often these heathen tribes would conquer neighboring tribes bringing their captives to the altars for sacrifices. The human pain and suffering that was caused, and the amount of blood that was spilled on those altars to these false gods was so enormous that it is almost unimaginable to the human mind.

Their sin of idolatry and sacrifices was like a cancer that had to be stopped, not only to preserve the lives of millions to be, but also to prevent them from marrying into the tribes of Israel and bringing with them their pagan rituals and beliefs.

Many theologians wonder why God did not wipe them out sooner.

At What Point Does a Good Man Take a Stand?

First of all, we must understand what a good man is. The truth

of the matter is that the Scriptures tell us that no man of his own self is good.

“For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not.” (Ecclesiastes 7:20)

“But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags. “ (Isaiah 64:6)

“The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. Corrupt are they, and have done abominable iniquity: there is none that doeth good. God looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, that did seek God. Every one of them is gone back: they are altogether become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.” (Psalm 53:1-3)

“And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God” (Matthew 19:17) Jesus here is implying that if He is good, then He must also be God in the flesh, because only God is good.

“As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that 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.” (Romans 3:10-12)

So the only way that one can become good — or perhaps a better word would be righteous — is through his faith in Jesus Christ, not by anything that he by himself can do (good works).

“Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight...” (Romans 3:20)

“For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.” (Romans 3:23)

“But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.” (Ro-

mans 4:5)

“For by grace are ye saved through faith (in Jesus Christ); and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.” (Ephesians 2:8-9)

Understanding Your Opponent

When God looks down from heaven he sees two types of people; saved and lost, or good and evil, or righteous and unrighteous, or unsaved sinners and saved sinners (saints.) Saints are those who have been sanctified. We become saints through our faith in Christ.

Although man comes in all races, creeds and colors, God chooses to view man in only two categories. Should not a righteous man also view his fellow man in those same two categories? If he would it would make the matter of self defense much easier to deal with.

If a man is a child of God, you are dealing with a man that has a new nature. Although he will still sin, when he does, the Holy Spirit in him will strongly grieve his conscience (soul).

“Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.” (Romans 6:6)

“That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts.” (Ephesians 4:22)

“Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds.” (Colossians 3:9)

“Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump.” (1 Corinthians 5:7)

“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.” (2

Corinthians 5:17)

“And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.” (Ephesians 4:30)

When you are dealing with people in the world, this is one category of people that you will be dealing with, so if you are a Christian, you are to deal with them as brothers.

Who is Your Brother?

For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.” (Matthew 12:50) (See also Mark 3:35).

Another point of interest regarding the matter of the mother of Jesus is recorded in **Luke 11:27-28** where a woman in the crowd attempted to bring praise to Mary the mother of Jesus, and Jesus gently rebuked her:

And it came to pass, as he spake these things, a certain woman of the company lifted up her voice, and said unto him, Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps (breasts) which thou hast sucked. But he said, *Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it.*

Jesus never meant for his earthly mother or any other human being to be glorified or worshipped in any way.

The other category of people that you will be dealing with is the unrighteous, the lost, and the unsaved sinner.

I do not believe that every lost sinner out there is a violent person that would not think twice about seriously injuring you, and then brag about it to their friends, but there are plenty out there that would. These are the ones that you would be most likely to confront physi-

cally. Remember that all it takes is one to put you in your grave.

Should this be the case, you should know as much about your opponent as you can and as quickly as you can. This will enhance your chances of victory should you be forced to fight.

Always Attack the Weaknesses of an Opponent

As a trained martial artist I would, first of all, note his foundation, how he plants his feet to the ground. This generally gives an indication as to the functional capabilities of his upper body. If his feet are not properly positioned he will lack power in his punches as well as his ability to move.

It does not matter how big or strong a person is, or how bad his attitude may be, if he has not had professional training, he will have many weaknesses.



If you were to chop down a large tree, you would not climb to the top and start cutting your way down, but rather you would chop away at the base. You handle attackers in the same fashion. It does not matter how large an attacker is, if he can't stand he can't be aggressive towards you.

Reading an opponent's physical foundation is merely a science of body

mechanics. But what about his heart? That is also a part of his foundation. Understanding an opponent's heart is a very important part of self defense and will, more likely than not, determine your decision as in when to strike or how much force to apply.

What does the Bible say about the foundation of an unsaved sinner? What are his capabilities? What is in his heart?

“An ungodly man diggeth up evil: and in his lips there is as a burning fire.” (Proverbs 16:27)

“And he said, That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man. For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: All these evil things come from within, and defile the man.” (Mark 7:20-23)

“But he that heareth, and doeth not, is like a man that without a foundation built an house upon the earth; against which the stream did beat vehemently, and immediately it fell; and the ruin of that house was great.” (Luke 6:49)

It is said that you can take a fool and educate him, but when you are done, all you will have is an educated fool. It is the foolish man who has chosen a faulty foundation and as a result, the rest of his house will be in disarray, for the foolish man is not capable of making Godly decisions based on true love or righteousness, for it is not in his heart.

“The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?” (Jeremiah 17:9)

“The tongue of the just is as choice silver: the heart of the wicked is little worth.” (Proverbs 10:20)

“Before destruction the heart of man is haughty, and before honour is humility.” (Proverbs 18:12)

“Be not thou envious against evil men, neither desire to be with them. For their heart studieth destruction, and their lips talk of mischief.” (Proverbs 24:1-2)

“He that is of a proud heart stirreth up strife: but he that putteth his trust in the LORD shall be made fat. He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool: but whoso walketh wisely, he shall be delivered.” (Proverbs 28:25-26)

“O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things. But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.” (Matthew 12:34-36)

In Matthew 12:34-37 Jesus is speaking to the unbelieving Pharisees who scorned and blasphemed him. In other words, these words of Scripture are for all those who have not placed their faith and trust in him, the lost sinner.

“For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.” (Matthew 12:37)

This verse tells us that a man’s words can either justify him, or condemn him. What are some of the words that can justify a man?

“That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the Scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.” (Romans 10:9-11)

Note that there is no mention of works. The teachings of ZEN, states that your good works in this life will determine your reward in

the next reincarnated life to come. As a Christian just believe. For if one truly believes he will obey and good works will follow. All that the thief on the cross had to do in order to be with the Lord in eternity was to believe. When the Philippian jailer asked Paul what he must do to be saved, he was told to **“believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved...”**

There is a scarlet thread that runs through the Scriptures depicting a picture of salvation in every book of the Bible. One of my favorite examples of this is found in the book of Numbers, Chapter 21.

The Fiery Serpents

At a time when Moses was leading the people through the wilderness the people spoke against God and against Moses complaining about the lack of food and water, thus God chastised the people (Numbers 21:6-9):

And the LORD sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and much people of Israel died. Therefore the people came to Moses, and said, We have sinned, for we have spoken against the LORD, and against thee; pray unto the LORD, that he take away the serpents from us. And Moses prayed for the people. And the LORD said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live. And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole, and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived.



All God wanted from his people is for them to believe in him, to take him at his word and believe.

Yes, Moses placed the brass serpent on a pole and erected it in the middle of the camp making easy access for all to see should they be bitten by a serpent. That's all they had to do, believe God's word and live. However, I'm sure that there were many that were bitten by the fiery serpents that did not believe God's words and probably tried everything that they could of their own works to cure the snake bites, such as trying to suck the poisonous venom out or packing the bite wound with herbs or mud.

God said believe, look, and live, just as he tells us today. Believe in his word, look to his Son (who was also lifted high on a pole) and live.

“And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.” (John 3:14-15)

Man Has a Choice as to the Final Destination of His Soul-Spirit

Salvation is offered equally to all men (**Romans 10:12-15**):

For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!

So these are some of the words that can justify a man. When these words come from the heart (man's innermost being) indicating belief, it opens the door for the Holy Spirit to enter. From this point on throughout eternity we have an advocate with the Father.

“My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:” (I John 2:1).

When we have an advocate with the Father, this means we as children of God will not receive a judgment of condemnation for our

sins, in other words we shall not be condemned.

“He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.” (John 3:18)

“He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.” (John 3:36)

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.” (John 5:24)

There is no verse in the Bible that indicates that a child of the most high God will ever stand before a judgment of condemnation. This judgment is strictly reserved for unbelievers.

The Bible speaks of two judgments. The Great white throne judgment is where the unrighteous sinners shall be judged with condemnation, as well as, be rewarded (be recompensed) for their deeds in the flesh.

“And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.” (Revelation 20:11)

“And the sea gave up the dead who were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead who were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.” (Revelation 20:13-15)

“But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire

and brimstone: which is the second death.” (Revelation 21:8)

The second judgment the Bible speaks of is the judgment seat of Christ. Here in these next few verses, the Apostle Paul is talking to born again believers.

“But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.” (Romans 14:10)

“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, According to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.” (2 Corinthians 5:10)

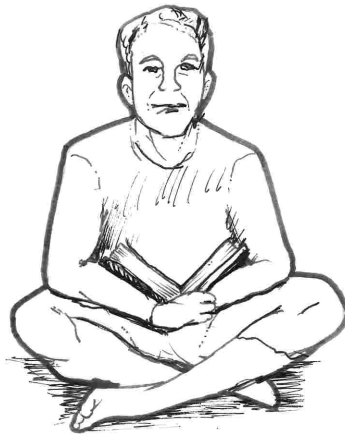
Unlike the great white throne judgment of condemnation for the unsaved; the judgment seat of Christ will deal with reward (or loss of reward) for believers.

Handling Hostile Situations

Always try to out-think your opponent before you have to out-fight him. Should you enter into a situation where you feel that somebody has done you wrong try quoting Scripture to them, preferably one that may pertain to the problem at hand or one concerning love.

If the person that you are dealing with is a believer, or even an unsaved sinner that respects the Bible as God's word, you stand a good chance of resolving your disagreement without fighting. This is not always the case with the unsaved sinner but should definitely be your first option.

If you do not have any Bible verses memorized it would not take a lot of effort to open to the book of Proverbs and select a few choice verses. There seems to be one for every situation. Memorize them. They may get you out of a jam some day. There is an immeasurable amount of wisdom to be found in the Proverbs, free for the taking, "seek and ye shall find!"



When a Man's Ways Please the Lord He Maketh Even His Enemies To Be At Peace With Him (Proverbs 16:7)

From my work as a karate instructor I have found this verse to be so true and have witnessed it at work many times. Everybody that comes into a karate school has a need to fulfill and that is why they are there. A good instructor will evaluate and attempt to meet that individual's needs as quickly as possible or he may lose a potential student.

Many times I would see somebody walking down the street towards my studio with anger, hurt and /or pain written all over their demeanor. Often I would prepare for a hostile meeting as they walked through the front door of my studio and into my office, however most of the time they would look around at the surrounding tranquil atmosphere, and the anger would dissipate and be replaced with an indescribable peace.

Yes, just the name of Jesus seems to bring peace, even to the unrighteous. Even the non-believer knows deep down inside that if there is anybody that would be fair and square with them, and would honestly give them a fair shake, if there is anybody that would accept them unconditionally for who they are and give them an unconditional love and respect due to a fellow human being, it would be if anybody, a follower of Jesus Christ.

Everybody knows that peace, love, understanding and mercy are traits of a Christian.

Once while I was at the park on a sunny, warm summer San Diego day just finishing a run, I was sitting by my van and I noticed a rather shabbily dressed man (he appeared to be homeless) walking

across the park towards me. He ended up walking straight up to me and asked for some change. He said that he had not eaten much in the last couple of days. At that time I inquired of him as to why he had walked past the rest of the parked cars and blankets of people saying nothing to them but walked directly up to me and asked me for money? He said that he had noticed my bumper sticker of the fish (a Christian symbol) and figured that if there were anybody in that park that would help him it would be me. That touched my heart and I ended up taking him with me to a Chinese buffet and then returned him to the park.

I have heard some people comment that Christians are not the only group that exercises charity, and that even non-believing atheists contribute to, and or establish charitable organizations that help the needy. This is true; however, dollar for dollar, good deed for good deed, atheists do not even come close to matching the contributions to society that are made by Christians or Christian organizations.

Three Potential Fight Situations

There are three basic ways a fight can begin:

- 1) Your adversary will start out bullying you, testing your confidence followed by pushing and shoving ... then it's on!
- 2) He will come up to you, square off and tell you that he's gonna rip your lips off ... then it's on!!
- 3) You can be jumped on from your blind side ... then it's on!!!

Each of these situations requires a different solution. Before we look at these three potential fight situations, let's have an understanding of what is, more likely than not, the number one cause of all fights... that is PRIDE, the first sin that was ever committed.

What do the Scriptures say about pride?

In the book of Proverbs it tells us that God hates six things
(Proverbs 6:16-19):

These six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.

Although each of these actions are potential instigators of fighting and strife, notice that PRIDE is number one on God's list of things that he hates.

What else do the Scriptures say about pride?

“Pride goeth before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall.” (Proverbs 16:18)

“Only by pride cometh contention: but with the well advised is wisdom.” (Proverbs 13:10)

“In the mouth of the foolish is a rod of pride.” (Proverbs 14:3)

“A man's pride shall bring him low: but honour shall uphold the humble in spirit.” (Proverbs 29:23)

Often we hear of senseless loss of lives in drive-by shootings that are often caused by a proud look or the stabbing and shootings that happen in party type atmospheres where drugs and alcohol are prevalent and some “fool” thinks that somebody may have looked at him wrong. Yes, the proud can be a most vicious adversary.

The Tongue

The second mention on God's list of things that he hates is a lying tongue. The sixth mention involves an out of control tongue.

Motivated by pride or an unloving heart, the tongue may very well be responsible for more discord, contentions and physical confrontations than any other source.

So many times, fight situations could be calmed if one of the individuals involved could exercise a tranquil tongue. Sometimes it is not what one says but how he says it that produces results. Even the expression on one's face as he speaks or body language is a factor in how the party that is being spoken to receives the message.

There are two reasons that God created man with eyebrows. One reason is to keep perspiration from rolling down into the eyes. The other reason is to help man communicate through facial expressions.

For example, how many times have men and women in dating situations sat across from each other at a dinner or romantic music in front of a fireplace and with minimal conversation communicate well with the eyes and facial expressions? These factors should be considered when attempting to calm a potential conversation turned violent.

The book of James chapter 3 is a chapter that is devoted to the tongue and its power (and how true faith will control the tongue). James compares the power of the tongue to a bit in a horse's mouth and how by controlling the horse's mouth you can turn its whole body.

And the tongue is compared to a rudder on a ship, how it can control a large vessel even though it is in the midst of a storm being tossed about by strong winds and angry waves.

He compares the tongue to a small kindled fire that can burn down a forest and even send a man into hell. Yes, the Scriptures give

us a mighty warning of the power of the tongue, should we not heed it?

James 3:8 tells it like it is: **“But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.”**

The tongue weighs about one ounce, but can bring you tons of trouble.

The tongue is only about five inches long, but can destroy a 6’6” 250 lb. muscular man.

I have personally learned over the years never to make a decision with anger in my heart. I’m sure that there have been many relationships broken because of somebody’s slip of the tongue. We are all just human and although we are able to forgive, it is humanly impossible to forget.

A very wise elderly gentleman once gave me some advice that I shall never forget. He said, “Words can slice. Never cut somebody to the bone even though you can.”

The tongue can play a major roll in self-defense and often has the power to stop or start a fight.

Fight Situation #1—the Bully

Let’s look at our possible fight situation No. 1, the bully.

There is no average bully; they seem to be powered by different motives. Some by a high degree of self-pride, while some by hatred or lack of confidence. For some reason they are not satisfied with themselves. Some people just hate good.

The Apostle Paul describes the days that we live in as having an abundance of these people in our society:

This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. (2 Timothy 1) For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. (2 Timothy 3:1-5)

If we can, we are to turn and walk away from such people, but that is not always possible for sometimes trouble follows those who turn away. Some troublemakers have a shorter fuse than others and would be quicker to initiate a physical attack. Each individual situation would have to be determined by its own merit.

As a general rule it is good to give a guy three strikes before you consider him out-of-there! I mean, you want to give this guy as much of a break as possible, so that if you do have to hurt this person to keep him off of you, the power of right will be on your side and you know that you are just doing what you have to do, no guilty conscience afterwards.

This general rule does not apply when an adversary is being verbally abusive, physically threatening, and is getting up into your face with violence on his mind.

I have found it a good practice, especially if I'm not in a position to walk away, to try to bring the incident to a quick closure. The longer it continues the more out of control it can become. Sometimes it is the hunt and not the kill that excites a bully.

I have had (and sometimes still do) experiences where I have crossed paths with bullies. They knew nothing of my martial arts

expertise, and I did not mention it either. Although in these cases there was no doubt in my mind that I had and have the ability to quickly defuse the situation by using sudden brute force, I find that to be extremely distasteful, for as a Christian I feel that it is better to receive a wrong than to hand one out.

Whenever I am encountered by a bully that verbally threatens me with physical violence and I feel that the situation will ultimately end up with us fighting no matter what I do or say, I will in a last attempt to quell the conflict (perhaps he is cursing and shaking out of control) by using as much wisdom, meekness and soft speech as possible. Perhaps I might say something like: "I am sorry that you feel the way that you do. It is my desire to be friendly with everybody. I have no desire to fight with you. I do not want to assault your pride, nor do I wish to have anyone assault mine. There is no need for you to threaten me with violence, I am not afraid of you. If you want to do it, don't talk about it, just do it, but be prepared to pay a concrete price for your actions." This is not meant to be a threat of any type, but only a last resort statement by me to try to make him think about what he is about to do; to make him realize that, in one way or another, he will be held accountable for his actions. I would say this to him only if I felt that he is seconds away from physically striking out at me. I am trying to make him think. As long as he is thinking he is less apt to become physical.

They will, usually, find that their scare tactics did not work and begin to reconsider the situation. Then, they will go on their own way. If this did not work and the bully continued to get up into my face with intent, then I would step back out of his hands range and warn him not to come close to me. If he continued to do so I would consider that to be a danger to my health and well-being. If he continued to advance towards me with a threatening attitude, I perhaps, then, would

proceed with a first strike. It is dangerous and not a good practice to allow a bully to put his hands on you or manhandle you. This just causes his confidence to grow, while his respect for you diminishes.

Body Buttons

There are certain buttons on the body that must be pushed when you enter your self-defense mode. Some of these buttons will be on your opponent; some of the buttons will be within yourself.

Some of the buttons on your opponent are the eyes, throat, nose, temple, solar plexus, lower ribs, groin, knees, shins, and various nerve centers. When you push one of these buttons properly you will get results, you must have confidence in this. When one of these buttons are pushed it will cause the biggest and strongest of attackers to drop like 100 lbs. of lead.

No matter how much this attacker is trying to intimidate you or how ugly a face he is making, one good shot can change the whole picture. Any style of martial arts can teach you about these buttons.

Perhaps the most important button that you need to learn is the button within, the Warrior button. This does not mean that every time you push this button someone dies, but it does mean that when it is pushed, you become ready to do whatever it takes as quickly as possible to remedy a dangerous and/or potential deadly situation, even if it means the taking of a human life in order to protect the life of yourself or a loved one. The biggest problem with most good men in the area of self-defense is locating and controlling the button. Once the first punch is thrown the physiological barrier seems to break and we are more apt to put our all into the fight. Crossing that barrier can be difficult for some people to deal with.

There are many who have come into martial art training and

learned the katas (forms), self defense techniques, basics, and the kicking and punching, but never made it to be the polished black belt that they had set out to be because they never found (usually due to lack of sparring) and mastered that “warrior button.” It is attitude not aptitude that decides one’s altitude in life.

It is a desirable trait in a martial artist to be able to come from a complete state of calm, press the “warrior button”(if and when necessary) and then release that button (at the proper God-given time) and return to the complete state of calm.

The problem is that most of the time, by the nature of the good man, he is trying to think of a way to resolve the trouble without hurting anyone while his adversary is trying to think of a way to hurt the good man. Yes, learning to control that button is perhaps the key ingredient in self-defense. Self-defense is 90% attitude and 10% body mechanics.

So a potential fight situation comes your way Christian, and you have decided that you are not going to allow yourself to be physically pushed, grabbed, or punched needlessly. This is just not going to happen. When you have pre-decided at what point you will hit that button, that’s 90% of it.

Between the time that the bully starts in on you verbally and the time that you actually press that button is known as the grace period. This is the time to do what good men do, practice Christianity — to make an honest effort to defuse the situation.

As a Christian I try to look at the bully as a sick person, or a person with a problem and deal with him accordingly. You never know what is going through a person’s mind or the heavy burdens that he may be carrying. I want to be merciful to the end.

However, no matter how bad this person’s problem, I have no intention of being physically abused because of it. And I know that if I

have to fight someone, he may not make it home that day. I don't want that to happen.

What does the Bible say about defusing a potential fight situation? One of my favorite Proverbs and perhaps the best advice in defusing a troubled moment is found in **Proverbs 15:1**: **“A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger.”**

During this grace period you should be trying your Christian best to give the bully soft answers. I mean go the extra mile. The Scriptures do tell us to walk the extra mile.

We Are to Walk the Extra Mile

The term “walk the extra mile” comes from the period of time in which the Roman government ruled over the Jewish people. It was a Roman law designed to preserve the strength of the Roman soldiers. If a soldier told a Jewish subject to carry his sword or armor, he was required to do so for the length of one mile. Jesus says to carry it not one mile, but rather two miles. **“And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain.”** (Matthew 5:41) The Lord Jesus is trying to tell us to make that extra effort to get along.

Similar teachings are found in the book of Proverbs:

“Better it is to be of an humble spirit with the lowly, than to divide the spoil with the proud.” (Proverbs 16:19)

“He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a



city.” (Proverbs 16:32)

Yes, these are indeed good words to live by. However there are some bully types in society that will not accept a soft answer and will strike, should you turn your back to walk away. Never take your eyes off of an assailant- back away until you have made a safe distance to turn. We are to be longsuffering, but not foolish. We are to be compassionate, but not stupid. Jesus says:

“Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.” (Matthew 10:16)

There are some people out there that are just looking for trouble, they seem to thrive on it, and may have it planted firmly in their mind that they want to fight with you. Should you come across one as foolish as this, especially if he is under the influence of alcohol or drugs, you may end up fighting no matter how much you dislike the idea. With just a little wisdom and a little discernment a person such as this is not difficult to spot.

There comes a time when conversation becomes void and one must take a stand. There are times when a good offense can be your best defense. The Scriptures have advice for every occasion including this one.

“Go from the presence of a foolish man, when thou perceivest not in him the lips of knowledge.” (Proverbs 14:7)

“Speak not in the ears of a fool: for he will despise the wisdom of thy words.” (Proverbs 23:9)

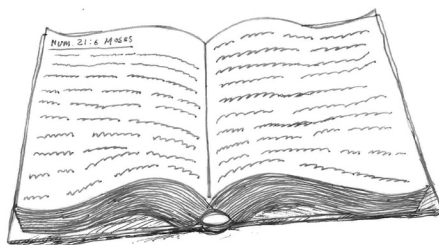
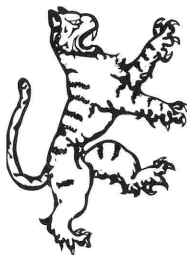
If I have told a potential attacker whom I have deemed as violent to stay his distance from me (out of striking range) and he persists to advance towards me, pressing me for space as I back step and have no escape, he is being foolish and it is best for me to speak no longer in his ears, for he will despise the wisdom of my words and may even initiate a first strike against me.

What is Considered “Your Space”?

The average martial artist is taught that he is within his rights to protect his “aura,” which is the extended arms distance in a circumference around the body. In most cases that is considered to be your space. People inside this aura can cause you bodily harm.

Some people can come into this space because you allow them to, such as a family member or a loved one, but not for those who wish you harm. There are times when this rule should be forfeited such as in crowded public places. Those who have not yet reached adulthood should not be as protective of the “aura” for it is in the nature of the adolescent to horse play.

Common sense (a form of discernment) is certainly one of the dominant factors in self-defense. I know of no martial arts instructor that would advocate his student’s actions should they punch somebody that brushed against them at the shopping mall or kicked someone who pats them on the back and jokingly calls them a chump. No, this is not what is meant by protecting your “aura”. However when you justly protect your “aura,” remember that concentration is the catalyst that activates self-defense.



Achieving a Complete Peace

Concentration comes from within. Should you ever be confronted by a bully, your first step of defense had better be concentration. There is usually nobody in the crowd to help you, so do not expect anyone to.

Whatever you are going to do to help yourself is going to come from within, not from external help. Go within yourself. Resort to the spirit, and/or Spirit that you have within, for there lays your inner strength.

“That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man.” (Ephesians 3:16)

So, as Christians we do have strength within us and concentration is a must. But when it comes time to “getting busy” with the physical part of self- defense you should have some knowledge of kicking and /or punching. This is what ultimately wins physical confrontations.

It does not take a lot of karate lessons to gain sufficient know-how to defend yourself. The hearts of most systems (different styles of karate) are the basics (kicks, blocks, punches, and kick-punch combinations) and self defense techniques that are taught in the first belt curriculum. This is what is known as the bread-and-butter techniques

of the system.

No matter how long a person studies in his particular style of martial arts or how high his rank is, when it comes to “duke’n it out” on the streets he will usually reach for his bread-and-butter techniques to pull him through.

Should a person get involved in a martial art school for training, he would probably obtain a belt in about six months time or less. Yes, even the first belt knowledge obtained by most systems of martial arts can bring a certain amount of confidence and peace, however for the Christian we realize that true peace comes from knowing Jesus Christ.

“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.” (John 16:33)

“Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” (Romans 5:1)

“For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.” (Romans 14:17)

“And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 4:7)

“Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.” (Philippians 4:9)

So, through the peace of God we can overcome the fears of the world, including the fear of death.

“And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.” (Matthew 10:28)

True peace is for the believer, those who have placed their faith and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ. Nowhere in the Scriptures does it

indicate that a nonbeliever has peace or true happiness, nor do the Scriptures indicate that God will do anything for a nonbeliever or even a lukewarm believer.

Here the apostle James is talking to Christians (**James 1: 5-8**):

If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord. A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.

Here the Scriptures indicate that God will do nothing for the man whose faith wavers. You either take a stand for him or you are against him. There is no room for wishy washy in-between fence riders. And why should he do anything for the unsaved sinner who does not even believe in God's work?

Should God bless the sinner that rejects his only begotten Son? I think not.

Reader, if you have not placed your faith and trust in Jesus Christ, your prayers may not go any higher than the ceiling. The next time you are in a pinch and attempt to pray to God think this next verse over carefully.

“Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth.” (John 9:31)

This verse tells us that the first prayer that God will hear from any man is the prayer of accepting his will or work. This is not to say that God, if it be his will, would not answer a prayer of an unsaved sinner in order to draw him to salvation.

Jesus Talking to the Unsaved

Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? *“Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.”* (John 6:28-29)

“...him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.” (John 6:37)

Again, Jesus is giving an invitation to all men, to establish a personal relationship with him.

“And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.” (John 6:40)

“And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God. (Notice here that Thomas refers to Jesus as his God.) Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.” (John 20:28-29)

(Also see: Deuteronomy 6:4, Acts 20:26, I John 5:7, Gen. 4:22, Isaiah 9:6, Phil.2:6, I John 5:20, John 1:1,10,14, John 10:30,33, I Timothy 3:16, Titus 2:13, Hebrews 1:8, Revelation 1:6)

“...Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.” (John 7:37)

Again, the offer of a personal relationship with him:

“Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.” (John 14:23)

This is when man achieves true peace. God does not make his abode with the unrighteous but with him that confesseth the Lord Jesus.

“Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.” (Matthew 10:32-33)

Yes, true peace is achieved through faith in Christ Jesus. As a Christian I have found much comfort in every jot and tittle of God’s Holy Word. I will follow him through life and trust him in death.

“And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.” (Hebrews 9:27)

As far as I’m concerned when my earthly life is finished, and my sinful flesh is laid to rest, the headstone may read as follows:

Here lies the fleshly remains of

Herbert Lee Patus

Born: Aug. 21, 19—

Died:.....NEVER DID, he just went home to be with Jesus

...and date it.

As an accomplished Chinese Kenpo Black Belt, I really have no fear of anything or anybody harming me physically.

If it came down to it, I would survive, even if it means gouging out eyes, crushing groins, or smashing an attacker’s knees. Whatever it takes, I will survive until my appointed time. And as a Christian, when I do reach my appointed hour of death, I go to be with Jesus. What could be better than that?

The Final Victory Over Death

“So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be

brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. (Because man is not able to keep the laws, he needs grace.) But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.” (I Corinthians 15:54-58)

Yes, the Scriptures tell us that when a believer is absent from his earthly body, he is present with the Lord.

“We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.” (2 Corinthians 5:8)

And where is the Lord now? According to **Hebrews 12:2**, **“...Jesus ...is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.”** (which is in heaven.)

Again we are told in **Colossians 3:1**, **“If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.”**

These assurances of Scripture give me a great deal of personal peace. When it comes down to it, everybody in this world is looking for peace of mind in their own way, even the bullies. It’s just a matter of how they go about it.

The nonbeliever seeks peace through worldly pleasures and the spiritual man through the Word of God.

And Christian, even though you may be at total peace with God through your faith in Christ, the knowledge of self defense will definitely increase your confidence and make you feel better about your earthly life.

So, if you lack defense skills and fear that self defense classes are a violation of Scriptures, do not be deceived. Learn to defend yourself and your family, for it is God's will that you do.

Fight Situation #2—I'm Gonna Rip Your Lips Off

Here we look at a situation where an adversary squares off to you and tells you he's gonna rip your lips off. This adversary does not wish to talk, he just wants to fight!

He may be a racist, bigot, or a show-off looking for the attention that he never had as a child. You never know what kind of psychopath or unbalanced person may suddenly and unexpectedly cross your path. Yes, there are those who can draw a negative response towards, or even hate, you for no reason.

I have met some people to whom it seemed like we really "hit it off" upon our initial introduction to each other. However, once I handed them my Kenpo business card and invited them to attend a class, their demeanor would change to hostility. Some even became verbally insulting, and acted as if they wanted to fight with me (I have low tolerance for such people). I knew that it was an issue about pride, but couldn't fully figure it out until I heard karate's Full Contact Heavy Weight Champion, Joe Lewis, comment on the matter. Apparently he has had similar experiences. He said, "Some people will look at you and feel that you represent what they wished they could be; but don't have the guts to become. And they will hate you for it"

Do not deceive yourself, it is a wild asphalt jungle out there and when it comes right down to it, the basic laws of nature still apply; only the strong survive. If you don't believe this, all you have to do is turn on the television news or pick up a newspaper to learn of the wickedness that runs rampant in America today. We all would like to believe that mankind is good and things will get better and men will

work everything out. The fact of the matter is that violence is on the rapid increase.

All too often we hear of parents abusing their children, beating them to death or molesting them. Children sue their parents or kill them. Women are beaten, raped and killed daily. There are violent carjackings, muggings and people being beat to death without just cause or mercy.

Yes, this does seem to be the age of “if it feels good, do it” society. This happens “all when man does what seems right in his own eyes.”

“The ways of a man are clean in his own eyes.” (Proverbs 16:2)

We are told the same thing again in, **Proverbs 21:2, “Every way of a man is right in his own eyes.”**

Even mass murderer Charles Manson, to this day, believes that his actions were correct. In his own eyes he has done nothing wrong.

Thank God that most men do not act out their evil as Manson did, but all men have a certain amount of evil in them and all men under the right set of circumstances are capable of doing evil to any degree.

The type of people who you would have to defend yourself from are those that are doing you wrong, but are doing “what is right in their own eyes.”

In order to survive in an environment such as this, it is a good policy to stay prepared.

Do not allow yourself to be in the wrong place at the wrong time (there are times when trouble can be anticipated).

A soft answer turneth away wrath.

A good attitude can take you a long way. You can catch more bees

with honey than you can with vinegar.
Discretion is the better part of valor.
A good run may be better than a poor stand.

All this is sound advice and is good to know. However when all else fails, the knowledge of self defense can pull you through.

So now you have some “IDIOT” in front of you that is bound and determined to fight with you. You have exhausted all of your good measures and it becomes obvious that you must fight in order to defend yourself.

Most bullies do not wish to fight with somebody that is bigger or stronger than them; it is not in their cowardly nature. If they did not think that they could overcome you, they probably would not be troubling you, thus the element of surprise would be on your side.

To Fight or Not to Fight

At this point if you are under the belief that the Scriptures do not allow one to defend himself and you are a firm believer in turning the other cheek until you drop, then prepare yourself to foolishly do so. However, if you are a good man and have decided that you are not going to stand idle and take a needless whopping or risk serious permanent injury then there are certain things that you should know in order to defend yourself.

The good man who has had training in self defense (the science of body mechanics) would automatically take over by utilizing distance and timing to defeat his adversary. When the fight is on, the trained fighter will guard what is called his critical distance. That is the distance in which you can reach out and touch or strike your opponent, or vice versa, your “aura” if you will.

When fighting, it is a major benefit to establish your “firing point” as soon as possible. The “firing point” is the position where your front foot is located at the time you are able to reach out and touch or strike your opponent with your front hand. Your firing point is where most of your attention should lay.

Do not look into the eyes of your opponent, but rather place your eyes on his upper chest. From there you can evenly monitor his hand, feet and shoulder movement. Whether he steps toward or away from you or vice versa, the firing point should be your main focus of attention.

Whenever your front foot reaches your firing point you should be busy punching with combinations. When your foot comes off of the firing point your body should be relaxed.

There is a firing point for the hands (punching) as well as a firing point for the feet (kicking). Shuffle, crossing, and spinning techniques also have their individual firing points (the science of body mechanics).

Your hands should be in front of your face for protection. The first basic rule in boxing is that if you open your hands up and your thumbs do not touch your head then your hands are too far away from your head. Learn to punch from there and then return your hands back to the same position.

As a general rule when your hands are high in front of your face, your face becomes more difficult to hit. Make it a practice to spar with hands high in front of your face. Working the speed bag is one of the best ways in which to train your hands to operate high in front of the face.

Always try to make an opponent reach for you, this will keep him off balance and force him to transfer his weight to one leg (usually his front leg). Use your timing to kick at the knee of that leg.

The knees or groin are excellent targets. If he can not stand, chances are that he can no longer be aggressive. The most delicate part of the knee is on the inside. If you cannot get to the inside of the knee, then the outside of the knee will do fine. It is generally not a good idea to kick to the front of the knee because if it is bent, you could injure your foot.

Be the Best You Can Be — Develop All That You Have

Most people who are right handed will use their right hand and a limited amount of their right leg. The rest of their body remains pretty much dormant unless they have had some type of special training (such as a martial art) to correct themselves.

A Japanese theory in martial arts is that when an attacker throws a punch, you don't just block the punch, but rather break their arm so that they cannot come at you with it again. A good method in which to render the arm useless is to strike (punch-elbow, or knee) to the inside of the arm, or grab the thumb on the right hand and twist it. If you take away the right arm of an attacker you have probably taken away his only weapon, and his will for aggression.

In a street fight, it is important that you control the thoughts of an opponent. Make him fight your fight. Do not give him time to think; do not allow him to set himself into a comfortable fighting stance. Always keep him off balance.

Your targets should be a well-balanced mixture of high-middle-low. Keep him guessing as to where you will be striking next. With your eyes focused firmly on his upper chest, all he can do is guess. Keep him guessing.

To be well rounded in self-defense on the street, one should have a good basic knowledge of boxing, grappling, and a martial art,

preferably one that teaches kicking and punching. If you are out-kicking or out-punching an adversary on the street, he will quickly turn the fight into a wrestling match if he can.

Good kicking skills as well as back up punching combinations can often prevent a wrestling match and even end a fight early.

In the art of Chinese Kenpo Karate, we profess to be masters in the art of self-defense techniques. We are taught to use a variety of our body parts as weapons.

The hand is broken down into a number of proficient weapons. The fingers, knuckles, and bones in the hand can be used to crush, bruise, break bone, and cut flesh when properly applied.

Tiger claws and crane hand techniques that are taught to the Kenpo students may accompany them to the ground should they be pressed to grapple. These are the combinations in self-defense that are desirable to make one feel in control of a fight situation.

Be Good to You — You Owe It to Yourself

Sixty to ninety minutes a night, three nights a week could change your whole outlook on life. If you are not good to yourself, do not expect anyone else to be. Take the time to train. Not only do you learn how to protect your temple but also to strengthen and preserve it.



Fight Situation #3 — Attacked From Your Blind Side

The laws of reaping and sowing are just as sure as the laws of gravity. Whatever you put into something is exactly what you will get out of it, no more, no less. This law also applies to self-defense.

In a world as troubled as the one that we live in today, we all know that we should be prepared to deal with what it dishes out. Most people are aware of the extreme violence that occurs in the streets of America today, but are not willing to take or make the time to prepare themselves for it should it come their way.

However, once a person experiences a violent situation he is

more inclined to take the proper steps to make sure that this does not happen to him again.

As a Kenpo Instructor who teaches self-defense I meet these types of people often. There has been many a person who have come into my studios with battered and broken bodies telling me stories of violent situations which they have experienced. Most of these people tell me that they are aware of the violence in the world and have been meaning to get involved in a self-defense program of some type but have never had the time.

Don't you wait until it's too late!!

In a situation where you may find yourself attacked from your blind side, my best advice to you is: Be prepared for that moment!!! Paying attention to your surroundings will decrease the chance of a surprise attack. After practice, the ability to switch into "warrior" mode will be faster.

If you have not taken the time to learn self-defense and you find yourself being attacked from your blind side, you are pretty much on your own. There is not much advice that any karate instructor can give you at that point.

If you are a big strong natural fighter maybe you can pull yourself through. If not, then a good run may be better than a poor stand. But with a little bit of training you could turn a seemingly hopeless situation into a beautiful day.

In our journey through life it is not a matter of "if" but rather "when" somebody will attempt to bully you and rub your face into the dirt in one way or another.

Christian, if you or a loved one have experienced abuse and have not had the proper training to deal with it, remember what the Lord told Joshua in the book of **Joshua, chapter seven**.

Joshua had taken a small portion of his army into a battle that

they were supposed to have won easily (the battle of Ai). Instead, they suffered a great defeat. It was then that Joshua began to throw himself a “pity party”:

And Joshua rent (tore) his clothes, and fell to the earth upon his face before the ark of the LORD until the eventide, he and the elders of Israel, and put dust upon their heads. (A sign of grieving.) And Joshua said, Alas, O Lord GOD, wherefore hast thou at all brought this people over Jordan, to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites, to destroy us? (Joshua 7:6-7)

And the LORD said unto Joshua, Get thee up; wherefore liest thou thus upon thy face? Israel hath sinned. (Joshua 7:10-11)

In other words, the Lord was telling him to get up from off of his face, stop his crying, and take care of business. If you have not been properly educated in the ways of self-defense for yourself and family maybe it is time for you to take care of business.

Fear Not — Stay Prepared and Be Strong

Other than the fear (reverence) of God for what he is capable and willing to do to those who disobey his Holy Word, the obedient believer is not to live in a state of fear. If he does, then something is wrong in his life and should be corrected. Jesus tells us in **John 14:27**, ***“Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.”***

We are told again in **2 Timothy 1:7**, **“For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound**

mind.”

Time after time God tells his people to be strong and of good courage. Three hundred eighty-six times God’s Word gives reference to his people for them not to be afraid, not to fear. Yes, we are to be strong. We are told in Proverbs 24:5, “A wise man is strong.”

God prophesied to his people through **Zechariah 8:13**, “...**fear not, but let your hands be strong.**” In **I Corinthians** we are told to watch and to be strong.

When the Lord was selecting men to accompany Gideon into battle, he sent them down to the water to drink (see **Judges 7:4-7**). Those who lapped, putting their hand to their mouth, were chosen to go into battle (because they watched while they drank). The rest had gotten down upon their knees and put their face down to the water to drink, and were sent home (because they took their eyes off the potential battle).

Even when Nehemiah was chosen by God to rebuild the walls that protected the city of God’s people, he did not lay back and wait for God to take care of his every whim. When their enemies threatened them, they prayed but, also, stayed ready for battle.

“Nevertheless we made our prayer unto our God, and set a watch against them day and night, because of them.” (Nehemiah 4:9)

“...I even set the people after their families with their swords, their spears, and their bows.” (Nehemiah 4:13)

God’s man Nehemiah told 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.” (Nehemiah 4:14)**

They maintained a state of readiness, as they worked **“...everyone with one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other**

hand held a weapon. For the builders, every one had his sword girded by his side, and so builded...” as they watched (Nehemiah 4:17-18).

“So we laboured in the work: and half of them held the spears from the rising of the morning till the stars appeared.” (Nehemiah 4:21)

Sometimes God’s Word is referred to as a sword because its truths are piercing to the depths of our innermost being. However, in this case it is obvious that the sword referred to here is a weapon of war.

God (Through David) Told His People To Carry a Sword

“Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a two-edged sword in their hand; To execute vengeance upon the heathen.” (Psalm 149:6-7)

“To execute upon them the judgment written: this honour have all his saints. (Saints = sanctified ones, believers.) Praise ye the LORD.” (Psalm 149:9)

There are those who believe that a two-edged sword is referring to God’s Word. However, **Hebrews 4:12** tells us that God’s Word is sharper than any two-edged sword. This would make a two-edged sword a weapon of war and not a reference to God’s word.

A Little Training Can Take You a Long Way

When people come into my studio for training I tell them that

they should sign up for, at the least, a six-month program. Even if a person does not wish to train to become a Black Belt, six months of karate training would give them some good basic defense skills that could change their whole outlook on life.

There is generally a large turnover of students in most karate schools due to busy schedules and priorities. People seem to come into my schools with an empty cup and will stay until their cup is filled. Everyone seems to have a different size cup. Once they feel that their needs have been met, they are gone.

I have had many white belt (beginner) students, whom have studied with me for as little as two months, tell me of instances when their newfound knowledge of self-defense saved them and loved ones from harm.

I had a woman call my studio one day inquiring about Kenpo lessons for her ten-year-old son. It was the same story that has been told to many a karate instructor. Her son was being picked on in school and would often come home black-eyed and bloody. He did not want to go to school, could not concentrate on his schoolwork, and his grades were dropping, as well as, his self-esteem.

“We’ve tried everything,” the mother said, “and nothing seems to work. We thought that we would give your school a try, and the six-month program sounds good.” After about three to four months into the program, I received a call from his mother. She sounded disturbed. She began to question me about what I do to control the fight skills that I teach my students, and how do I assure that these skills are not abused. She went on and on.

Finally her concern came out. She said that five boys had followed her son home from school to bully him and he turned loose on them. The school principal had called and told her that he had bloodied up all five of them. When I further questioned her, she admitted

that these were some of the boys who have been picking on him for the past year and she was concerned that he would go about “cleaning house” on those who have wronged him and have been troubling him.

There was a long pause of silence, and then I replied, “Ma’am, when you first brought him to me, his spirit was down. He had no confidence and his body was bruised. This is no longer the case. The shoe could have been on the other foot. You could have been calling me to tell me that my classes did not work, your son is no better from the training that he has received and that he had gotten beaten up badly or even stabbed at school. But this is not the case. When your son showed up for his first lesson, he did not think he could do it. I reached into my Bible and shared a verse with him that may, very well, have permanently changed his attitude in life. **‘For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he.’ (Proverbs 23:7)** If this little guy thinks that he can hit like a heavyweight, he can. If he thinks he can move like a lightweight, then he can. I began training him on this premise.”

I told her that I had done the job that she had paid me to do and that at some point the parents have to accept the responsibility of molding the child’s heart.

It is not the gun or knife that is evil, but the heart of him which holds it. The Scriptures do not tell us that money is evil, but rather the love of money (which comes from the heart) is where the evil lays (see **I Timothy 6:10**).

I went on to tell her that the best way that I knew to set a child’s footsteps on the correct path of righteousness would be to take him or her to a good Bible preaching church where God’s Holy Word is properly taught.

“And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.” (Ephesians 6:4)

“Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.” (Proverbs 22:6)

This verse does not guarantee that if you raise your child up in a godly church that he will come out perfect in every way. There are many God-fearing Christian parents who do raise their children in a godly manner and their children still turn out to be “bad eggs.”

What this verse seems to say is that if you raise your child up on a godly foundation and train him with the knowledge of Scripture, he would know his way back to the righteous path should he ever stray.

As a martial arts instructor I have seen many a child come into the kwoon with a broken spirit. It is a very sad sight, but I know that, more often than not, I can help and that makes it all worthwhile. It is easier to take child that is “cocky” and humble him than it is to build up one, which has had his spirit broken or crushed.

When a child or anyone else is “cocky” their attitude is usually a “can do” positive attitude. They often think that there is nothing that they can’t do. This can even lead them to a false belief that they are indestructible and cannot be touched or harmed.

The difference between the “cocky” positive-type individual and one that has had their spirit broken (and don’t believe that they can) is attitude.

In every phase of this world attitude is everything. Without a positive “can do” attitude, one is defeated before he ever begins.

We have all heard phrases like “if you cannot dream it, you will never achieve it,” or “if you want to jump up onto a roof top you must aim for the moon.” Always aim higher than your goal if you want to achieve it.

Attitude comes down to belief or faith in yourself. If you can’t have belief or faith in yourself then don’t expect anyone else to. It has

got to start from within.

That is why I believe that **Proverbs 23:7, “Man, for as he thinketh in his heart so is he”**, is one of the most powerful verses of wisdom that the Scriptures have to offer. A person can never be anything more than he thinks he can be. The power of thought may, very well, be the most underestimated strength that a human being possesses. Before you can achieve something, you must first believe that you can.

The total sum of what a man is, first, starts with a thought, then from a thought to an action, from an action to a habit, and, finally, from a habit into his character. This is why, as a Christian, I try to surround myself with positive godly thoughts and activities as much as possible.

Can a Christian Feel Comfortable Training in a Karate School?

We have looked at some Scriptures regarding self-defense and have found instruction on the matter. Yes, the Word of God does make provisions for the righteous to defend themselves.

There is nothing wrong with studying the science of body mechanics — self-defense — however, there are demands made by some karate schools, which offend (or should offend) a child of the most high God. What are some of these offenses? Calling a mere man Master, bowing to idols, and chanting are what most Christians would be concerned about. So, let's take a closer look.

Is it Okay to Call the Head Instructor Master?

In the world of martial arts when one reaches the rank of Fourth Degree Black Belt, he is considered by most styles of karate, to be a Master Instructor, or simply, Master. When a Master brings a student up to the rank of Master, he, then, becomes a Grand Master. The Master's belt is a black belt with a red stripe that runs through the middle. The Grand Master's belt is a black belt with a yellow or white stripe that runs through the center of the belt. The colors of white and yellow are usually colors worn by beginners. The reason that the Grand Master wears these colors revolves around the oriental (Zen) philosophy that one always returns to his beginning.

In the Bible the word "Master" has several meanings depending upon the content in which the word is used.

"Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh." (Ephesians 6:5)

"Accuse not a servant unto his master." (Proverbs 30:10)

"Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh." (Colossians 3:22)

So the Scriptures indicate that man has masters according to the flesh. There are more than a half dozen different words used in the Scriptures to describe the various applications (or meanings) of master. You may come across the word master in one Scripture and it may have a completely different meaning than the word master used in another verse of Scripture.

The word that is used to describe our heavenly Master is kurios (KOO-ree-os) from Kuros (supreme); supreme in authority. God, Lord, Master.

"And it came to pass, as they departed from him, Peter said

unto Jesus, Master.” (Luke 9:33)

When one refers to a Fourth Degree Black Belt as Master, he is actually referring to a fleshly (not spiritual) title, which was obtained through the fleshly art of karate. So, in this case the word Master simply translates to... teacher.

The object of this point in Scripture is to instruct the children of God not to refer to any human as a master or supreme authority in a Spiritual sense.

**“Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal; knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven.”
(Colossians 4:1)**

“And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ.” (Matthew 23:9-10)

So the Scriptures instruct us to call no man Father, or Master in a Spiritual sense.

Although there is probably nothing wrong with calling a Fourth Degree Black Belt, Master, I call no man Master and I wish no man to call me Master. As a child of the most high King, that is my preference. I will, however, refer to those, who qualify, as being a Master Instructor.

A student should respect his instructor for the knowledge that he is receiving from him (for this knowledge more likely than not will change his way of thinking and influence his life greatly), this respect, however, should not be allowed by the Christian student to conflict with God's Word.

Most of the black belt instructors I have come across, through my many years of training, have been fairly squared-away fellows, but there are those who have become big-headed and egotistical and would not hesitate to put themselves or their teachings above God's

Word (a non-believing instructor).

Most karate tournaments are held on a Sunday (the first day of the week, the Lord's Day) rather than on Saturday. This is the main reason that I stopped participating in them. I felt that I belonged in the Lord's house on that day.

I have had more than one black belt instructor try to tell me that a student can love the Lord, be obedient to his words, and not attend Sunday church services. "After all," they say, Jesus said...

***"For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."* (Matthew 18:20)**

"See?" they argue, "You don't have to be in church to have the Lord with you."

This verse of Scripture is often taken from its intended context in order to justify one's neglect to gather in his name. In actuality, this verse is not in reference to worship. For a more complete interpretation go back a few verses to **Matthew 18:15-17**. Here, Jesus is speaking of how brethren in the church should settle their differences (**Matthew 18:15-16**):

Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.

Also, at that time (after Christ was risen), the gift of speaking in unknown tongues (other languages) was practiced in the church:

"If any man speak in an unknown tongue, let it be by two, or at the most by three, ..." (1 Corinthians 14:27)

Again, Paul speaks to the church at Corinth concerning this

matter:

“...in the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established.” (2 Corinthians 13:1)

This matter of “two or three” stems from the Mosaic Law that establishes the power of witness (see Deuteronomy 19:15), in no way, relieves a believer from gathering with the church.

Christ loved the church and even died for it. He left three commands to the church:

Baptism (Matthew 28:19).

Establish and support missionary work (Matthew 28:20).

Communion (breaking of bread) (Luke 22:19).

These are not requests or options, but commands and cannot be fulfilled by those who do not attend and participate in the functions of a local New Testament church.

Hebrews 10:25: “Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting (uplifting or doing what it takes to correct) one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.”

Christian fellowship (church attendance) will help to keep the fire of godliness burning inside. Christian fellowship can be compared to burning coals on a barbecue, as long as the coals are “gathered” in a pile, they burn red hot, but if you take those red-hot coals from the top of the pile and place it off to the side by itself, it will lose its glow and grow cold.

It is a weak excuse for those who say that they do not attend church because of the hypocrites who are there. There are hypocrites everywhere — sporting events, shopping malls, movie theaters, parties, etc. Yet, that does not stop them from attending those types of activities, just church. When one focuses his full attention on Christ, he is not as apt to notice the hypocrites.

Should one become involved in a street fight, it is likely that a crowd will gather to watch. If you take your concentration off of your opponent and place it on the crowd you may not fare so well. Always take care of business physically and spiritually.

When Thou Prayest, Enter Into Thy Closet / Pray in Secret

This is another weak and, even, foolish excuse used by those who try to justify non-church attendance. These were words of Christ Jesus from the Sermon on the Mount in **Matthew, chapter six**. However, to put these words in their properly intended context, and to obtain a fuller understanding, one should read the entire chapter and even some of the surrounding chapters.

Matthew chapter six is focused on condemning external religion and teaches that worship should be practiced with sincerity, from the heart, not as an outward display to others as was practiced in the temple by the Pharisees of that day (see Luke 18:9-14).

Our attitude towards worship was referred to by Jesus in chapter five of Matthew. In the Sermon on the Mount, “The Beatitudes.” It is here that Jesus teaches us that we are the salt of the earth and the light of the world, and that men do not light a candle and place it under a bushel but rather on top in a candle stand so that your light will shine before men.

Bowing to Idols

In the Orient, a simple bow is a salutation or greeting similar to a handshake in the United States. This in itself is a harmless gesture, which violates no Scripture.

Many of the traditional schools whose origins are from a country that has strong beliefs in Buddha (usually the Korean and Japanese styles) will often place a statue of Buddha upon the entrance of the workout area, and require that all students bow to Buddha before entering this area.



This harmless bow or salutation, when directed towards this dumb and deaf idol now becomes a stench in the nostrils of God and is an abomination unto Him. Bowing to an idol of any type is a direct violation of God's word.

If a school involves bowing to an idol of any type before entering the school or workout area, no matter how good is its martial arts program, then this would not be a good place for the Christian to study. I wish that I could offer an alternative in this area, but the Bible

leaves the obedient believer no options when it comes to the acknowledgement of idols of any type in any way...period!

Over the years there have been vast numbers of committed Christians who have chosen death by fire or torture for themselves and their families rather than bow down to idols (their reward in heaven will be great).

Should a Christian begin to compromise his beliefs (on such a vital point) in this area, then it will be just as easy to compromise in the other areas until his Christianity is “luke warm.” Remember, if you don’t take a stand for something, then you are liable to fall for anything.

Could you imagine a devout follower of Zen or Buddha entering into a Christian run martial arts studio and saying a prayer to Christ so that he could train in that particular school...I don’t think so!

So, why should they expect a Christian to violate his code of ethics in order to train with them. No, their stand is strong: you bow or you leave.

The Christian stand should be equally as strong; take your idols...and I’ll obey God.

Bowing to a mere man may or may not be a violation of Scriptures depending upon the intent of the bow. If the bow recognizes a man as being Spiritually supreme then it’s wrong.

What Do the Scriptures Tell Us About Idols?

The Scriptures address the matter of idols and is very clear in the instruction of how to deal with them. It is true that an idol can be anything that takes your devotions away from God, however in this case it is evident that the Word is addressing images made by men. Let’s look at a few verses of Scripture regarding idols.

“Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, ...” (Exodus 20:4-5)

“Lest ye corrupt yourselves, and make you a graven image, the similitude of any figure, the likeness of male or female.” (Deuteronomy 4:16)

Yes, Christian, our God takes a strong stand against idols, and speaks much about them throughout Scripture and even describes them (Psalms 115:4-9):

Their idols are silver and gold, the work of men’s hands. They have mouths, but they speak not: eyes have they, but they see not: They have ears, but they hear not: noses have they, but they smell not: They have hands, but they handle not: feet have they, but they walk not: neither speak they through their throat. They that make them are like unto them; so is every one that trusteth in them. O Israel, trust thou in the LORD: he is their help and their shield.

(See also Psalms 135:15-18.)

We are warned of idols again in the book of Romans:

“Thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege?” (Romans 2:22)

We are warned again in the book of II Corinthians: 6:16 **“and what agreement hath The Temple of God with idols? For ye are The Temple of the Living Gog;**

In another warning in the book of I John, we are told straight out — **“Little children, keep yourselves from idols.” (I John 5:21)**

The Scriptures make it very obvious to the children of God that

we are not to make or build idols of any type and bow down to them. It does not matter what the likeness of the image is or where it is located, whether it is in a karate school or even in a building that claims to be operated by an organized, scriptural church. Idols are an abomination unto God. God speaks through Isaiah and tell us why:

“I am the LORD: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images.” (Isaiah 42:8)

A simple bow from a student to the instructor is merely a sign of respect and appreciation for the knowledge he is about to or has received from his instructor. The child of God is not receiving anything from an idol of any type and, therefore, should not bow down to or display any type of respect or acknowledgment towards it.

Chanting and Emptying of the Mind

Chanting is not something that is common in most karate schools. If you come across one that does, more likely than not, it would be one of the Chinese styles Kung Fu or Tai Chi, etc. The Chinese are known for their incorporation of Zen into their arts.

I do not mean to knock the art of Kung Fu for there are good schools available with much to offer. However, of all the arts, the Kung Fu style has a tendency to be the most mystical and has the strongest ties to Zen.

Chanting is not for the Bible believing Christian. When chanting is performed it is part of the Zen spiritual philosophy. Who are they chanting to? Certainly not the God of the Bible! And what good does it do?

I find that the best way to start a work out is with a humble and sincere (from the heart) prayer to the God who knows all, hears all,

and sees all. The God in which the Christian draws his strength.

“I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.” (Philippians 4:13)

Chanting is definitely not for the Christian.

“Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.” (Colossians 2:8)

The children of God are not to use “vain repetition” when communicating with God, not even when praying.

“But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking.” (Matthew 6:7)

No, chanting is not pleasing to God!

“Be still, and know that I am God...” (Psalms 46:10)

Zen teaches one to empty the mind, however when the mind is emptied it makes way for a new mind set. This opens the door to fresh new ideas: a new way of thinking, a new doctrine if you will. This can subject the Christian to be blown and tossed about to and fro by waves of false doctrine.

The Bible tells us to be filled with the Spirit, and to meditate on God’s Word day and night: **“But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.” (Psalms 1:2) and to be content “...for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.” (Philippians 4:11)**

To the Christian, emptying the mind is a dangerous concept and not really necessary to prepare oneself for a workout or a study in the science of body mechanics (although one should try to empty out all negative thoughts and thinking, especially before a workout).

In the Kenpo classes that I teach, I use exercise to empty the mind of negative thoughts before proceeding to the teaching of the

self-defense techniques. Often I sit at my desk, quietly, watching the students as they walk through the front door of the kwoon and ready themselves for the group class soon to be conducted. Many of them are just getting off of work or from school. I can see the tensions of everyday living on their faces and in their walk. They have not left their problems outside the front door as they should but that's okay because as we begin our exercise routines those worried looks will change. I will break them down and take them back to the basics of life.

We start out light. We warm up our bodies with such exercises as push ups, sit ups, leg lifts, flip flops and kicking drills. As the pace picks up the breathing becomes heavier, then I begin to see perspiration beading up on their faces. The worried looks begin to fade and are replaced with a look of concern as to whether or not they can keep the pace with their peers. Self-esteem begins to drive them. Their minds begin to empty through physical exertion.

The pace continues. I can tell that they are no longer stressing about their previous concerns (car payments, relationship problems, household chores, unhappy job situations, etc.). All they want now is a drink of water, but they can't have water yet. We've got a class to finish.

The pace continues with very short rests between exercises. Down for more pushups, over for more sit ups, on the feet for more kicking. They soon come to the point where they are no longer concerned about water. Now all they want is a little bit of fresh air, but now is not the time to stop, for now we are riding on the line of their breaking point.

Although they may feel like giving up, they must learn to operate on that line, just like they may have to do in a self-defense situation on the street.

Yes, physical exertion has a way of emptying the mind. It is easier for the average individual to exert himself physically with a group rather than by himself in a solo workout.

As one advances in the arts he learns to push himself or empty his cup at will. He learns how to relieve stress and to become at one with pain through education, pushing and exercising the body.

When the body is exerted, the mind seems to open, cleared of the cobwebs of life and much more receptive to knowledge.

I greatly enjoy my own personal workouts. It is a special time in the day for me to push my body to its physical limits either by weight lifting, or a vicious isometric routine (push ups, sit-ups, pull-ups, dips, etc.). It is then that I utilize my concentration to the fullest, emptying my mind (not completely, but of negative thoughts) while I pump up my spirit.

I try to schedule my workouts in the morning while listening to a local Christian radio station, which broadcasts about three straight hours of good and sound biblical doctrine by various preachers. It gives me a chance to build my body and spirit at the same time, while deeply meditating on God's Word. It works great for me.

There Are Many Styles to Choose From

As to what style of martial arts would be best for you, depends on you. Due to each individual's strong and weak points one art that works well for one person may not work out, equally as well, for another. For instance, the grabbing, wrestling, throwing type arts may work better for one that is strong and has a natural aggressive grappling ability opposed to a person who does not.

The grabbing, throwing type arts are considered to be extremely

soft arts and often allows the practitioner to overcome his adversary with a minimal amount of damage to him, where as in the kicking, punching type arts the practitioner is more apt to stop an attacker with techniques such as bone-breaking type kicks, punches, eye gouges and throat chops.

A grappler could do well on a one-on-one type situation, but in a multi-person attack situation he could not afford to find himself wrestling around on the ground with one attacker due to a missed grab or throw, leaving the rest of the attackers to kick, punch, club or even stab him.

Yes, the kicking and punching type arts would have a definite advantage over the grappling type arts in a multi-person attack situation. I do not believe that the art of Judo fully prepares the practitioner for the viciousness that awaits on the streets today. I personally do not have much regard for the untrained street toughs. However many of them may have a basic knowledge of boxing and, as a general rule, it is not a good idea to attempt to grab an opponent in order to set up a throw or hip roll while he is punching at you with combinations. It is my opinion that Judo is a good sport and a great work out, but is not considered to be a martial art. Once a person has an adequate knowledge of kicking and punching, the wrestling or throwing type techniques will most certainly enhance his fighting abilities. However, learn to kick and punch first.

The Korean arts place a large emphasis on stretching and kicking, usually thrusting and locking the kicks. Although the Korean arts like all the rest offer a great deal of benefits to their practitioners, it could be a difficult art for the average person in the age bracket of thirty years old and above due to the aging process inhibiting one's natural lower body flexibility. The thrusting and locking of the kicks as taught by the hard styles have a tendency to produce hyperexten-

sion that results in damage to the joints. This paves the way for arthritis later in life.

As a general rule, the softer the art the more longevity the practitioner has in it. I have had a good number of hard stylists (black belts) come into my studios searching for an art that would not aggravate their damaged shoulders, elbows, hips and knees. Some arts are more forgiving to the body than others. If you are serious about martial art training and have a goal to obtain a black belt, you may want to take some introductory classes from each category:

A Hard style (Japanese, Okinawan, Korean)

A Soft style (Kung Fu style, one that does not chant)

A Hard-Soft style (Chinese Kenpo, or Polynesian Karate)

Choose wisely which is right for you. It often takes a year or two before the smoke clears and one is able to figure out some of the strong and weak points of the various martial arts systems.

Evaluations can often be made when a student meets and works out with friends that study in other arts, or take your art into open tournaments where all styles are welcome and you can see how your techniques work against the various techniques used by other styles.

Make your search thorough. I have met more than one black belt practitioner that has been pleased with the system in which he received his black belt, but admits that if he had it to do all over again, with the knowledge he has now, he would have chosen another style. All styles of karate have kicking and punching. The major difference between each art is the philosophy of how the kicks and punches are delivered.

The four prominent mainstream arts are Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and Okinawan. When choosing a defense school, you will usually select from one of these origins. Always remember that any art is only as good as the instructor that teaches it.

A hard stylist while defending against a punch may use a ridged block followed by a bone-crunching, hip-powered punch, while the soft stylist would probably push the punch away with a soft palm (Parry block) and follow with a four-fingered eye, or palm shot. The hard stylists are more prone to thrust and lock a kick or punch, whereas the soft stylist would snap and recoil it, ready to defend and strike again, if necessary. The following information may be of some help to you when choosing a karate school.

A Basic History of the Martial Arts

There are many different theories and claims as to the origin of the martial arts. One of the most common beliefs is that China is where the martial arts made its first big start with the Kung Fu systems.

Before the arts made their way to China, there is evidence that they evolved from India where swords and daggers greatly influenced them. Even before that, they were practiced in Egypt where, still, today the ancient art of Sabaca (the way of the snake) is practiced. The original art taught by the monks in the Shaolin Temples was a very basic art and probably had a total of four or five kicks in the entire system. At that time the arts were very basic for the evolving process

had barely started.

The Chinese added much to the fighting aspect of the arts as they would study the fighting techniques of various animals (tiger, crane, monkey, leopard, praying mantis) and incorporated these movements into the system (art).

From China, the arts evolved to Okinawan where, even, today it is kept very basic. The Okinawan systems have the fewest amounts of moves from white to black, than any of the other mainstream arts.

Although they may not have a lot of moves compared to most other systems, they demand extreme perfection for the moves that they do have. The Okinawan stylist has a tendency to place a strong emphasis on the front hand and the front foot. They feel that these weapons are the closest to their opponent, can get to the target quickest, and are usually unexpected by an opponent.

One of the biggest contributions of the Okinawan system to the martial arts is, perhaps, the farm tools that they developed into weapons. This occurred during a period of time when the Emperor forced the farmers to raise crops and then taxed them, almost, their entire harvest. This virtually turned the farmers into slaves.

When the peasant farmers rebelled, the Emperor imposed a law that any farmer who was caught with a bladed weapon was put to death. It was at this point that the peasants developed the farm tools of their trade into weapons of defense.

THE BOW (STAFF): Used to herd and defend the farm animals.



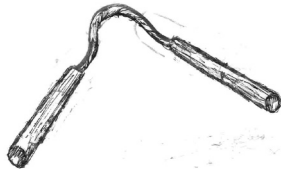
THE SAI: Used to uproot weeds, poke holes in the soil to plant seeds, and to aerate the soil. This tool was a great defense against the sword.



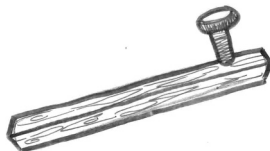
THE SICKLE: Used to harvest and or clear the land of growth.



THE NUNCHAKUS: Used to beat the freshly harvested rice, separating the husk from the rice.



THE TONFA: Used as a handle to turn the grinding wheel that crushed the wheat or rice into flour or meal. It also doubled as a beating tool to dehusk the rice. This tool was also used to defend against the sword.



Okinawan stylists are tough. I would consider them to be a 60/40 system, that is to say sixty percent feet and forty percent hands.

From Okinawa, the arts evolved to Korea. Here, the emphasis was placed on kicking. The philosophy emphasized by the Koreans is that the legs are much stronger than the arms and have a longer reach.

Yes, I salute the Korean arts for they have indeed done much to incorporate the science of kicking into the evolutionary process of the martial arts.

The mainstream Korean arts are Tang So Do, Tae Kwon Do, and Hapkido. Tang So Do (the art of the Korean military) and Tae Kwon Do (the chosen art of the people, the state sport in the People's Republic of Korea) are very similar arts. Hapkido is a very hard-core art of kicking and punching, and traditionally has no katas (form sets) or lengthy self-defense techniques.

The Hapkido stylists are known world wide for their "cane" techniques that are taught to their black belts and is a requirement for a second-degree black belt in their system.

The Korean systems are a 75/25 system, seventy-five percent feet and twenty-five percent hands. Should you choose to study a Korean art, I suggest that you take some boxing lessons to go along with it. I personally know of many Korean stylists who combine boxing hands into their art, and they turned out to be the better for it.

From Korea, the arts evolved to Japan. The Japanese styles

teach a well-rounded basic art of self-defense with good strong kicks and more than adequate hand techniques. They are a 60/40 system, sixty percent feet and forty percent hands. The Japanese are excellent swordsmen and have added much to the martial arts.

From Japan, the arts evolved to the United States. It was not until, perhaps, the late 1950's that the Eastern (oriental) world of martial arts began to open up to the Western world. The U.S.-Japanese war left some hard feelings for a while. They also felt that the West would not utilize the arts wisely, and that they would capitalize on them.

The Orient allowed Judo into the West, but refrained from teaching their sacred art of Karate. With time, the various martial arts styles have trickled in and are now taught extensively. Today you can find about any major martial art style in the West and study it, if that is your desire. Yes, the martial arts have been an evolving process since the beginning. Now that it is in the United States, we have added boxing hands to the arts.

Boxing hands are some of the most awesome enclosed weapons taught in the world today, and the West has the best. When you incorporate excellent boxing hands with good kicking techniques, you become hard to beat.

Every art has strong and weak points. Bruce Lee was the first to point this out in a big way, and further suggested that one utilize the good points of all systems. When one studies boxing, he is taught a jab, a lead hand strike, a cross, hook, and an uppercut. He, then, works these five basic techniques until he, in a short period of time, becomes proficient with them.

When one begins in a karate style he is given an array of blocks, kicks, punches and stances, katas, and self-defense techniques. Often, the material is given to the student faster than he can proficiently use in a street situation. The positive side of this is that when the

student cannot make it to the kwoon for training, he will have plenty to work on until he can. The karate student is kept crammed with new working material (fighting techniques) at all times. As the student becomes proficient (at one) with his material, so does his defense skill.

Americanized Karate Versus Traditional Karate

The traditional karate schools will teach the art as it has been handed down from years past. In the eyes of the traditional schools, their art has finished evolving and they are satisfied teaching the same techniques, the same way the ancestors did. They do not allow change, nor do they accept it. If their system does not teach it, then they feel they do not need it.

My complaint in regard to some of the traditional styles of the martial arts is that it can become easy to get hung up spending an excessive amount of time studying some of the ancient fighting techniques that were necessary in that day and time, but do not really apply today. Techniques that were used to fight against armor-clad foot soldiers or armor-clad, sword-carrying soldiers on horseback are obviously outdated and unnecessary.

These techniques are good to know in order for the practitioner to procreate his art, but some end up spending an excessive amount of time on this type of weaponry, while their empty hand defense skills suffer.

For the Americanized example I will speak of our organization, American Kenpo Karate, which is a Chinese Kenpo style. KENPO is a Chinese word that means fist-law, or law of the fist. This is not to be confused with the word KEMPO, which is a Japanese art. The Japanese word “Kempo” means: “the accepted constitution,” “the accepted way.” Indirectly, the Japanese word “Kempo” shares the same concept as the Chinese word “Kenpo,” that is to say “the way of the

fist” if necessary. Chinese Kenpo is considered to be a soft-hand style while Japanese Kempo is considered to be a hard style. These two arts are as different as night and day.

At American Kenpo Karate, we teach all of the traditional aspects of the art: the way of the tiger and the crane. On top of that, we have removed the horse blinders of tradition. We spend a lot of time boxing and kickboxing. Our way of training seems to attract black belts from many different styles.

Yes, American Kenpo is an open-minded Americanized school of defense, and our students seem to find exactly what they want from the arts. I’m sure that there are schools in other systems and styles that teach Americanized karate, all you have to do is look.

Is it Okay for Christian to Engage in a Full Contact Sport?

There is no verse of Scripture that would prevent a Christian from participating in a contact sport. Actually, there are many good Christian men that earn a good yearly income as a result of competing in professional contact sports such as boxing, kickboxing, football, and hockey. Even baseball and basketball are sports that can result in extreme contact and serious injuries.

In a sport such as boxing or karate-type competition, where the objective can be to knock out your opponent, one can compete and, yet, still remain within the boundaries of Scripture, providing that the heart of the participant is right or correctly motivated. As long as both equally skilled opponents agree to contest and both are trained in the way of the sport, and do not allow anger to drive or motivate them, then it is scriptural.

As a rising martial artist, I've taken my fair share of kicks and punches. I used to get angry, but as I progressed in the arts I learned that when I got hit, there was a reason for it and that instead of becoming angry I should learn why I got hit and then try to prevent getting hit in that same manner again. I also learned that when I got angry I would make mistakes and then get hit more often.

By the time I got to the rank of black belt I learned to take a good shot (if necessary), remain cool, and take care of business. It does not pay to lose mental control in any type of situation. Early in my black belt career, I was competing in "kumite" (a Japanese word for fight) at a local karate tournament. My opponent was a traditional hard stylist. He was an excellent black belt in his style. Our match became heated and in a very short period of time we both forgot about the trophy. Our match became a full contact bout and the judges had to literally pry us apart.

I ended up being disqualified and was highly upset about it. I told him that he could have the trophy and when the next tournament came by, he could have that trophy also because the next time I lined up in front of him to "kumite" I was going to slap him along side of his head. I was highly upset and left. It was a short while later that I finally cooled off and began to reevaluate the situation. When I come under pressure, I always revert back to the Holy Scriptures, which I try to keep firmly embedded in my heart.

Whether I was right or wrong was no longer the issue, but rather how I conducted myself through out the situation, for this is what tests an individual's character. I felt that I had failed. After all, I was a black belt and should be an example of good sportsmanship, but most of all, I, being a Christian, should not have let my anger linger.

"Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath." (Ephesians 4:26)

I have always found this to be good advice, for anger causes stress and stress drains the life out of the body thus weakening the temple. It is not a sin to become angry (depending upon what you have become angry about), but it is a sin to stay angry.

About a week later during an evening training session at my studio, my tournament opponent dropped in. His attitude seemed to be humble as he apologized to me for his part of our confrontation. He said that it was his desire to be at peace with me and that he wished to have no enemies.

Being a Christian, that sounded good to me. I apologized for my part and began to feel guilty that I was not a bigger man about the whole situation in the first place. I also became humbled as we shook hands. He went on to say that he had never before sparred a skilled boxer like me, and how my boxing technique had frustrated him. He asked me if we could spar lightly together and if I would teach him some boxing techniques to take back to his sparring classes. This we did. We went over some basic boxing and Kenpo blitzing techniques, which he picked up quickly.

Boxing in a Traditional School?

I later learned that my tournament opponent had taken his newfound techniques to his school's sparring class and was scoring extremely well with them. His instructor became upset and angry and told him not to use any sparring techniques that were not taught from his style.

Yes, a little bit of boxing can take one a long way, and will definitely enhance the fighting capabilities of any martial artist. Although the art of boxing is great, it also has its weakness. Most boxers must have their torso (both shoulders) facing their opponent in order to maintain maximum power focus. Low kicks to the groin or to the

inside of the knees will have a tendency to turn a boxer sideways and disorientate him.

When a boxer throws a jab, he normally shifts his weight to the front foot. If you can time his front hand jab and have a kick waiting to meet his knee as his weight shifts to his front foot, you can cause him great problems, if not defeat. On the other hand, there are many martial artists that would have a big problem should a competent boxer get on the inside of their kicking range and force them to work hands.

Out kick the puncher and out punch the kicker is the name of the game. Have a good basic knowledge of both kicking and punching (boxing). For how can kickers beat a boxer unless he knows how the boxer thinks? And how can boxers beat a kicker, unless he understands the strategy of the kicker?

Are Karate Classes Too Brutal?

With a good instructor, classes can be physically exerting, but should never reach the point of brutality. A good instructor will take a student and push him to his limit, but not over it. Most schools will start you out kicking and punching shadow-style until you develop form. Power comes from good form. From there, you kick and punch hand-held focus bags or pads.

When you become comfortable with that, you graduate to a heavy bag, and then to “no contact” sparring. Here, you establish your focus, timing and distances (kicking distances and punching distances). At this point, the student also gets accustomed to dealing with a moving target, as well as, kicking and punching with combinations, and control of power distribution. When you become efficient with “no contact” sparring and drills, you move on to touch (sticky hand) contact

drills and sparring.

Once you are comfortable there, you graduate on to light contact sparring, then to full contact type training. The student moves up these progressive levels at his own pace. Most of the time, with most schools, karate training can be as hard as you want, or as light as you want.

Tournament fighting is a stage of training. It is not unusual for a student of karate to work his way up to touch contact type sparring (this is the method used in tournament competition) and stagnate there. Participating in karate tournaments can be a lot of fun, but is merely a stage of training that readies one for a higher level of contact.

The martial artist that stagnates at the tournament level usually develops certain poor habits such as throwing a one or two step combination, stopping and waiting for a referee to step in and call a point, or throwing their kicks and punches from too far away thus creating false critical distances for both the hands and the feet.

Do not be psyched out by the thought of contact sparring, for when the time comes to participate in it, the student is usually ready and anxious. The body has been toughened by a countless number of pushups, sit-ups, and martial art type exercises and drills. He has a good understanding of his body's capabilities and is ready to test his physical powers and skills. Once you know how, you don't mind doing it.

Some schools do not allow contact sparring until a brown or black belt has been achieved. The thought behind this practice is to keep student injuries down and student enrollment up. I would avoid a school such as this. It is not uncommon, however, to have a student earn one belt before he begins his contact sparring. This gives him an assortment of weapons with which to work.

When one is involved in a contact type sport, which involves kicking and punching, a street confrontation that may turn physical is thought of as “just another work out.”



What Must I Do To Earn Belts in Karate?

In karate, a belt is awarded to a student for reaching a set standard of achievement for each belt. Each style of karate has a number of Basics (kicks, blocks, and punches of various combinations and stances), Form Sets (katas), and Self-Defense Techniques, which must be memorized and performed by a student in order to receive a belt. Testing can be done individually or as a group.

Each belt signifies a piece of the puzzle in the picture of self-defense, as seen through the eyes of those who developed the system. By the time a student reaches the coveted black belt, he has pieced the entire puzzle together and can then see the whole picture clearly.

Let me explain this in more detail, as I break down the belt ranking system and what each belt signifies in my art, Chinese Kenpo Karate. But first, let us key in on some strong points of the two animals in which our Kenpo system has patterned its fighting techniques after — the Tiger and the Crane.

The Tiger has truly mastered the economy of motion. Every move he makes has a purpose. He has eliminated nonessential up and

down body movement. When he stalks, his body is crouched low and his knees are bent. His body momentum is transferred 100% forward, his head is low, his chin down, and his eyes are focused. His concentration is frightening, his lunge is awesome, his acceleration is incomparable and he covers much distance in a very short amount of time. He will strike with his powerful paw and then with the same momentum rip and tear with his claw. He does not know what fear is. If he is going to fight, he is going to win. He must win to survive. His attitude is that of a class "A" world champion.

We are all probably somewhat familiar with the tiger's fighting techniques due to nature films on television, but what about the crane? If you think that a goose is tough (and he is), farmers often rely on them to act as watchdogs, you ought to see what a crane is capable of doing!

The Crane is a peaceful animal by nature, but can be a formidable opponent and most vicious if aroused. His long sharp toes are quite capable of ripping and tearing flesh. When he curls his toes, the huge club-like bone in his foot becomes a brutal weapon, capable of crushing an adversary's skull (this is where the Kenpo system developed the knife edge snap and thrust kicks, as well as the front snap, side, rear kicks, and back knuckles). The front edge of the wing is also a huge bone that can crush and mangle as it is whipped out with lightning speed and precision (many of the Kenpo elbow strikes are delivered in likewise manor).

His long, wiry neck is used to block (the Kenpo parry blocks) and, with the same momentum and motion, delivers a strike with its long pointed beak. He is extremely elusive.

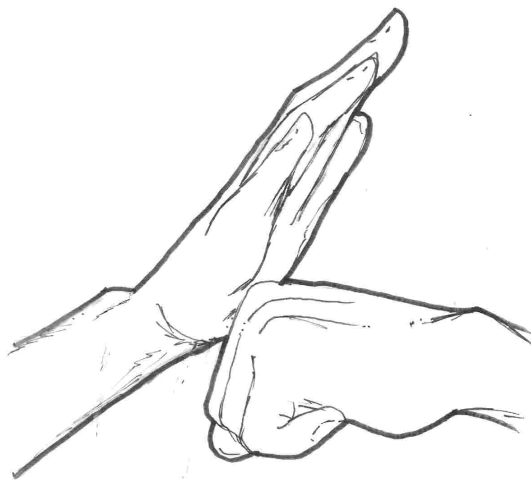
His head has a thick skull bone, which is also part of his arsenal of weapons (the Kenpo crane hand). The crane can kick while simultaneously striking with its beak or head. Timing is a large part of his

fighting technique. He is a natural counter-puncher and the master of offset and delayed timing techniques (Kenpo broken rhythm techniques).

Not only is the Manchurian Crane a fighter but also displays extreme devotion and love. Cranes are monogamous and when they mate, it is usually for a lifetime. They will nurture and care for their offspring for about a year before they journey off on their own.

The life span of the crane is approximately 40 years. The Chinese often refer to them as lovebirds. At one time in China the Manchurian cranes were given to the royalty of the palace as wedding gifts, which symbolized a long-lasting marriage. Anyone not of royal blood caught possessing a crane was put to death.

Yes, the Kenpo system has chosen and mimicked its teachers well, as we continue to pass on the way of the tiger and of the crane.



What Each Belt Signifies in Chinese Kenpo Karate

Our belt colors are as follows:

Orange

Purple

Blue

Green

Brown (three degrees of brown)

Black

WHITE BELT — When a student begins his training (or apprenticeship) in the art, he is given a white belt to wear while he studies his first belt material.

ORANGE BELT — This belt for, many, is the most difficult, for it is here that one must coordinate his body, develop timing, balance, and memory. The primary objective in orange belt is for the student to develop their foundation with strong stances in which to operate from. Closed fist punching and blocking are studied intently, for the hand is much more vulnerable to damage when striking with a closed fist than it would be with the open hand. The student is taught which parts of his body can be used as weapons, as well as the vulnerable areas in which to strike an attacker. Conditioning at this point need not be a major factor, but eventually will be.

Orange belt basics: These are the heart of the student's self defense training. Not only are these basics good bread and butter techniques, but also the kicking drills involved are great to condition the abdomen and lower stomach. At this stage of training stretching and deep breathing becomes very important.

Orange Belt Self-Defense Techniques: For the self-defense technique stage of training, the student must learn forty self-defense

techniques. Each technique has a name for easy learning. These techniques are pretty much a combination of the basics. The self-defense techniques teach the student how to deal with the attacks in which one may be confronted with on the streets such as front bear hugs, rear bear hugs (arms free, or entrapped), front or rear waist grabs (one hand or two), front or rear choke holds (one hand or two), tackle techniques, lapel grabs, full nelsons, attempted push and grabs or punches (step through or boxers type).

Orange Belt Forms or Katas (short one and long one): There are two form sets taught per belt. A kata is a preset pattern of designated movement in which the practitioner fights imaginary attackers from various angles. It is here that the student learns to change directions with a minimal amount of movement while maintaining balance and focus. He begins to learn how to make the feet as friction-free to the earth as possible as he pivots properly on the balls of the feet to generate hip torque. He learns to maintain a central ceiling level while transferring his weight forward to maintain maximum body momentum and how to eliminate excessive motion (the ways of the tiger).

Kata is excellent for the development of concentration and is a crucial link in teaching the science of body mechanics. Over the years, I have heard many martial artists complain about having to perform Kata, because all they want to do is fight. It is important to be an accomplished fighter, but the truth of the matter is that the ultimate long-term respect goes to the teacher rather than the fighter. We can and should do both.

Yes, just the knowledge obtained through the first belt is enormous and should instill a newfound confidence in one's walk. With one-hour workouts, two to three times a week, a beginner should earn his orange belt in approximately four to six months. The Kenpo system is a much more intricate system than the hard-style systems.

Kenpo has more movements to learn, so will take a little longer to advance in rank. We make the extra effort well worth it.

PURPLE BELT — Here we enter a new phase of training as we take a closer look at the open hand and its various weapons. The kicking techniques become more deceptive and are put together in combinations.

Purple belt provides the first real exposure to crane techniques. Studying defense techniques that are contrived by a crane can be extremely enlightening. It stimulates the attitude of the practitioner to a new method and options in which to deal with attackers.

The orange belt training helps to develop a stand up, take it to them, bold forward, straight at them, block, punch, kick, stand your ground type of foundation in self defense. These methods, such as crane type blocking, leaping and blocking simultaneously, leaping-kicking technique, and leaping-striking techniques of various types are completely foreign to the untrained street thug. This type of training is great for defense and, also, allows the student to make great gains in the area of balance, coordination and timing.

Upon completion of the purple belt curriculum, the student's self-defense knowledge has probably more than doubled from where he was when he completed the orange belt curriculum.

He can now look back with an educated eye at the orange belt techniques, which used to give him difficulty and, now, can perform them with a newfound snap and luster.

The purple belt curriculum has integrated enough crane type footwork and movement into the techniques to give one the feeling that they are truly performing Kung Fu.

Purple Belt Basic: The new list of basics in purple belt will demand that the student achieve a greater level of flexibility in which

to accomplish the jumping and kicking techniques which will be required.

Footwork becomes an issue in purple belt. When you fight like a crane, you must also move like one.

From my own personal experience as a student of Kenpo, I have found that one of the greatest degrees of difficulty in advancing from one belt to another can be the transaction from orange to purple. It is not uncommon for the purple belt basics to frustrate, even the outstanding, orange belt students.

Purple Belt Self-Defense Techniques: The student of purple belt will be required to learn forty new self-defense techniques. These techniques will offer first time exposure to club and knife defense techniques.

The purple belt empty hand defense techniques become more intricate and timing becomes crucial. Purple belt self-defense techniques require the practitioner to jump or leap into tightly coiled stances or positions that can seem extremely awkward at the time of learning. However, once the student has tapped into his body's proper power source and feels comfortable with this newfound power obtained through uncoiling, he will, at that time, have a greater understanding than ever of what will be expected of him in future belt curriculums.

The task is tough but the reward is great. Those who achieve a Kenpo purple belt have obtained much more than a basic knowledge of self-defense. At this point in his martial arts career, the student should be experiencing a high level of confidence in his daily walk.

The mysteries of self-defense are now definitely unfolding.

Kata: The student of purple belt must learn two more new katas, short 2 and long 2. In orange belt we spend a significant amount of time teaching the heavy-footed students to pivot on the balls of

their feet. Purple belt allows the student to put this new footwork to a practical use. The purple belt student now has the knowledge and proficiency to dance and move, thus simulating a stick and move-type attitude towards defense. The orange belt Katas are performed on 90 degree angles. Purple belt Katas, on the other hand, are performed on 90 and 45-degree angles. This gives the performer an appearance of light-footed, crane style-type of movement.

While the two orange belt Katas, short 1 and long 1, are composed of tiger type movement using the hips and shoulders to deliver short sharp locking blocks and strikes (the way of the tiger). The two purple belt Katas, short 2 and long 2, are composed of, almost, entirely cane techniques. These Katas will, for the first time, allow the practitioner to flow with simultaneous hand strike-kick, block-kick, and double kick combinations.

BLUE BELT — In the orange belt curriculum we concentrated mainly on the fighting techniques of the tiger, and in purple belt we begin to study and mimic the fighting techniques of the crane. In the blue belt, we equally combine tiger and crane techniques from orange belt and purple belt to produce a well-balanced style of self-defense.

Usually, by the time that a student has his purple belt and is working on blue, he is probably operating with substantial snap and flexibility. The blue belt curriculum contains a lot of up and down, low-high type striking techniques that require the student to develop strong knees. Often it can take a person to the rank of blue belt, or about there, to beginning settling deep into the kenpo stances especially the low bent-knee horse stances.

Blue Belt Basics: Blue belt curriculum provides the student with his first real exposure to elusive kicking techniques such as dou-

ble kicking with the same leg, leg sweeps, faking and spinning techniques (spin rear and spin heel hook).

The blue belt basics are great confidence builders that teach the student to twist torque and spin in the proper fashion thus transferring upper body momentum into the lower body techniques.

The awesome power that the human body is capable of producing by the use of proper body torque is truly amazing. The kicking techniques that are taught in blue belt are dynamic and extremely effective as the student learns to drive his opponent backwards with multi-kick combinations.

Blue Belt Self-Defense Technique: The blue belt self-defense techniques offer a variety of blocking options for a quicker, softer, and even more efficient method of blocking. Some of the methods learned are parry-strikes, parry-blocks, parry-checks, and double block techniques.

To accomplish this new type of blocking the timing must be impeccable. The blue belt self defense techniques demand that the student eliminate wasted hand or arm movement while parry blocking. These self- defense techniques are practical and smartly arranged with a pleasant blend of aikido wrist, thumb and arm locks woven throughout the blue curriculum.

The self-defense techniques taught in blue belt are perhaps some of the most awesome techniques in the entire system. By the time a student obtains a blue belt he begins to look like a polished fighter. His movement begins to flow; the hands and feet are working in a strong, efficient, and elusive manner while delivering combinations. Balance does not seem to be a problem at this point.

If I had to choose the curriculum of only one belt in the Kenpo system to use as defense, it would be blue belt. The Kenpo blue belt should not have to worry about defending himself on the street, for he

has enough knowledge to handle almost any type of situation he may come across.

The Blue Belt Kata (Short 3 and Long 3): The orange and purple belt Kata provides the student with a foundation of good solid stances that accommodates proper pivoting. The blue belt Katas promote agility. There is a lot of light footed, nimble, hopping, kung fu type footwork interlaced into these forms. There are also a lot of stance changes that require rapid shifts from one stance to another with snap and precision. Once the kenpo student obtains the blue belt he will be expected to perform Kata with refined form and pace. He is beginning to leave his novice status.

Forms can give one a sense of completion that he has conquered what he sought to achieve through his belt curriculum and should leave him feeling polished and satisfied.

The blue belt Kata movements have a high degree of intricacy compared to the previous lower belt Katas. They are intricate enough that they can be, and often are, used by seasoned upper belt marital artists in high-level competitions.

One year, while I was at the Ed Parkers International Karate Championships in Long Beach, CA, I witnessed a young woman win the woman's Black Belt Kata Division. The set she used was Long 3. I was impressed.

It is not in the nature of most people to operate with low, bent knees. This must be installed into their way of thinking. The blue belt curriculum helps to do precisely that. Once the student learns the required list of blue belt Katas (short 3 and long 3) and the forty, incredibly awesome self-defense techniques, he, then, tests for blue belt.

GREEN BELT — Green belt is an extremely artistic curriculum of self-defense. Green belt heavily emphasizes on the teaching of

crane techniques. The crane hand is a vicious weapon and has many uses, as displayed by the green belt techniques. Here we take a closer look at self-defense against street weapons. There are forty green belt self-defense techniques.

At this point in the student's Kenpo studies, he becomes aware of the fact that he is reaching another level of training. He is to combine his technical knowledge with his new physical defense skills. If he has not begun to do so already, this is the time where he will be required to begin light contact sparring.

It is time for practical application. Mixing perspiration with application is one of the main ingredients in success. If anyone should choose, at this point, not to go on to light-contact sparring, their quest for the Kenpo black belt would be over.

Yes, at green belt, fighting does become an issue. Should you come across a school (and there are some out there) that does not require contact sparring in order to obtain a black belt, it is probably the "idea" of the instructor rather than the system that he is teaching.

Sparring or Kumite is when there is no preset attack and the action demands adaptation to changing circumstances.

At American Kenpo, we get our first taste of fighting for a belt while seeking the rank of green belt. Coordination and a good memory can take you a long way, but each test you take should also become progressively tougher physically.

Green Belt Basic: Kenpo green belt basics mimic the crane more so than any other belt basic curriculum. The push-snap kick, the shuffle knife-edge, the crescent kick, the reverse crescent kick, the side thrust kick, all of these green belt basics are awesome kicks devised by the crane. Green belt basics are strong and deceptive and they add tremendously to the arsenal of the student. Many of the green belt crane style basics are ideal for defense against various street weapons.

Green Belt Self-Defense Techniques: Many of these self-defense techniques deal with advanced weapons defense techniques against the club, knife or gun.

The empty hand defense techniques taught are extremely effective. A number of them are short sweet three to four movement techniques that are capable of disabling attackers in a matter of seconds. The green belt self- defense techniques are cleverly composed and teach us how to deliver multiple strikes off of the same body movements. This vastly improves the timing of the student and his fighting capabilities.

Green Belt Katas: Green belt Katas have special names. The “Mass Attack” teaches the student principles and innovative concepts of how to deal with multi-attack type situations. The “Book Set” (also know as Panther Set), which is a long and beautiful set, displays a well-balanced mixture of Chinese and Japanese fighting techniques. It is a real eye catcher in Kata competition and scores well. This is another Kata often used by black belts in tournament competition. By the time one reaches the green belt, he has learned to flow his movements smoothly.

Green Belt Testing: Each student tests for his belt individually. All eyes are on him and the pressure is tremendous. There is nobody you can look to for help at this time. You must go deep within yourself to find the answers. If you’ve done your homework, you’re ready. Your peers have a way of remembering your tests for years to come.

The testing student is required, first, to display his Kata. If he cannot remember his Kata under pressure, some do draw a mental blank during testing, the test is terminated. There is no excuse for not having the Kata’s memorized by the time of the test. If the Katas are approved, then it’s onto the display of the self-defense techniques for the belt he is testing for, plus previous belt technique spot checks.

Next, he will display basics until near exhaustion. He now has five minutes in which to dawn his sparring gear. He will now have the privilege to experience what it is like to fight other seasoned fighters and to defend himself while he is totally exhausted.

He will fight three three-minute rounds with one-minute rests in-between. Each fighter that he faces will be a fresh, well-rested green belt fighter.

This is the reality check. It has taken years of training for the Kenpo student to arrive at this day. He has studied the science and theories of fighting and self-defense skills. It is now time to put this training to the test and see if it works.

The three fighters on the test will give it their best to make sure that the testing student is pushed to the edge both physically and psychologically. They will push him until the stress builds to a peak and the adrenaline is flowing. They will push him to the edge in order to mimic a real combat situation, for to act in any other manner would demonstrate a total disrespect for the testing student.

The Kenpo green belt student has probably learned more material earning a green belt than most hard stylists have had to learn for their black belts.

BROWN BELT — All belts under the rank of brown are technically regarded as white belt ranks. Brown is considered the first stage of professionalism and much is required of the student who tests for it.

Third degree brown belt is the next rank up from green belt. Then second degree, then first degree. For each degree of brown belt, the student learns only twenty self-defense techniques instead of forty.

From my personal experience as a Kenpo student and instructor, I've found that brown belt can be a lingering belt for some students. In

the previous belt curriculums the student is accustomed to advancing in rank and color approximately every six months. However, at brown belt, the student often feels that he is not quite ready for the ever so coveted black belt. It can be an intimidating time for the advancing student.

Once achieving the rank of brown belt, a student can start to feel that he is beginning to burn out from overload. After all, he has been at it for years and has exhausted himself both physically and mentally by achieving up to the brown belt curriculum. This seems, for some, to be a good time and place in rank to rest and regroup before the final climb to the top of the mountain for the black belt. It is not uncommon for a student to remain at brown belt for years before finally taking the next step in rank. I, personally, remained a brown belt for approximately five years. It is the time, at this rank, to get into the best condition of your life because you must be ready for intense workouts and sparring. All brown belts are, at their own pace, getting ready for the, ever so demanding, black belt test.

There are many brown belt students who have been fighting under the color of brown for many years, yet have actually been performing at black belt level for a long time but for one reason or another have never taken the test for black belt. A good instructor will give gentle pushes in the right direction in order to mentally prepare the brown belt student for his next task at hand, the black belt test.

Cream floats to the top and by the time one achieves a brown belt he is near the top in the Kenpo system and is highly skilled in self-defense.

Brown Belt Basics: All three degrees of brown belt share a long common list of basics, which the student will be required to work and drill into extreme perfection.

Stretching and conditioning are key factors at brown belt, and

again fighting becomes a major issue.

The brown belt basics contain awesome “blitzing” techniques which enables the Kenpo practitioner to close the distance gap with lightening speed and frightening deception while driving his opponent back with powerful long-arm style punches and snapping kicks. These basics are the key to tournament victories of the Kenpo fighters. Martial arts students of all styles covet Kenpo brown belt basics.

The student will be expected to perform these basics with precision and grand displays of flexibility. At this point in his training, he needs to operate with a loose body and becoming tight only when necessary. The brown belt student needs to adjust his mindset from hard to soft, and soft to hard. He should, if he has not done so by now, have the ability to absorb a punch as well as to tighten up the body upon impact of a punch in order to defray it.

Our first belt, orange, is considered to be the foundation of our Kenpo system and brown belt is considered to be the heart of our system. Even after one reaches black belt status he will still predominately use brown belt basics as his main arsenal.

Brown Belt Self-Defense Techniques: Brown belt self-defense techniques are vicious. They are designed to lame, cripple, paralyze or kill. The preferred weapons in these self-defense techniques are fingers, knees and elbows. Brown belt self-defense techniques can be very intricate and requires exceptional coordination. All of the previous belt self-defense techniques that the Kenpo student has learned up to this point have prepared him for these sixty devastating brown belt self-defense techniques.

During the period of time, in which, I was learning the brown belt curriculum I remember the deep respect for human life that arose within me while learning how easily a life could be taken with the mere use of fingers. I have never thought about taking a human life

before, but now I know how, and that frightens me at times. I realize that it is important, now more than ever, to stay away from hostile situations lest my anger get the best of me and I do something that I would regret for the rest of my life.

The Bible says that God made man in his own image, and loves all men dearly. For one man to harm another man is very upsetting to God. We must all stand before Jesus Christ someday and I believe that it would be a frightful thing to stand before him and try to explain why it was necessary to harm another fellow human being without just cause.

By the time that the Kenpo student has mastered the sixty awesome brown belt self-defense techniques, he has acquired an incredible knowledge. There is great power in knowledge.

Brown Belt Katas: Set 4 and set 5 are incredible works of art. They are largely composed of self-defense techniques, which have incorporated techniques from the various belt curriculums.

These two awesome form sets are extremely long and intricate and will substantially test the mental retention of the learning student. It is here that the speed and nimbleness of the feet are intently developed and the science of pivoting should now become a reflex. One's stamina must be strong to endure the intense release of energy that these sets require.

Exercising Kata in its true form is, in itself, a great workout that can quickly break you into a heavy sweat. Continuity, balance, strength, and flexibility are in demand, now more than ever, in order for the practitioner to perform up to the Kenpo standards. It takes an incredible amount of effort to learn and master sets 4 and 5, but once you do there is a deep sense of pride within. The sets become a part of what you are and what you are becoming. It becomes a part of your spirit.

Brown belt Katas are taught in this order:

Third degree Brown: Fingers set, moving finger set, and staff set.

Second degree Brown: Set IV

First degree Brown: Set V

In order for a student to test for a brown belt, he must have all previous belt (orange through green) materials down solid.

Brown Belt Test: The student is tested individually. He must, first, perform all the katas (orange through brown), then display all the brown belt self-defense techniques (twenty) as well as twenty defense techniques from each of the previous belts. Then, he displays brown belt basics until he is exhausted.

At this point, the testing student has five minutes to clad himself with his sparring gear, and then he must fight five three-minute rounds, with one-minute rests in between rounds. Each one of his opponents will be a fresh brown belt or above.

The student has had a taste of fighting, while exhausted, at the end of his green belt test, so he has an idea of what to expect. Each belt averages approximately six months time to earn, except the brown and black belts. It will take about one year for the student to go from green to brown.

BLACK BELT — Everything that the student has learned in previous belt curriculums has been to prepare him for this final stage of training that the Kenpo system requires in order to qualify for the black belt.

At this point, the spirit of the student is usually at an all time high. Not only has he achieved a prestigious brown belt in rank but is now, also finally, working on black belt material. The end of the quest is near.

I remember the feelings that I had as I received my brown belt.

I felt satisfaction, knowing that I had leaped a broad span of obstacles just to reach this point. I felt a sense of wisdom from the knowledge that I had received from studying the Kenpo system. I understood the human body: its strengths as well as its frailties, its capabilities and its breaking points. I felt a peace within knowing that everything I've learned will serve me well throughout my life. I also know that the rest of my journey to a black belt would be an intense struggle and that I would, at all costs, prevail.

Once the student has the brown belt material (all three degrees) he is, then, expected to work it until perfection. It will take approximately one year of hard, consistent training before the brown belt student will even be considered for a black belt test. Everything the student has learned needs to be polished for the coveted black belt test.

Black Belt Basics: The black belt basics are few and consist mostly of jumping, flying, dropping or spinning kicks or punch techniques.

Due to the high degree of difficulty in performing these basics, the polished brown belt will need all of his physical skills functioning at 100%. These basics are tough!

It will take a substantial amount of time and effort to drill these basics to black belt standards. Although, at this point, the student has already achieved his brown belt, he is expected to continue perfecting the, ever so demanding, brown belt basics.

Black belt basics are primarily based on timing and deception, the way of the tiger and the crane.

Black Belt Katas: "The tiger and the crane" is the name of our black belt Kata. This set is a masterpiece of movement, which can only be described as "totally awesome." It is actually two form sets, which are in contrast to each other, but are performed as one. The first

half of the set demonstrates the fighting style of the tiger, and then there is a brief pause with emphasis on breath control, then continues right into the crane part of the set. The hard-soft contrast in this form is amazing. The tiger and crane set has approximately two hundred and sixty-five moves.

Other black belt Katas includes a two-man black belt set (which takes two black belts to perform), a hooking spear set (a staff with a crescent or spearhead on one end), and a short “sword set” that demonstrates basic swordsmanship.

Twenty Black Belt Self-Defense Techniques: Most of these techniques are extremely long and complicated by elements of timing. These self-defense techniques are an equally balanced display of the tiger and the crane, at their best. The brown belt student that is testing for a black belt is expected to fight toughly on his test.

The Sifu needs to see him in the kwoon working out three times a week or more, checking to see if that burning desire for a black belt is there. By the time the student has gotten to this point, he has fought at the end of his last two tests (each test being progressively tougher) and knows that this is going to be the most physically enduring test that he has ever put his body and mind through.

The brown belt has, more likely than not, witnessed many black belt tests and is aware of the bone crunching kicks and punches that often take place, the cuts, bruises and extreme punishment that one can be subjected to. Yes, the brown belt student is aware of this, but all he can envision is the coveted black belt. He will be expected to absorb punishment, if necessary (and it will be), and dish it right back out. He will be ready.

First- Degree Black Belt Test: The student first displays all of his Katas (orange through black) then displays all brown and black belt self-defense techniques (a total of eighty), as well as twenty from

each of the previous belts (an additional eighty techniques). So the testing student will snap out approximately 160 self-defense techniques, and then he will be drilled on all brown and black belts basics and spot-checked on all under-belt bread and butter basics until, almost complete, exhaustion. Then, he has five minutes to put on his sparring gear for the fighting part of the test.

Black Belt Fighting: He must now fight five three-minute rounds. Each of his opponents will be a fresh first-degree black belt or above. In most green or brown belt tests, the testing student has studied the art for about the same length of time as the fighters that are participating (2 to 4 years). However, when the brown belt steps into the ring for black belt testing, he is now competing with those who may have been training for ten to fifteen years or more. He had better be ready.

For the testing student to be successful in the black belt test he must demonstrate certain demands, which will be expected of him from a panel of master instructors (fourth degree black belt and above). Some of these demands will be:

Conditioning: This is a must. There is no excuse for a student to show up for his black belt test and not be in the best condition of his life. No matter how good of condition that one is in, it always seem to him as if it is not good enough. By the time that the testing student is about halfway through the fighting portion of the test, he tends to feel as if he should have trained harder. Yes, Conditioning is a major factor in any Kenpo belt test that includes fighting as a portion of the test.

Determination: This must be displayed in abundance. As the test progresses and the testing student starts to wear down, the truth will come out as to whether black belt determination is there or not. No matter how good one's condition is, absorbing punishing kicks and punches to the body can and will cause conditioning to quickly dis-

sipate. Nothing will be left and the student will be driven, solely, by sheer determination.

Courage: This must be at the utmost. None, except the determined brave will ever have a chance to achieve the coveted Kenpo Black Belt. The black belt test is so intense that courage or lack of it cannot help but be displayed by the testing student.

Focus: This is what the testing student must utilize in order to endure this grueling fighting portion of the test. Although years of training has prepared the student for this day, once the test begins it can be difficult to properly distribute the energy in a manner that will be necessary to carry him throughout the test. As the fighting student becomes weary he must, at some point in order to conserve energy, concentrate on focusing his kicks and punches. He must make every strike count and hit only the targets that he is aiming for. Swinging and missing, as well as, striking non-vital targets, such as hips, arms and shoulders, consume a lot of energy. The wearier a trained fighter becomes, the smarter he should begin to fight.

Vows: These are personal and are not discussed often among us. It is understood to be within each and every one who salutes in for a black belt test. From my own personal experience, when my time had come to test for the Kenpo black belt I was anxious and ready.

As a young child, I was inspired by Bruce Lee's role as "Kato" in the television series "The Green Hornet." It was at that time when I vowed to myself that, some day, I would achieve a Chinese style black belt.

It has been said that a child exists within every adult and for better or for worse the child lives on.

I remember entering the arena where I was to test. I could feel the energy in the air. The scene was set. My instructor, the panel of masters, the fighters that I was to face, the crowd, everything was in

place. I knew that it would be a physically enduring afternoon but I tried to think of it as just another workout. It has taken eight years of discipline training for me to get to this point and I had no intention of failing.

I was prepared, both physically and mentally, to endure whatever the test required. All that I could visualize, at that point, was leaving that arena with a Kenpo black belt and fulfilling my childhood vow.

A vow can be an extremely powerful driving force, which can propel an individual to great heights. If you cannot, first, imagine it then it will never happen. Although this was my personal vow, I'm sure that all those whom tested before me and after me have had equally powerful vows, which also drove them to successfully achieve their black belt.

Second- Degree Black Belt Test: Each style of karate has their own set of standards for earning the various degrees in their system. At American Kenpo, to be eligible for a degree in rank one must stay active in the arts by either working out consistently or teaching.

For the second-degree, one must wait for a time period of, no less than, two years from the date of the first-degree test. They must fight ten two- minute rounds with one-minute rests in between. During each round, the testing student will fight a fresh black belt.

For this ten-round fight, the student must adhere to some type of fight plan. He will need to display, in his arsenal, an equal balance of offensive and defensive techniques and tactics. He should, also, include a good display of lower belt basics in order to show that he is utilizing all that the system has taught him.

He must, and will, be prepared mentally because all it takes is absorption of a few good kicks and or punches to the head or body to alter the best of fight plans. Often by the end of the tests students are

worn down to the point that they are operating on sheer discipline. This is, perhaps, the most physically enduring test that our system has to offer. The second-degree tests are very exciting and seem to draw black belt participants from miles away.

Most fighters feel that the person who is testing has had plenty of time to ready himself for the moment, and if he is not ready then he had “darn well better be.” After all, he is asking for a second-degree black belt in the art of Chinese Kenpo Karate, and we have all gathered from afar for this test. We’ve all trained hard to get our belts, and we’ve all fought under the same standards. The fighting for a second-degree black belt is always very hard and can even be brutal. From my own personal experience of going through the gauntlet of the second-degree test, my battle wounds included a severely broken nose.

The second-degree black belt test is the last time that a student will be required to fight for a belt.

I was exceedingly happy that I had successfully endured, completed and passed my second-degree test, however there was a deep sense of sadness because I would no longer fight for a belt. I would miss the challenge that was such a driving force to me for so long. I would never again be placed in front of a panel and, instead, would be placed in a position to judge these qualities in others.

It has been said, “He who lives without discipline dies without honor.” At this point in my life I could not help but to think back on the discipline in my life that has now brought me to this hour.

As a Kenpo instructor I have had the opportunity to watch new students, with little to no discipline, begin their training and develop discipline. Discipline develops character. I enjoy watching them grow. I was fortunate that I had a strong athletic background from high school, which provided me with a great foundation for my Kenpo training.

Third-Degree Black Belt: The various degrees in black belt are designed to reward the practitioner for staying active in the art after earning a black belt. Every teacher begins, first, as a student and always will be a student. He will always be entitled to rewards for his work in propagating the arts. Three years after the date of the second-degree test, one becomes eligible to test for the third degree. He will be required to design and perform a fifteen to twenty minute demonstration for his peers, a panel of master instructors. Often the test will last 45 to 60 minutes.

At first this may seem like a menial task, but it is the job of the testing black belt student to impress a panel of masters who hold rankings of anywhere between fourth and tenth degree black belt. This panel will not be easily impressed. However, the testing student is, himself, a second-degree black belt and considered to be an expert in the art of Kenpo and self- defense. Therefore, he is capable of fulfilling the task. The key to a successful third-degree test is intense thought and devout preparation combined with dynamic showmanship.

It would be difficult to instruct this panel with knowledge that they are not already familiar with to the highest degree; however, they can always be impressed with showmanship. At the rank in which the testing student holds, he should be able to, for instance, take a simple technique such as a punch, block, or a kick, and speak on it for an hour breaking down the movement and science of body mechanics, which empowers it. And even though the panel of judges may know this information, they would like to know that the testing student knows how to relay his thoughts on a higher level, or refined information.

There could be no greater compliment to the testing student than to have a member of the master panel approach him after the test

and tell him that as a result of the test he, the master, was enlightened with knowledge that he had not, yet, been familiar with.

I have, over the years, known black belts that were good fighters but lacked in teaching skills. The Kenpo second-degree black belt test is our method of reviewing the fighting skills of our black belt students at their best.

The third-degree test is our method of observing their teaching skills at the highest level. We demand that our high-ranking black belts be excellent fighters, as well as, teachers.

Showmanship is not exactly a requirement but is a virtue to the student should he find himself in a position to perform a public demonstration in order to propagate his art or school.

As for my own third-degree black belt test, I broke down the science of punching (various types of punches), the basic science of kicking (the art of coiling and uncoiling the leg for various types of kicks), and the science of cause and effect by combining the two. I, then, reinforced my chosen theories by combining application with showmanship. I placed five assistants in various positions throughout the room, each holding boards. I, then, skipped across the room using a series of stutter steps and hidden foots and utilized punches, jumping-spinning elbows, front snap and rear kicks to break them. It drew a welcoming smile and a hardy applause from the panel of masters. I was satisfied.

Fourth-Degree Black Belt (Masters Belt): Four years from the date of the third-degree test, one becomes eligible for the fourth-degree test. The testing student is required to design and demonstrate before his peers, two katas and ten self-defense techniques. To champion one's master belt, he must reach deep inside to pull out all the knowledge he has obtained from the science of body mechanics, and combine that with the wisdom that has come to him through the study

of self-defense techniques, that ability to apply the innovative concepts of self-defense where applicable. You get one chance, its got to be the best performance of your life. Your peers will always remember you for what you accomplished on your masters test.

Fifth-Degree Black Belt: Five years from the date of the fourth-degree test, the Kenpo student is eligible for a fifth-degree test. He must write a fifteen to twenty page college-level thesis on any subject concerning the martial arts. A fifth-degree black belt, in a good Kenpo system, will have worked approximately twenty years in order to obtain this rank. Each degree, from fifth to tenth, requires the student/teacher to remain active in the art and fulfill a five-year waiting period in between each degree



(Point of Interest) Honorable Mention of The Mighty Men of the Bible and the Staff

When God instructed Moses to assume a state of readiness in **Exodus 12:11, He told him to gird his loins, put shoes on his feet and a staff in his hand.**

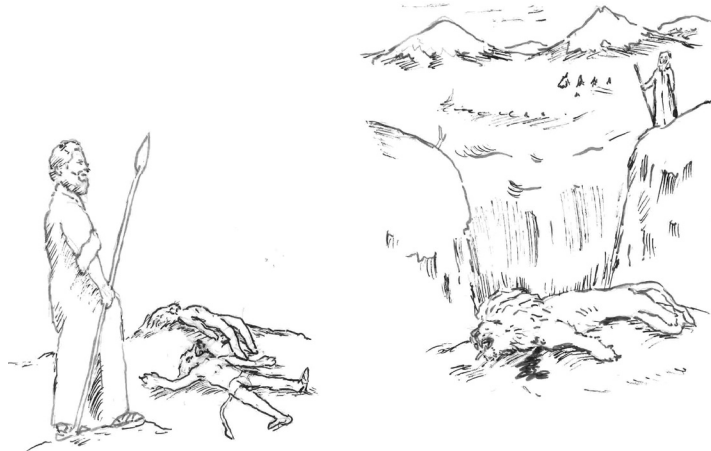
When David prepared to fight Goliath, **I Samuel 17:40 tells us “He took his staff in his hand and chose him five smooth stones out of the brook, and put them in a shepherd’s bag which he had, even in a scrip; and his sling was in his hand and he drew near to the Philistine.”**

Yes, David was indeed a mighty warrior. I have always won-

dered about the five smooth stones, which David picked out of the brook. Every single word in the Bible has a purpose for being there, God never communicated to us in his Word with meaningless chatter. More likely than not, the five stones demonstrates David's determination and perseverance to defeat Goliath.

Both Israel and the Philistines had agreed to send out their best warrior to fight in order to decide which side would win the battle. We must accept that these were their terms, however I find it extremely interesting that the Scriptures mentioned the four other, also large in size, brothers of Goliath (see II Samuel 21:16-22). I have often wondered if these four brothers had anything to do with the number of stones that David had taken from the brook.

Not only was David a mighty man, but those who served under him were incredibly tough as well. These four brothers of Goliath were slain by the servants of David in battles with the Philistines. One of Goliath's brothers is described in the Bible as a man of great stature, that had six fingers on each hand, and six toes on each foot. He was slain by Jonathan, David's nephew, the son of Shimeah (see **II Samuel 20-21**). The Scriptures, also, mention about Benaiah, who was one of these men (**2 Samuel 23:20-21**) :



21):

And Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, the son of a valiant man, of Kabzeel, who had done many acts, he slew two lion-like men of Moab: he went down also and slew a lion in the midst of a pit in time of snow. And he slew an Egyptian, a goodly man and the Egyptian had a spear in his hand; but he went down to him with a staff, and plucked the spear out of the Egyptian's hand, and slew him with his own spear.

In the Gospel of Mark, it is recorded that when Jesus sent his twelve disciples out to preach and heal, he instructed them to arm themselves with a staff (**Mark 6:7-9**):

And he called unto him the twelve, and began to send them forth by two and two; and gave them power over unclean spirits; And commanded them that they should take nothing for their journey, save a staff only; no scrip, no bread, no money in their purse: But be shod with sandals; and not put on two coats.

As Jesus sent them out, he told them to “travel light,” to take only what was necessary. It is apparent that Jesus felt that they had need of a staff.

In Matthew's version of this same account (**Matthew 10:10**) Jesus sent his disciples out with instructions to take nothing, not even a staff. Some would misinterpret this to mean that Jesus did not expect nor desire them to defend themselves.

The gist of Christ's words in the eyes of Matthew is that because of the miraculous healing powers that would be sent with them,

those who witnessed or were blessed by those miraculous powers would meet their daily needs.

However in Mark's version, Jesus intended for them to defend themselves while traveling and to take a staff for that reason. The staff was a common method of defense against wild animals and robbers in that day. It was lighter than a sword and much cheaper. They were to prepare for their safety while traveling.

We are told in **Hebrews, chapter 11 (the faith chapter, God's "Faith Hall of Fame")**, verse 21, **"By faith Jacob, when he was a dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph; and worshipped, leaning upon the top of his staff."**

It seems that the staff has been used for self-defense since the beginning of mankind. The staff was a great weapon then, and still is today. It is, in the opinion of many, to be the most useful weapon that the martial arts have to offer. It has reach. You can grab one end and swing it. You can poke, butt, block or strike with it. It can also be used to stretch the muscles in your arms, back and legs.

Judgment and Self-Defense

I'm sure that the law library is filled with volumes of books pertaining to the laws and legal ramifications involving self-defense. Each state has its own particular laws and statutes, so it can be complicated. However, the generic law of the land is, "never use more force than is absolutely necessary in order to defend one's self." The laws in most states dictate that no more than "equal and opposite force" should be used in a self-defense situation. Should these laws be violated, one could easily find himself in front of a twelve-person jury (criminal and/or civil) explaining the events and actions leading up to

and including the self-defense situation in detail. This can be scary, as well as expensive. Whether it is win, lose or draw, the time it takes the courts and high paid attorneys to sort out the facts you could end up financially battered or bankrupt. It is always best to avoid or back away from trouble whenever possible.

Several of our students are veteran attorneys and they seem to feel that an accomplished martial artist would find it difficult to draw sympathy from a jury should he become involved in a bodily injury case involving self-defense. The jurors, especially if they are not trained in a fighting art, would not wish to have an accomplished fighter beat on them and would probably have a certain amount of natural sympathy for the injured party. After all, should not the accomplished martial artist have exercised constraint and applied a conscionable amount of force to resolve the situation adequately?

I personally know of a third belt martial artist that came into my studio for training (he had gotten his belts elsewhere). He was tough, but had a bad attitude. After our first sparring session he quickly developed respect for me. I did not want to lean on him too hard because I felt that it would be like kicking a man that had a broken leg. So I worked with him and tried to share some wisdom of Scripture with him.

One day he came into the studio talking about how he had recently punched a guy in the face over a money dispute and, now, felt very bad about it. The victim ended up with a broken nose and jaw. He said that he did not think he had hit him that hard and asked what he should do now? I shared a Scripture with him.

Matthew 5:25-26, “Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means

come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing.”

One of the points that the Lord is making is if you can't afford to do the time, then don't do the crime or it will cost you greatly.

The martial artist in this case ended up being sued for thousands of dollars. The “golden rule” in the ring and in point karate (tournament fighting) is to “Be First...He who hesitates loses... If you see an opening, go for it... If you snooze you lose...Don't worry about what he's gonna do, do what you wanna do... Don't think about it, just do it... Go for it.”

These are great ideals for competition, however on the street should you strike out at another human being to inflict bodily injury, the “power of right” had better be on your side.

I am not suggesting that one should never strike out first in a street confrontation, because there are situations that it could be prudent to do so. Sometimes it can be a big mistake to take too much pity on an attacking bully.

I have had defense situations where I did not want to apply too much force on my attacker and he took it as a sign of weakness and kept coming back at me. If he gets angry enough he may even come back with a weapon.

I hate to say it, but some situations require you to beat an attacking bully all the way down to the point where he is disabled and cannot get back up to come at you again while you are trying to walk away. And there are some situations, where if you take it easy on some individuals in a street fight and do just enough to win, he will think that it was a close fight and want a rematch. This type of individual must be beaten to the point that the next time he sees you he doesn't want a rematch, but will walk across the street in order not to meet with you again. However, the ideal situation would be to win decisively with so much skill and finesse that he realizes that he could not win

and would ultimately leave you alone.

When to Fight, When to Walk

This is the question that good men have been asking since Cain slew Abel. The truth of the matter is that each individual conflict or self-defense situation has its own factors or circumstances in which it should be evaluated or judged.

There are many people who have a set of standards that they try to go by, their own code in which they operate. They draw their own line where they think it should lay and are ready to fight should somebody cross it. They establish their own set of moral standards. These standards are often subject to change without notice, especially if drugs or alcohol is involved.

This is why I try my best to live by the morals and standards that are set forth by the Holy Scriptures. I have found none higher than that of the Bible, and they are never changing.

“Judge not, that ye be not judged.” (Matthew 7:1)

There are those who attempt to use this Scripture to defend themselves from reproof should they be confronted while doing a negative deed. What the Lord Jesus is telling us here is to keep your own self clean, for if you judge yourself according to God’s Word and the standards that are set forth by the Holy Scripture, then you would leave no door open for man to judge you. Do not be over critical or nit-pick your neighbor if he or she does not meet your own personal standards.

The truth of the matter is that we all make a certain amount of judgments on a daily basis. There are certain matters, which may require one to make a righteous judgment concerning a neighbor and then there are matters in your neighbor’s life that are simply nobody’s

business and are strictly between him and God. So where do you draw the line?

We all make judgments when deciding whom to loan our automobile or money to and it is a good practice for parents to evaluate and make a judgment call on the character of the person they entrust to baby-sit their children. But it is not a good call to judge a person's righteousness or spirituality by the food they eat (see **Romans 14:13**), or the clothing that they wear, etc. "Judge not..." is telling us not to make any judgments in the sense of condemnation (for God's Word already does that.) It is important to remember that "what goes around comes around," ... "that ye not be judged." None of us are beyond falling.

"Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." (1 Corinthians 10:12) And should we fall, how would we desire to be judged?

***"For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged."* (Matthew 7:2)**

It has been said that the Christian army is the only army in the world that tramples their wounded, and unfortunately in many cases this is true. The Apostle Paul gave good advice to the church in Galatia regarding this matter.

"Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." (Galatians 6:1)

We are not supposed to be some "wet noodle wimp" that does not take a stand or make a judgment of any type. Under the right circumstances we are to make "righteous judgments."

***"Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment."* (John 7:24)**

Should a man make a righteous judgment, it should be based on

the set standard of the Scripture and, in return, he also should be willing to be judged by that same measure of Scripture.

“... And with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.” (Matthew 7:2)

Paul speaking to the church in Corinth said, **“I speak as to wise men; judge ye what I say.” (I Corinthians 10:15)** **“But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, ...” (1 Corinthians 2:15)**

The Greek word that Paul used here for “judgeth” is *anakrino*, which means to question, examine, investigate, scrutinize, and judge. There is no double meaning here that would indicate any type of condemnation, damnation, sentencing, punishment or avenging to be associated with this word. A good description of this word would be to “evaluate.”

How can we make an evaluation or judgment except by the fruits that a man bears? In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus warned against false teachers and how to recognize them.

“Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.” (Matthew 7:15-16,20)

A man must be right with God before he is capable of making righteous judgment and although a man may be right with God, he is still a sinner saved by grace and has no right to judge his brother with condemnation.

The Apostle Paul’s epistle sums up the matter as he addresses the Christians in Rome, the theme being that the whole world is guilty before God. He says, **“Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things.” (Romans 2:1)**

Christ himself says, ***“Either how canst thou say to thy brother, Brother, let me pull out the mote (splinter) that is in thine eye, when thou thyself beholdest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, cast out first the beam (log) out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to pull out the mote that is in thy brother’s eye.” (Luke 6:42)***

No, we are not to judge anybody with condemnation. However, the Scriptures do tell us that we can know them by their fruits and to test, discern, or judge them as to whether or not they are compatible to God’s Word or standards.

“For a good tree bringeth not forth corrupt fruit; neither doth a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. For every tree is known by his own fruit.” (Luke 6:43-44)

Yes, learning to evaluate (or judge) the fruit of an opponent or potential adversary can be a major factor in any defense or fighting situation.

Discernment / Wisdom to Evaluate

The decision on whether, when, where, how hard, and how many times to strike will ultimately be determined by one’s discernment. The Scriptures tell us that God’s Word contains the wisdom necessary to discern the fruits of the heart, and that discernment is a spiritual gift that is given to believers. We are told to try to evaluate, according to scriptural standards, the spirits to see if they are godly.

“Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God.” (I John 4:1)

So in order for a man to exercise just and godly judgment he must have discernment. In order to receive discernment, he must diligently seek the wisdom of Scripture.

“For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of

righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.” (Hebrews 5:13-14)

These verses in Hebrews tell us that the more Scripture we digest, the more discernment we get in return. Verse 14 speaks of those who exercise their senses to discern both good and evil. These senses would be the eyes to read, ears to hear, and touch through use of the tongue to speak God’s Word.

Yes, there is a special wisdom that comes from knowing and understanding God’s Word. The Apostle Paul addresses the church of Corinth concerning this special wisdom.

“Which things also we speak, not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth.” (1 Corinthians 2:13)

This special wisdom is reserved strictly for the believer (Christians).

“But the natural man (the unsaved, non-repentant sinner) receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.” (They have not spiritual discernment.) (1 Corinthians 2:14)

Soul, Spirit and Senses

There seems to be much confusion in the world as to the difference between the soul, spirit and senses. This confusion can be greatly multiplied by the martial arts if the student does not possess a good understanding of God's Word. It is said that Albert Einstein, as intelligent as he was, used only about 1/10 of his brain's potential. Man uses even less of his physical potential, thus the martial art training can give one a feeling of being complete.

Before becoming involved in martial art training, the student would use predominately one hand and partially one foot. Now, after the training, he uses both hands and both feet, and is taught proper kicking, punching, breathing and stretching techniques. He learns to spin, torque and twist his body like he has never done before. He learns to unlock and tap previously unknown power sources of the body.

The web of confusion, which has entangled his eyes on an issue that is a primal instinct to man, survival (self-defense) is beginning to unweave. Now all of a sudden, his needs are being fulfilled. He begins to see the self-defense plan that the school has lain out. He has never seen anything like it before. He never dreamed, even in his wildest dreams, that he could perform these feats. This stuff is awesome, its pure magic. I mean, wow, its great!

At this point in time in the student's life it becomes easier than ever for him to absorb the pagan, those that do not believe in salvation through Jesus, philosophies of Zen and how it can empower his body and life.

To the God-trusting Bible-believing Christian, the teachings of Zen have nothing positive to offer a man's eternal soul. Some of the

physical aspects that are incorporated into the teachings of Zen may be useful such as the cleansing of the body, the purification of the lower diaphragm through deep breathing, exercises, stretching, and meditating techniques (positions in which to meditate from, but not subject matter in which to meditate on).

In order for a Christian to study a martial art that incorporates the teachings of Zen, and be able to pick and choose what is beneficial and what is not, he will need discernment. For there is a very fine line between the soul, spirit and senses. The philosophy of Zen is not the way of the cross. To them the cross is foolishness, and Jesus was just another good man.

“For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.” (1 Corinthians 1:18)

Soul and Spirit

There are many who believe that the spirit and soul are one and the same. However, the Bible does speak of them as being separate, and all we really know about the soul is what God tells us in his Word.

“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 (not spirit).” (Genesis 2:7)

The truth of the matter is that the Scriptures have not left us with a clear, written definition of the exact differences between the soul and spirit of man and how they intricately affect each other.

There is enough Scripture written on the subject, and in such a manner that there seems to be a door open for one to interpret the meaning of soul and spirit in various ways. The Scriptures do tell us that the soul and spirit are separate, and although, sometimes, the Scriptures speak of them as having the same qualities, the very fact

that God's Word divides them constitute a division.

“And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body (the trinity of man) be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” (1Thessalonians 5:23)

We are told of the separation again in Hebrews, “For the word of God is quick (alive) and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder (the taking apart of) of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow...” (Hebrews 4:12)

The word used in the Old Testament to describe soul is *nephesh* and has the same meaning as the Greek word *psuche* that is used in the New Testament. Both of these words are used in an extremely wide manner and could mean a number of various interpretations. The soul is the moral and emotional nature of man, his integrity, the embodiment of spiritual principles in a man. The instinct of right and wrong comes from the soul.

The Old Testament word for spirit is *ruacha*. It is equal to the New Testament word for spirit, *pneuma*, which means wind, air, breath, and spirit. The soul is the conscience.

“I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well.” (Psalm 139:14)

Emotion comes from the soul — love, hate, desire, affection — as does man's will (will power, self-will) and conscience.

The Soul Has Many Attributes

Others can affect the soul: **“...and destroy all them that afflict my soul.” (Psalm 143:12)**

The soul can be troubled: **“For my soul is full of troubles:...”**

(Psalm 88:3) “...and his soul was grieved for the misery...” (Judges 10:16) “...his soul within him shall mourn.” (Job 14:22)

The soul can be converted: **“The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul” (Psalm 19:7)**

When the soul is converted you become “born again.” Jesus said, ***“Ye must be born again.” (John 3:7)***

The soul needs redeeming: **“...and my soul, which thou hast redeemed.” (Psalm 71:23)**

The soul can be restored: **“He restoreth my soul.” (Psalm 23:3)**

God can take the soul: **“...when God taketh away his soul?” (Job 27:8)**

The soul needs delivery from death: **“For thou hast delivered my soul from death.” (Psalm 56:13)**

The soul needs healing: **“...heal my soul...” (Psalm 41:4)**

The soul needs thirst: **“My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God.”**

(Psalm 42:2)

The soul can be satisfied: **“My soul shall be satisfied ...” (Psalm 63:5)**

The soul can take counsel: **“How long shall I take counsel in my soul, ...” (Psalm 13:2)**

Through the use of his senses (see **Hebrews 5:14**), man’s soul can take counsel. The senses of touch, sight and hearing are used to counsel the soul through the reading of the Scriptures, and hearing the preachers, teachers, and evangelists that God has sent our way (see **Romans 10:14-15**). The sense of taste and smell can be used to spread the Gospel through ministries that feed the poor and share with them the Word.

The Spirit Knows

The spirit of man is the part that knows his thoughts, his mind, and his disposition. **“For what man knoweth the things of a man, save (except by) the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.”** (1 Corinthians 2:11)

“But there is a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding.” (Job 32:8)

“The spirit of man is the candle of the LORD, searching all the inward parts of the belly.” (Proverbs 20:27)

Because man has a spirit, he is able to communicate with God and serve him. **“For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son.”** (Romans 1:9)

God’s creation of man was an extension of his bountiful love. God made man so that he could have a relationship with him and designed him so that the Holy Spirit could “plug into” man’s inner spirit and guide him. When the conditions are right (see **John 3:16**) God’s Spirit will come into the inner man. **“That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man.”** (Ephesians 3:16)

Although man’s spirit and soul are separate, they are closely related and work in conjunction with one another, and are often thought of being one and the same.

One of my favorite preachers has been Dr. J. Vernan McGee, and although brother McGee has gone home to be with the Lord and his soul is in heaven, his spirit lives on with us on earth through his books, taped sermons and worldwide radio ministries.

The spirit of man has been referred to as an abundance of, the mirror of, the gateway of the soul. The soul is able to discern and ef-

fect or guide man's spirit.

A man can be compared to a lit candle: the soul as the flame, the spirit as the heat that is produced, and the Spirit as the light. Spiritual contentment comes from a satisfied soul. The soul is the seat of our emotions, our character: who we are, and how we feel about things. Our spirit is our conduct: what we do, and how we relate to others. Our spirit projects our emotions to others.

Do animals have a soul? My dog has emotions (love, anger, and jealousy) and therefore has a soul, but not an eternal soul. The book of Revelation describes the life in the sea as being "souls". **"...man: and every living soul (breath) died in the sea." (Revelation 16:3)**

When the Scriptures Speak of the Heart

There are various applications. The fact is that the original Hebrew writers used many different words to describe the various inner parts, both physical and spiritual, of man while the English translators chose to use a select few words to describe the same things. One of these words is the word heart.

Heart, soul and spirit are sometimes used in the same manner. The English word heart could be used while referring to the exact center of, interior, man's inner most being, the soul, or even the mind.

"How long shall I take counsel in my soul, having sorrow in my heart (inner most being) daily?" (Psalm 13:2)

"...your heart (soul) shall live for ever." (Psalm 22:26)

"He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart (innermost being); ..." (Psalm 24:4)

"...he shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the LORD." (Psalm 31:24)

We are told in **Psalm 62:8** to pour out your heart (innermost being) before him, and in **Psalm 73:26** that God is the strength of the

heart (innermost being). The innermost being is referred to here by the Psalmist (in **Psalm 86:12**), **“I will praise thee O’ Lord my God, with all my heart”**. And in **Psalm 129:23**, he asks God to **“search me O God and know my heart (innermost being), try me and know my thoughts (mind)”** (**Psalm 139:24**) and **“see if there be any wicked way in me and lead me in the way of everlasting”**. **Psalm 78:72** speaks of our heart or innermost being as having **“integrity.”**

Heart Can Also Refer to the Spirit or Mind of Man

“And be renewed in the spirit of your mind (a new attitude, think differently) And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.” (**Eph 4:23-24**)

The new man has a changed spirit, mind, or heart (see **Ezekiel 36:26**). **Proverbs 2:10** tells us, **“When wisdom entereth into thine heart (mind).”**

We are told in **Proverbs 4:4**, **“Let thine heart (mind) retain my words.”**

Proverbs 8:5, **“...be ye of an understanding heart (mind).”**

Proverbs 10:8, **“The wise in heart (mind) will receive commandments.”**

Proverbs 14:33, **“Wisdom resteth in the heart of him that hath understanding (that can think things out).”**

Proverbs 15:28, **“The heart (mind) of the righteous studieth to answer.”**

Yes, the word heart is also used to refer to man’s spirit, and the spirit is our mind’s projection.

Instinct

Instinct is a product of man's spirit (mind), which is developed through an accumulation of thoughts and experiences stored in the mind (knowledge) by the use of our senses.

Before I was involved in Kenpo Karate I would not be as apt to flinch when a person within my critical distance would quickly move an arm or leg, but after a period of time and many injuries later (several broken noses, fingers and toes, cuts, bruises, blackened eyes, cut lips, etc.) I have learned to "sense" a kick or punch coming my way even before it is thrown.

My spirit (mind) has learned that when a person stands or positions himself in a certain manner he is able to strike out with authority. Now should I be confronted by an adversary my instinct would observe how he positions his body while he is within or close to my critical distance (aura).

My instinct tells me when the possibility for trouble exists, because I have seen trouble that others have been involved in as well as experiencing trouble myself. I dislike trouble immensely and my instinct can now detect it coming my way long before it can get to me. Some may refer to this as a sixth sense.

A conditional response is how a person reacts or responds due to the conditions that he is, or has been exposed to.

I have a dog that is a pit bull terrier, and it is the most affectionate animal, towards people and other animals, that I have ever owned. Although pit bulls have a reputation for being aggressive and vicious towards other animals, my pit, her name is "Baby", just beams with a loving spirit. I attribute this to the way I raised her. Her senses have detected nothing but love projected from my spirit to hers. This love became a part of her innermost being (soul) and this is what she has become, a lovable pit bull. She has an incredible ability to spar and

does this by instinct, as well as a result of physical responses (reflexes) induced by her body's design.

Most animals by nature can swim, due to their instinct. However, ultimately, it is their mind that instructs their limbs to kick and paddle their way through the water. Most young children have no fear of water; their instinct (mind) has not yet registered the fact that it can be deadly. As a result, thousands of children die each year from drowning.

Can Training in The Martial Arts Enlighten One's Spirit?

Yes and no. A study of self-defense, the science of body mechanics, through a system or style of the martial arts can sharpen one's senses and dramatically increase one's confidence level thus sharpening the mind (spirit). But it has positively no properties of enhancement on man's soul other than the fact that the increased level of confidence could make one a bolder witness for the gospel of Christ and thus increases one's heavenly reward.

Scripture tells us that bodily exercise profiteth little, yet exercise does profit us and we are to protect and care for our bodies, but it is our soul and spirit that lives forever. We know that the spirit and the soul are separate, yet one intricately effects and relies on the other.

The most descriptive teaching by Jesus concerning the capabilities of the soul and spirit in the afterlife is found in **Luke, chapter**

16 where both Lazarus and the rich man died. When Lazarus opened his eyes from death he found himself being comforted in the bosom of Abraham. The bosom of Abraham is a picture or reflection of God's word, law and will for man. Abraham represents those who are wrapped or blanketed in God's promises, those who obey His will.

Before Christ's work at Cavalry, those souls who died in the faith would rest in Paradise, after the ascension of Christ, the souls would rest with the Lord (in heaven) forevermore.

When the rich man opened his eyes he was (in hell) in instant torment. They were able to communicate, to see and recognize, they had memory and were able to exercise their senses. Each began instantly to reap the reward of their labors which they had sown while they were on earth.

The Bible has much more to say concerning the transition of the soul from our earthly bodies to eternity future, however for the purpose of this thesis, I will stop here.

Choosing a Karate School

The cost of running a karate school today is substantial. By the time the sole proprietor of a school computes rent, which is usually a long-term lease commitment, utilities, telephone, instructors' salaries, printing and advertisement costs, insurance, and other costs, it can become quite expensive.

Most of these costs will increase by a set percentage annually, so every year the cost of operating a school goes up. However, you can only charge so much for karate lessons. The owner of the karate school has had to make a substantial financial commitment in order to open the school and is looking for committed students to help him

keep it going.

The average sole proprietor of a karate school probably teaches more because he enjoys it, than for the money he makes. As a general rule, I believe that most legitimate Black Belt karate instructors are over-worked and under-paid.

The cost of running a school is passed on to the public, making the average price of karate lessons today anywhere from \$60.00 to \$200.00 per month. This may seem like a lot of money, but when a student makes a commitment to study and train in a martial art he will usually replace his old activities with newfound studio time. Hopefully, work out time becomes a part of his life.

Watch for contracts. They can be good or bad and are only as secure as the parties who sign them. Most schools will offer, or try to sell you, a variety of programs and, like anything else, the more you buy the cheaper it becomes. They will offer programs that will take you to your first belt, all the way to black belt, or to anywhere in between. Unless you plan on cashing out, paying in full up front, as an option on a program, you will, more likely than not, leave a down payment and make weekly-biweekly-or monthly installments until your program is paid for.

It is rare to find a studio that will allow anyone to begin training without first making some type of down payment, for it is not unusual for a student to fall behind on payments and then decide that it is not financially feasible for him to continue with his program. So in order to keep the student enrollment up, down payments are utilized.

I have owned and /or operated several karate schools in various communities and have found that people in higher income brackets consider a business that does not use contracts as a “fly by night” operation, while the people of lower income brackets feel threatened by contracts.

I feel that good instruction and well-structured classes will hold a student to the studio, not a piece of paper. However, a contract could be good for some people, for when a financial commitment is made, a student is more prone to finish what he started.

I would be extremely cautious of multi-year contracts. I believe that it is a big mistake for a person who has had no previous experience with martial arts to enter into a school and sign a multi-year contract, because there are too many variables in life that can change in a short period of time.

If you like a particular school for some reason and wish to train there, I would try to start with a six-month program, but definitely not more than one year on the first sign up. There are many schools out there that will not spend time to talk to you if they feel that you will not sign up for an eighteen month to three-year program. You do not need this type of school. Walk away.

I would also be cautious of any school that taught more than one style of a karate art. If they really had their act together it would be a full-time job to run one efficiently.

A general business rule when operating a gym or karate school is to try to get as much money up front as possible because chances are that the student will not be around to finish it. When the student leaves prematurely, he loses his down payment. And if he has signed a binding multi-year contract, which may be referred to as a student enrollment agreement, he could lose a lot more.

When a person comes into a karate school to inquire into lessons he is usually on one of life's peaks, his enthusiasm is up; perhaps inspired by a recent movie he has seen on martial arts or has a sudden need for it in his life and is vulnerable to high-pressure sales pitches. A good night's sleep is good advice before signing any contract.

In the case of a karate school you may have a personality con-

flict with an instructor or some of the clientele, a change of school ownership or instructor, and soon decide that you would rather study elsewhere. That would not be so easy to do if you were locked in on a two or three year contract. The law requires that the studio provide the student with adequate instruction, which is at the discretion of the school, not the student.

When considering martial art training for children, often the YMCA, Boys Club, or the local community recreation center may possibly have an inexpensive type program that does not utilize contracts and would suit your purpose fine. I would not recommend that parents enroll their children in a school that uses contracts of any type, for a child's interests can and often do change quickly.

Most schools offer introductory programs of some type. These programs vary and can be anywhere from 30 days for \$100.00; one week for \$30.00; five lessons for \$25.00; or as little as, "Come in and try a class for \$10.00." Most schools are earnest about offering their introductory programs to the public. They give the potential student a chance to have all of his questions concerning the school and/or martial arts answered. I feel that introductory programs are a good thing and should be utilized before engaging in long-term programs. It is not uncommon for a school to use a good Black Belt with polished sales skills to pump up the prospective students and, after they sign up, assign them to lower belt instructors.

I have often heard adults complain of how after signing a contract they ended up in a class that was mixed with children. This can be a sticky situation. I do not mean to say that a lower belt instructor cannot be good for a beginning student, because they can be.

Which is Better — Private or Group Lessons?

Most systems of karate teach their art extremely well in groups and have little need for private lessons. However, kenpo is one of the few arts that require the use of private lessons to master the intricacies of the system. Kenpo is usually taught with a combination of private and group classes. We feel that this is the most effective method in which to convey our art.

Private lessons are great and much can be accomplished through them. However, the competitive type atmosphere created by group classes plays an equal role in the development of a student. The problem with learning from a Black Belt friend or relative, strictly on a one-on-one private lesson basis in the park or garage, is that the competitive type atmosphere among peers is missing. Without the group type training it becomes difficult for a student to evaluate his true progress in comparison to his peers. It is also a great benefit for a martial art student to work out with others of various heights, weights, strengths, and body designs.

Hidden Costs

It is not a common practice, but there are schools that have clauses in their student enrollment agreements (contracts) that obligate the student to purchase their mandatory equipment from them at a tremendous mark up. Belt advancement testing fees can be another hidden cost that could substantially add to the total price of your training. Ask about this before signing any type of agreement.

I personally know of schools that require all beginning students to wear a white GI (uniform) until they obtain their first rank (six to eight weeks), and then must switch to a black GI. Students are required to purchase all equipment from the school. The school sells

mandatory supplies and equipment at a tremendous (at times outrageous) mark up.

Most schools would not care where the students obtain their supplies or equipment, as long as they get it. I think that most reputable schools give the option to the student to buy their good quality supplies at a reasonable price.

The best deals on supplies would probably be found at a martial arts supply store, and it is a good idea to visit a few of them before making major equipment purchases. The down side to this is that it is not uncommon for a novice to shop at a martial art supply store and purchase a low grade or even the wrong type or size of equipment. When shopping for his own equipment the student should have an educated idea of what he is looking for. In most cases, it is probably a good idea for the beginning student to purchase his first sets of necessary training equipment from school's studio before he ventures out elsewhere to obtain his own.

Initial Equipment Necessary for Training

When it comes to equipment, it pays to get the best. Good equipment will help keep injuries to a minimum, which in return will result in a more regular training schedule.

Some of the basic equipment items that should be obtained by the beginning students are GI's, cup and supporter, mouthpiece (single upper-football type) for easy breathing, safety kicks and safety punches (foam hand and foot protectors), shin pads, and a head protector.

You get exactly what you pay for, when investing in a head protector, and the boxers have the best. I strongly believe in boxing head-gear with extended cheek protectors. A well-designed cheek protector can prevent a needless broken nose. And when wearing a good fitting

piece of leather headgear you almost don't mind getting hit. The key to a good set of headgear is the cheek protector. If they are extended too far, your peripheral vision becomes limited to on coming kicks and hook shots. If they are not extended far enough, then your nose will pay the price. Be careful when selecting headgear and choose wisely. The approximate cost of headgear should be between sixty and eighty dollars. The rest of the equipment should cost about \$100.00.

While you are collecting equipment, it would be a good idea to invest in a good set of rolled foam padded boxing gloves (provided that your school will allow you to use them in the sparring classes). And do not forget the hand wraps, for they greatly reduce the chance of injury to the hand. A good set of boxing gloves may cost approximately \$60.00 or \$80.00 a pair but should last you many years.

The key to making good leather gloves and headgear last is to sprinkle baby powder on the stitching to prevent the salt in the sweat from deteriorating the threads. The leather usually holds up fine, it is the stitching that falls apart. Baby powder also helps keep the leather dry, soft, and pliable as well as odor free.

Take Your Time and Shop Around

Do not sign up at the first school that you visit.

Compare prices.

Try to select a studio that is close to home and has classes that are convenient to your schedule; this makes it harder for one to make excuses about how they are too tired after work to train.

Do not tie up a lot of your money with a new school. Karate schools have a tendency to open and close very quickly and unexpectedly, due to lack of capital. Often an individual can be

a good Black Belt fighter and teacher but substantially lack the capital and business skills necessary to keep a studio open.

If you come across a school that interests you and they do not offer introductory programs or lessons, at least take the time to view several of their offered classes. Watch the instructors at work and talk to some of the students after the workouts.

Check out the environment. Is the studio clean?

How about the language that is used? Is cursing or foul language allowed?

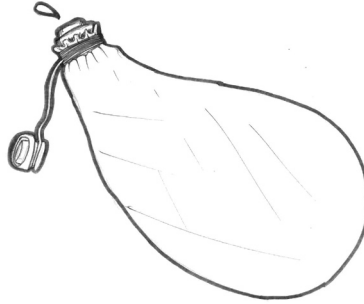
Does the school have a set standard of rules and regulations for all students to follow? Discipline is a must.

Does the school have work out equipment and will it be available to you?

My school is extremely well equipped. We have approximately a dozen heavy bags of various types, some large, some small, stuffed bags, air bags, water-filled bags, speed bags, double-ended focus bags, hand-held focus pads and bags, and jump ropes.

Often people will come into our studio wanting to purchase work out time because the traditional school they have contracted with has none, not even a heavy bag. Training equipment makes a big difference. If you are not knowledgeable in the art of self-defense, I urge you to learn for the sake of your loved ones as well as your own peace of mind. If you are not knowledgeable of the Holy Scriptures I also urge you to cash in on their wealth. **“The testimony of the LORD is**

sure, making wise the



The Scriptures and Strong Drink (Alcohol)

Due to the fact that the strong drink has a tendency to be a dominating factor in many conflicts, I have included alcohol as part of the self-defense topic. Remember, common sense as well as a little insight (discernment) are major ingredients in the practice of self-defense. As a general rule, I try to stay away from socializing where alcohol is the center of entertainment. It seems to attract a crowd of people who seek fulfillment through a chemical means.

Occasionally, I will find myself at a wedding or a company picnic where alcohol is served, but not often. I just do not feel comfortable around the average drinker, for strife seems to follow them. We are warned in **Proverbs 4:14**, “**Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men.**” And again, **Proverbs 4:17**, “**For they eat the bread of wickedness, and drink the wine of violence.**”

Whenever I’m in a place where alcohol is being served, I try to

stay extra alert, for I have come to realize that anything is capable of happening at any time, without notice, while in the company of drinkers (winebibbers).

Alcohol, which in itself is a form of a drug, can and, often does effect, or even control one's thoughts and emotions. There are many that reach for a drink in order to relax or to calm their nerves, perhaps to feel more comfortable on a date, or at an important appointment. If they do not have enough of this chemical in them, they may not like you. If they have too much of this chemical in them, they may not like you, and may even want to fight or harm you. But if they have the right amount of this chemical in them, then you're an "Okay Joe." Not every drinker is like this, but many are.

There are also many that feel there is nothing the matter with the social consumption of alcohol as long as it is not abused. After all, some may say there were great men of the Bible that drank strong drink! Let's take a look at what the Scriptures tell us about wine. We must first have an understanding as to what wine is according to the Bible.

We must also keep in mind that the Scriptures have been translated from Hebrew to English (the Old Testament) and Greek to English (the New Testament). This does not mean that any truths have been lost through these translations. However, the disciples of the Word must search diligently for these truths, and they are not hidden from those who seek.

We know that in the part of the world that Jesus walked and ministered in, the water was, in most cases, not fit to drink. Even today, the water in the Middle East can be unfit to drink. Often, their rivers are used as sewage and waste disposal sites.

Two thousand years ago this area was a much more fruitful area. The grape grew well and in abundance. The common drink in

these areas was, and in many cases still is, grape juice. To preserve the juice from spoiling, fermentation was used. So when the Scriptures speak of wine, we are not told as to how high of an alcohol content was involved except by terminology such as wine, good wine, new wine, strong drink and mixed wine. The English word “wine” used by Scripture could even mean pure grape juice.

We know that the grape was fermented to many levels of strength. The mixed wines that are mentioned by Scripture were more likely than not fermented corn mixed with fermented or non-fermented grape juice (an excellent source of hard liquor). The fermented corn, itself, is a potent drink. **“Corn shall make the young men cheerful, and new wine the maids.” (Zechariah 9:17)**

Here the prophet Zechariah speaks of the young men drinking hard liquor and the young ladies drinking fermented wine. Cheerful meaning under the influence, as to what degree is subjective. The Bible does speak of those who drink strong drink, but never condones it. As a matter of fact, the Scriptures guide us away from strong drink and warn us of its ill effects. **“And new wine takes away the heart (mind).” (Hosea 4:11)**

The prophet Joel speaks of the anguish a drinker feels when he is separated from this strong drink (alcoholism). **“Awake, ye drunkards, and weep; and howl, all ye drinkers of wine, because of the new wine; for it is cut off from your mouth.” (Joel 1:5)** Here, Joel was prophesying the fall of Israel and telling the people that their lifestyle would change.

The prophet Isaiah warns of the error of wine. **“Woe to the crown of pride, to the drunkards of Ephraim, whose glorious beauty is a fading flower, which are on the head of the fat valleys of them that are overcome with wine!” (Isaiah 28:1)**

Time after time the Bible warns us of the ill effects of wine,

should we not heed these warnings? We are told that those who choose drinking and partying as a lifestyle, do not have a lot to look forward to in the area of financial gains. **“He that loveth pleasure shall be a poor man: he that loveth wine and oil shall not be rich.” (Proverbs 21:17)**

In the days of Jesus Christ, wine and mixed drink were relatively inexpensive compared to today’s prices. Today, a man (a blue collar worker) can easily exhaust his weekly pay trying to quench his thirst for alcohol. What he does not spend on alcohol, he can spend foolishly on other things (and often will) while under its influence.

In the book of Esther we are told (see **Esther 1:10**) that King Ahasuerus (when the heart of the king was merry with wine) commanded his chamberlains (personal servants) to bring his queen Vashti before him so that he could show off her beauty to his guests as they partied at his banquet. Vashti was said to be the most beautiful woman in all the land. The queen, as was the custom, wore a veil, which she refused to remove in public. She would not allow the drinking king to shame her. This stirred up the pride in the merry king (who was under the influence) and caused him to divorce her. Alcohol has a strong tendency to bring out and magnify pride in a man. This made an opportunity for the brave and godly woman Esther to become Queen. Again, alcohol made the king become foolish “at the banquet of wine” and while under the influence offered Esther anything she asked for, up to half of his kingdom.

In another incident, King Herod (see **Mark 6:23**) was celebrating his birthday and offered the daughter of Herodias (who danced for him) up to half of his kingdom. The Scriptures do not indicate that Herod was under the influence of alcohol, but it is more likely than not that he was. After all, this was a feast with many prominent guests, and it was his birthday party.

Yes, the Scriptures are constantly reminding us of the deceptions of wine.

Proverbs 20:1, “Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.”

We are told in **Genesis 19:32** that Lot’s daughters deceived him with wine.

In **Genesis 27:25** Jacob used wine to deceive his father Isaac and to steal the “blessing of the first born” which rightfully belonged to his brother Esau. This brought much grief to the family for many years. **II Samuel 11:13** tells us that David used strong drink to make Uriah drunk in order to deceive him.

Danger Comes When You Least Expect It. Always Keep Your Guard Up!

Yes, wine and strong drink definitely cloud one’s thinking. Even small amounts will have some effect. Alcohol can take a person’s mind off business and cause one to “drop their guard.”

In **II Samuel 13:28** Absalom commanded his servants to wait until Amnon’s heart was “merry with wine” then kill him.

In **I Kings 16:8-10** we are told that Elah reigned over Israel for two years. His servant Zimri conspired against him. He waited until Elah drank himself drunk one night; then killed him and



reigned in his stead.

Yes, it is a good battle tactic to wait until your enemy is drinking or drunk, than attack.

Nahum 1:10, “O for while they be folden together as thorns, and while they are drunken as drunkards, they shall be devoured as stubble fully dry.”

Job 1:13 tells us that the sons and daughter of Job were at the eldest son’s house eating and “drinking wine” (partying) when a great wind struck the house and it fell upon them and they died.

We know that the reason that they died was because the devil was walking about seeking whom he may devour. So they may well have died whether they had been drinking or not, but should death come my way, I’d like to be at my best to try to deflect it, not in a drunken state, or under the influence of anything. We are told to be sober in several Scriptures throughout the Bible.

1 Peter 5:8, “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.”

1Thessalonians 5:6, “...but let us watch and be sober.”

In these two verses the English word sober is translated from the Greek work nepho, which means to abstain from wine.

Every alcoholic starts out with just “social consumption,” so why even take the chance? The graveyards are filled with people that thought, “It won’t happen to me.” Death is inevitable, but should we not utilize every way to prolong its arrival? Statistics show that alcohol consumption reduces longevity of life.

Does the Bible Condone the Drinking of Wine?

Due to the structure of our society and advanced technology,

our needs for alcohol are not the same as they were in the Middle East when Jesus abode in the flesh. Today we have advanced medicine for just about every sickness. During ancient times, medicines were limited to wine, oils and herbs.

Luke 10:34 tells us that the Good Samaritan used wine on the open wounds of the beaten man. The Apostle Paul tells Timothy to use wine as a medicine and guided him away from the water — **“Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach’s sake and thine often infirmities.” (1 Timothy 5:23)**

All we can do is guess as to what Timothy’s infirmities were. (Many theologians feel that he may have had chronic stomach trouble.) However, Paul did advise him to “drink no longer water.” Perhaps it was the water that was making him sick, and Paul was telling him to drink the juice of the grape instead, it would be better for his stomach.

I find it hard to believe that Paul would tell Timothy to replace water with a wine that had high alcohol content. Not only would this turn Timothy into a drunkard and an alcoholic, but his thirst would never be quenched, for the consumption of an alcoholic beverage may quench the thirst for a short while, it ultimately dehydrates the body leaving one with an almost unquenchable after thirst. The morning after for one who tarries long at the wine table leaves him feeling like there is not enough water in the world that can quench his thirst.

Paul was an Apostle and a man of God. He was training Timothy for the ministry. It would be incompatible with God’s word for Paul to guide him to wine that had a high content of alcohol, but not to a refreshing preserved grape drink used for medicinal purposes. A godly man is to obtain his joy from his spiritual relationship with the Holy Spirit (God). We are told many times throughout Scriptures to “rejoice in the Lord,” not in an alcoholic beverage.

The Nazarites (separated ones) were to separate themselves from wine, a symbol of a mere natural joy, and give themselves wholly unto the Lord.

Daniel was a mighty man of God and refused wine. Daniel was a Nazarite. **“But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king’s meat (meat which was from animals that were sacrificed to idols) nor with the wine which he drank:” (Daniel 1:8)**

Yes, the Scripture has provided us with enough evidence to show that strong wine is not for the children of God.

Proverbs 31:3: “Give not thy strength unto women, nor thy ways to that which destroyeth kings (drinking strong wine).”

In Proverbs 31:4 is states that:

It is not for kings (a symbol for Christian leaders, preachers, deacons, etc.) O Lemuel, it is not for kings to drink wine; nor for princes (children of God) strong drink.” (The children of God have been made kings unto God through Christ’s work at calvary. See **I Corinthians 4:8, Revelation 1:6, and Revelation 5:10.**)

In Proverbs 31:5-7 it is stated that:

Lest they drink, and forget the law, and pervert the judgment of any of the afflicted. Give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish (medicine for the deathly sick), and wine unto those that be of heavy hearts (bitter of soul, the ungodly). Let him drink, and forget his poverty, and remember his misery no more.” (If a man refuses to accept the refuge of peace and joy offered by God, then he should have strong drink. That’s all the comfort he is going to get in this world.)

No, God’s Word does not condone strong drink for His

children especially His priests and prophets. We are to speak His words with sober lips and a clear head.

Isaiah addressed Ephraim, the outcast tribes who broke away from Israel. He spoke of the cause of their downfall in **Isaiah 28:7-9:**

But they also have erred through wine, and through strong drink are out of the way; the priest and the prophet have erred through strong drink, they are swallowed up of wine, they are out of the way (no longer of use) through strong drink; they err in vision, they stumble in judgment. For all tables are full of vomit and filthiness, so that there is no place clean. Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine?

Wine and strong drink was the beginning of their demise though I'm sure that they all started out as just "social drinkers." Wine can cause God to put you on the shelf. God cannot and will not use an unclean vessel.

I am amazed at the organizations we have today that claim to be "churches of God" that allow their leaders (preachers or priests) to consume alcohol as if they are "one of the boys." Should they not be above the bad habits of the people whom they are trying to lead to a life of sacrifice?

I have had friends who are members of an extremely popular denomination, which claims to be a scriptural "church." Each year during one of their popular holidays this church holds festivities that includes alcoholic beverages. The leader of this particular "church" as well as some of the "church" officers drink themselves to the point that they are visibly intoxicated and smoke cigars and cigarettes to boot!

I have witnessed this on several occasions and at more than one of this denomination's "churches." "They are human, just like us," the members say. "After all, we're all sinners." This type of conduct is incompatible with God's Word, for a man who is called into the ministry is to be subjected to the guidelines set forth by Scripture. These guidelines are basically the same for preachers, deacons, bishops, and elders (officers of the church). See **1 Timothy 3:1-13 and Titus 1:5-11**.

Because many people are led to believe by the officers of their "church" that social drinking is acceptable (usually they themselves enjoy it), I would like to point out some Scripture on this matter.

Yes, we are all sinners, including the officers of the church. However, the officers of the church are to be found blameless. Blameless and sinless are not the same thing. One of the qualifications of Scripture is the consumption of wine.

I suppose that there is enough Scripture written and in such a manner that one could propose a good argument as to why one should be able to drink wine in small amounts, but let's try to view this in a manner which would be the most consistent with God's Word. 1 Timothy, chapter three is devoted to the officers of the church and the good example that they are to set forth.

1 Timothy 3:2: "A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife."

1 Timothy 3:4-5: "One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity. (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)"

Therefore, a scriptural preacher must be a man who can be an example of how to rule a house. According to Scripture the man is the head of the house. There is no verse of Scripture anywhere in the Bible that gives a woman the authority to rule a house, not even in an unsaved

household situation. The point of this is that preachers (officers) are to be an example.

I Timothy 3:3: “Not given to wine...,” and again in verse 8, “... not be given to much wine.” This same qualification is reiterated in Titus 1:7, “... not given to wine....”

The advocates of wine will argue that this does not teach total abstinence, and wine in small amounts is okay. The problem is that wine, regardless of the amount, will have some type of influence on the consumer, even if it is in a small way.

A Godly preacher is a man of much responsibility. He is often called upon during a crisis, especially when death is near. If I had an unsaved loved one on a death bed who has rejected Christ’s plan of salvation all of their life and the doctor told me that he had only hours left to live, I would want and expect my pastor to come to his bedside to talk to him one last time, hoping that my loved one would accept Christ’s work on Calvary. I would want my pastor to be at his best, powered one hundred percent by the Holy Spirit. If he should show up hung over or smelling of wine, I would be highly upset. A preacher is on call twenty-four hours a day to do God’s work and he should stay ready. No, wine has no part in the New Testament ministry.

Walk Your Talk

By nature I am a very physically minded person. I believe in my martial art training and I work out extremely hard. I set an example for my students. I have had many sign up for my classes just because of the physical condition that I keep myself in. I try to be a product of what I teach.

My classes are tough. I will often drop down to my first two knuckles and pump out fifty perfectly formed push-ups, then stand up

and tell my students that I want them to do twenty-five. This method of teaching will get their respect quicker than any way I know.

I have talked to many students who have admitted that they left their previous schools because their instructors would not practice what they preached. They do not want some overweight, out-of-shape, beer-drinking, cigarette-smoking karate instructor tell them to drop down and pump out fifty push-ups and fifty sit-ups while he slips into his office to drink coffee. Setting the example is very important both in the martial arts, the ministry and witnessing.

Be Not Drunk With Wine Wherein is Excess: What is Excess?

This seems to be the argument between those who do and those who do not advocate the social consumption of wine. The wine used back then for a thirst-quenching drink (in place of water) may have had as little as one to two percent alcohol content. The average wine on the market today has on average twelve to thirteen percent and can have as high as twenty percent.

The consumer of the low percent biblical wine would have to drink approximately six to thirteen glasses of that wine to get the same effect as one glass of the average wine that is served today. So, are the Scriptures telling us not to drink an excessive amount of this low (alcohol content) percent wine? Or is it telling us not to drink strong wine or mixed wine in excess?

To answer this much-debated question let us look further into the Scriptures:

According to Proverbs 23:29-31:

**Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions?
who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who
hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine;
they that go to seek mixed wine. Look not thou upon the
wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup,
when it moveth itself aright (strong fermented).**

Here we are instructed to stay away from strong wine, and are even told why:

Proverbs 23:32-33, “At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder. Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things.”

Fermented drink has a strong tendency to guide the partaker in an ungodly manor **Proverbs 23:34-35:**

Yea, thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast (It will make you sick, thus defiling your temple.) They have stricken me, shalt thou say, and I was not sick; they have beaten me, and I felt it not: when shall I awake? (It will distort one’s senses.) I will seek it yet again. (And may even develop into a habit.)

A favorite verse of Scripture for those who seek to justify the use of strong wine and mixed drink is found in **Luke 7:34, “The Son of man is come eating and drinking; and ye say, Behold a gluttonous man, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners!”**

This is not an admittance on the part of Jesus that he was drinking “strong drink” with sinners, but rather the emphasis is placed on the fact that he was being falsely accused. To get the full meaning of this verse one must look at the content of the surrounding Scriptures.

So, let's look at the previous verse.

Luke 7:33: ***“For John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine; and ye say, He hath a devil.”***

Then read **verse 34**, John the Baptist was a Nazarite and was forbidden to consume any part of the grape at any time. Yet because of his prophesying he was also falsely accused of being “under the influence.” Again in **Acts 2:3**, the Apostles were falsely accused of being drunk.

It does not make Scriptural sense that John the Baptist would separate himself from the grape (for the purpose of purification) to make way for Jesus, and then Jesus himself sat down to strong drink with winebibbers. The fact that Jesus sat down with the ungodly is what upset his accusers. The ungodly may have been drinking strong wine in his presence, but that does not mean (and the Bible does not say) that Jesus did. Nowhere in the Scriptures are we told that Jesus drank strong wine.

Luke 7:36: ***“And one of the Pharisees desired him that he would eat with him. And he went into the Pharisee's house, and sat down to meat.”*** (Notice that there is no mention of wine.)

Again the Pharisees accuse Jesus in **Luke 15:1-2**, ***“Then drew near unto him all the publicans and sinners for to hear him. And the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them.”*** (Again there is no mention of wine.) This time their accusations are not false. I'm sure that Jesus sat down with many a winebibber, but the reason why is clarified by Scripture in...

The Call of Matthew

According to **Matthew 9:10-13:**

And it came to pass, as Jesus sat at meat (no mention of wine) in the house (of Matthew the tax collector), behold, many publicans and sinners came and sat down with him and his disciples. And when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto his disciples, Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners? But when Jesus heard that, he said unto them, *They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick... for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.*

When Jesus sat at meat with winebibbers it was more likely than not that he would drink the preserved grape drink with his meal regardless of what the winebibbers would drink with theirs.

Another verse of Scripture used by advocates of strong wine is found in the Gospels (**Matthew 9:17; Mark 2:22; Luke 5:37-39**). This is where Jesus speaks of putting new wine in old wineskins. They feel that because Jesus used the parable of wine as an example to make a point that he must be advocating the use of strong wine. In actuality, Jesus used wine as an example because it was terminology that people of the day could easily relate to. (A Pharisee on the subject of fasting had questioned Jesus. He used the parable of wine to answer him.)

What About the Wine Made by Jesus For the Wedding at Cana? (The First Miracle)

The truth of the matter is that nobody really knows how strong of a grape drink that it actually was. This is one of the matters that we will have to find out about once we get to heaven. Yet, it does not

seem consistent with God's Word to warn us of the dangers of strong drink and to guide us away from it (**Proverbs 23:31**), then make a large batch of it at a wedding so that men could become "well drunk."

So let's take a closer look at some of the events that took place at the wedding in Cana, the wine that Jesus made, and see where the emphasis of the miracle should really lay. (See **John 2:11**)

They had run out of wine at the wedding.

The mother of Jesus had directed the servants to do whatsoever Jesus told them.



John 2:6: "And there were set there six water pots of stone, after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three firkins apiece." It was the custom of the Jews to wash the feet of their guests as they arrived. These six water pots of stone contained foot-washing water. A firkin equaled nine gallons so each pot contained eighteen to twenty-seven gallons.



John 2:7-10: “Jesus saith unto them, *Fill the waterpots with water.* And they filled them up (topped them off) to the brim. (This would now be approximately 162 gallons.) And he saith unto them, *Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast.* And they bare it. When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine (not “new wine” or “strong drink”), and knew not whence it was: (but the servants which drew the water knew) and (you can bet that they spread the word as to what Jesus had done to the foot wash water) the governor of the feast called the bridegroom, And saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse: but thou hast kept the good wine until now.”

The Greek word that is replaced with the English word “good” does not reflect the alcohol content of the wine (juice of the grape) that Jesus had made, but rather the quality of the drink. The miracle here is not that Jesus provided strong drink for a wedding celebration, but that he took the unclean foot wash “six water pots of stone” vessels and purified the contents to a good wine (grape drink).

This is a picture in Scripture of the cleansing power of Jesus of how he can purify the ungodly. It was more likely, than not, the crowd was an ungodly lot attending the festivities, and well drunk on strong wine (they had drank until they ran out of wine and it was probably a strong wine.)

By the time that they had drunk the wine (juice of the grape) that Jesus made. They were more impressed by the quality rather than the alcoholic content of the wine.

It does not seem to be consistent with Scripture that Jesus would make strong drink in order to make well-drunken men drunker,

then have Holy Scripture to tell us later in *Ephesians 5:18*: “***And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit.***”

It should, also, be noted that the scripture tells us that this was the first miracle that Jesus had performed on earth. It is a good indication that as a child, Jesus did not run about performing miracles, however when he did perform his first miracle, it was in the presence of the servants in the foot washing area of the wedding premises at Cana. Jesus loves the lowly.

And at what point did the water turn to wine? No ceremonial sensitive Jew would ever drink anything from a foot-wash basin. So, once it was turned into wine, it was placed into a container and carried to the governor of the feast, without him knowing where it had come from.

Yes, there have been great men of the Bible that have indulged in strong drink. It was never God’s will that they do so, and they did reap and sow.

The Scriptures tell us of an episode where Noah became involved with strong wine. Please keep in mind that this is the first time that the Scriptures speak of fermented wine or drunkenness. The first time Noah drank wine after the flood he may not have even been aware of what ill affect it would have. Remember that this event took place just after the flood. The reason God destroyed the earth with water was because man had become wicked, evil and violent, yet there was no mention of fermented drink or drunkenness before the flood. Under the “canopy theory” the great mist atmosphere that surrounded the earth before the flood may have even filtered out the particular suns rays that supplied the chemical substance in the grape that allowed it to ferment.

Noah's Shame and Ham's Sin

In Genesis 9:20-27:

And Noah began to be an husbandman, and he planted a vineyard: And he drank of the wine, and was drunken; and he was uncovered within his tent. And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brethren without. And Shem and Japheth took a garment, and laid it upon both their shoulders, and went backward, and covered the nakedness of their father; and their faces were backward, and they saw not their father's nakedness. And Noah awoke from his wine, and knew what his younger son had done unto him. And he said, Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren. And he said, Blessed be the LORD God of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant. God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant.

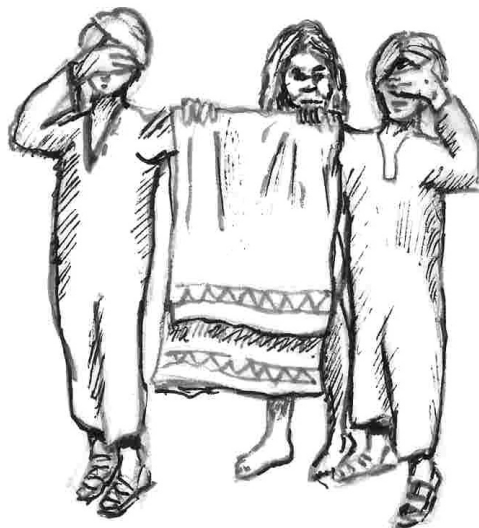
So, Noah “drank of the wine, and was drunken and laid in his tent drunken and naked.” His youngest son Ham, the father of Canaan (Canaan being a form of government among the Jewish people), walked into his father's tent saw his father's nakedness and was shamed. And he told his two brothers that were outside.

The Hebrew word used here for “saw” has many applications and may even imply that this was not a casual glance, but rather a hard stare.

This matter of uncovering nakedness actually falls under the category of respect and the Scriptures address this issue in **Leviticus 18:6-19**.

The two brothers held up a blanket shoulder high (as a curtain) behind

them and walked in backwards (so as not to view their father's nakedness) and covered him.



The Scriptures do not tell us what business, if any, that Ham had in his father's tent, but we are told that "Noah awoke from his wine" (he was hung over) and knew what his younger son had done unto him (walked into his tent saw his naked body and was ashamed of him). He then did something, which he may never have otherwise done, had he not been hungover — he cursed his son. **"And he said, Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren."** (Genesis 9:25)

This story also portrays a New Testament parallel of how those who are ashamed of the Father (or his plan) are cursed and those who are not ashamed are rewarded.

Yes, Noah drank strong wine, but a heavy price was paid by the decision that he made while under its influence.

What About Communion Wine?

It is highly unlikely that, while the Scriptures teach so strongly against the grape once it “moveth itself aright,” Jesus would use it to sup with. Even under Jewish law the ceremonial bread and wine was to be unleavened, that is bread without yeast and unfermented grape juice. Leaven (the boiling of poisons), is a symbol of sin and not allowed to be used by the people in the temple. These were Jewish men whom were accustomed to using unfermented pure grape juice for ceremony. Why would they suddenly change over to a (leavened) strong drink for a precious event such as the Lord’s Last Supper? It just does not make sense.

In Closing

I believe that in this chapter, on the subject of wine as a strong drink, enough Scripture has been presented to suggest that the Bible teaches the New Testament Christian to abstain totally from wine as a recreational drink, or a refuge of any type (Although a strong case has been presented that the leaders of the church should totally abstain). If a doctor prescribes a medicine that has a high content of alcohol, then that is a different matter and would not be a violation of Scripture.

The family was the first institution established by God, even before the church. God loves the institution of the family. Fermented drink is an enemy of the family, and not necessary to produce joy. Fermented drink has caused many a man to become abusive mentally and physically to his wife and children, shattering wedding vows that are precious in the eyes of God.

Does not fermented drink wreak havoc in our society? The shootings, stabbings, the human bodies that are strewn over the roads

in our great land, the prisons that are overcrowded, hospitals filled with alcohol related diseases, sicknesses and accidents, the graveyard's daily burying, and the list goes on as to the ungodly attributes of fermented drink.

It is difficult to conceive the thought that the Christian God who knows all, sees all, and hears all, past, present, and future could give his blessing on strong wine that causes so much ungodly grief pain and destruction throughout the world, and then tell us to exercise good sense as we partake in it.

We are told in Genesis that after the fall of man, the earth was cursed, and today man can harvest many poisons from it. Just because a substance is organically grown from the earth does not make it acceptable or wise to consume or partake. How about a little marijuana? Or just a little bit of cocaine?

And what about your witness?

Romans 14:21: "It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak."

Fermented drink can destroy the witnessing power of a Christian. How can a Christian convince a non-believer that his faith and trust is totally in Christ Jesus if he is stumbling around on wine like the person that he is trying to convert? Even the smell of alcohol on the breath of a Christian can be enough evidence to persuade the lost that you are really no different than them. And why should they listen to you?

The legal system will often demean the character of a witness if they have knowledge of alcohol consumption in his life. Drinking strong wine will not send you to hell, but it can make life seem like you are already there.

The Bible speaks of four different types of life: physical, spiri-

tual, abundant, eternal lives. The abstinence of fermented drink can enhance each of these lives.

What about the martial artist who wants a cold beer or glass of wine after a work out? **Isaiah 5:22** says it all!

**“Woe unto them that are mighty to drink wine,
and men of strength to mingle strong drink.”**

Choose Wisely and Overcome

The path to a Fifth Degree Black Belt is a long hard climb that not many take. To achieve it, one must go by, “The Way,” of those who have gone before us.

Man must choose his path wisely if he is to “overcome.”

Jesus speaks of two paths in which man has to choose from. Although these paths, referred to by Jesus, are “spiritual paths,” I cannot help but relate these paths to the physical and mental aspects of the Fifth Degree journey. They both require sacrifice.

Matthew 7:13-14:

***“Enter ye in at the strait (narrow) 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.”***

I pray that these words will somehow benefit those who have been gracious enough to read them.

Peace be with you.



(OMEGA)

