

JESUS

Christ-Centered Defense

By

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Defense

We teach students of martial arts to defend themselves from the “center” of their body. When a martial artist defends, they focus their mind, body and spirit to a point that runs from the very center of their being – outward only as far as necessary to defend. Eyes to the center – ears to the center – hands to the center – focus to the center – power to the center. Our training takes us from the point of origin (wherever our hands happen to be at the moment we are attacked) to the center of our body. We face the enemy and move our hands only the width from the center necessary to escape, block, strike, trap or throw – usually no wider than our shoulders because we always move from the center. Once the defensive technique is finished, our hands return to the center ready to do the next thing in defending our lives and the lives of people God gives us to defend.

We protect the center of our bodies because that is our life. Our heart, lungs and other organs vital to life are located at the center of our body. Our head, which contains our brain with its ability to think, perceive, decide, feel, see, hear, smell and taste is located in the center. Our vulnerable reproductive organs are located in the center of our body. If we do not defend our center, we will be unsuccessful during an attack and could be seriously injured or worse.

The same is true in our Christian life. Christ is the Center of our life. He is our Heart, our Breath, our Mind. His desire is to Rule us from our hearts (Ephesians 3:17). I have been in dangerous situations several times in 50+ years as a martial artist, but I face spiritual danger every day as a Christian. **Faith defense** is truly more important to me than self defense. I believe that is also true for every other person alive. If I teach someone how to defend their mortal body but not their eternal soul, what good

have I really done for them? As Jesus said, “do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.” (Matthew 10:28) We have an enemy more subtle, more wicked, more cunning, more powerful than any we’ve ever known – and he wants to destroy us (John 10:10). There is a danger in this life far greater than becoming the victim of violence and it is that danger Christian martial artists must share at every opportunity.

Christ-centered defense begins when Jesus becomes Lord of our life. As the Apostle Paul pointed out so clearly to the Ephesian believers, salvation by grace through faith should be followed immediately by obedience and service – “For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; *it is* the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in

them.” (Ephesians 2:8-10) We have a Divinely-appointed purpose and that purpose is to do what God wants us to do for His Glory.

First, I find it amazing that God knew us before He Created the world (Ephesians 1:4). Second, how wonderful to know that we are “His workmanship” – His handiwork. We get the English word “poem” from the Greek word for “workmanship,” *poiema*. We are God’s “poem.” And third, we were “created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.” God wants us to “order our behavior in the sphere of” (*peripateo* – walk) “good works.” He wants our lives to be committed to and surrounded by deeds and tasks that are of the highest character and the deepest benefit to Him and others (Matthew 22:37-40). When were you “created in Christ Jesus?” When He saved you by His Grace, when He became the Center of your life. At that exact moment when He

miraculously “saved” you, He called you to the most amazing adventure ever conceived – God reconciling the world to Himself in Christ. What a calling it is!

“Therefore, if anyone *is* in Christ, *he is* a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. Now all things *are* of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation. Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore *you* on Christ’s behalf, be reconciled to God. For He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.” 2 Corinthians 5:17-21

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Building Confidence Through Evidence

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