

# COMMUNITY BUILDING

spiritual warfare - know your enemy

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## TRUTH WORTH CLIMBING

### God went first

1 John 4:19 tells us “we love because he first loved us.” Everywhere we look in scripture we see that God has already taken the first steps **toward us** > now it’s our turn. With his help, we have to take steps toward him if we ever want to experience the story we were meant to know.

### Trying to ‘follow’ on our terms

So we are invited to follow Jesus.

Too often however, we want to be a follower of Jesus on our own terms. The hard truth is this: not only won’t this work {bring us to the kind of life + purpose Jesus invites us into} but it means we really aren’t following Jesus at all > we’re following ourselves.

Not everyone who started following Jesus kept following Him. People left Jesus - they “no longer walked with him” (John 6:66-69) because they didn’t want to surrender their story to his story. His standard of commitment was + is full send.

### Honest Attempts

This is not to say we have to be perfect in our attempts @ following Jesus - we know that’s not possible > but just that we have to be **sincere**. We know when we’re sincere - as much as we’d love to, we can’t fool ourselves (or God).

When we aren’t making honest attempts @ following Jesus - but pretend we are > it’s a problem. It’s a hurdle for our hearts + the heart of the community we’re serving. It creates frustration, disillusionment + disorients us.

### Guarding by Going First

We have an enemy that’s hoping for opportunities just like frustration, disillusionment + disorientation. Our dishonest attempts are perfect opportunities to attack us + the community we live in. We can guard our hearts + the heart of our community by simply running out ahead + making honest attempts @ climbing the truth Jesus has challenged us with. Again, not expecting any kind of perfection - just sincerity.

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## ANCHOR POINTS

### 1 Peter 5:8 {watch out}

Stay alert! Watch out for your great enemy, the devil. He prowls {walks, paces back + forth} around like a roaring lion, looking {always scanning, searching} for someone to devour. **Stand firm** against him, and be strong in your faith.

### Ephesians 6:10-12 {the fight we can't always see}

A final word: Be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on all of God's armor so that you will be able to **stand firm** against all strategies of the devil. For we are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world, and against evil spirits in the heavenly places.

### Galatians 5:16-17 {set apart for good > strongest desires vs. deepest desires}

So I say, let the Holy Spirit guide your lives. Then you won't be doing what your sinful nature craves. The sinful nature wants to do evil, which is just the opposite of what the Spirit wants. And the Spirit gives us desires that are the opposite of what the sinful nature desires. These two forces are constantly fighting each other, so you are not free to carry out your **good intentions**.

### Galatians 5:19-21 {the wounds we guard against}

When you follow the desires of your sinful nature, the results are very clear: sexual immorality, impurity, lustful pleasures, idolatry, sorcery, hostility, quarreling, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambition, dissension, division, envy, drunkenness, wild parties, and other sins like these. Let me tell you again, as I have before, that anyone living that sort of life will not inherit the Kingdom of God.

## DEFINITION OF TERMS

1. **ADULTERY/ SEXUAL IMMORALITY** = any + all sexual encounters outside the promise of marriage for married people.
2. **FORNICATION/IMPURITY** = any + all sexual encounters for unmarried people. Sexual encounters outside the promise of marriage, making causal what is valuable.
3. **UNCLEANNESSE/SENSUALITY** = literally > immoral, lustful, lewd, extravagant, wasteful activity. I buy into + join ridiculous, meaningless + destructive activities. I consume + abuse for my own pleasure.
4. **IDOLATRY** = I worship + give the best of myself (time, effort, resources, thought) to created things rather than the creator.
5. **WITCHCRAFT/SORCERY** = root word > *Pharmakeia* > mind/decision/will/spirit altering drugs.
6. **ENMITY/HATRED** = The opposite of love. As an enemy full of hate I want the worst for people. I just want to watch the world burn.
7. **STRIFE/QUARREL** = Trolling, picking fights, a thirst for drama, killing peace.


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8. **JEALOUSY/SELFISH AMBITION** = I'm owed something I'm not getting. I should be ranked higher. Me vs. You.
  9. **WRATH/ANGER/TEMPER/RAGE** = Zero grace, twitter posts looking for something to rage against, rage filled exchanges in Walmart + on the road.
  10. **RIVALRIES** = Seeking to win followers. Making factions & cliques. "Intriguing (angling) for office". Seeking social or political gain.
  11. **DISENSIONS/DIVISIONS** = Opposite of unity. The tearing down of community, connection + the common good. An "i'm/we're better than you" sect/cliقة
  12. **ENVY** = Displeasure from seeing the advantage, success or prosperity of others. I don't want them to win > I want to win.
  13. **DRUNKENNESS** = Mind/will/ decision/spirit altering - a vulnerability + loss of control. It means what you think it does.
  14. **WILD PARTIES/ORGIES/REVELING** = Drunken partying. A momentary collection of (community) people pursuing their strongest desires rather than their deepest desires. Conspiring/working together to build a moment that's collectively destructive.

## QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- What's on the 'prowl' in our community right now?
- Can you see how this will wound our community?
- Is there a natural pull to downplay the hurt/wounds this element can cause?
- This is not a complete list of every danger to community - is there something not on this list you see 'prowling' around the edge of our community?
- What can we do > how can we help protect + guard against these wounds?

Pray together about how we can 'let the Spirit guide us' + help protect what God wants to build.

## FURTHER RESOURCES

 [The Truth About Lies Part 3/\(God, the "gods", The Spiritual Backdrop of the Bible\)/Vari...](#)