

## AVOIDING LIFE OR EMBRACING LIFE

Many people take a passive approach to life as if life is more about avoiding pain and responsibility than it is about making an impact for eternity. C.S. Lewis once described a burly sort of man he'd met as someone who had the *stamp of war* on him. He was a man who had fought in World War One or Two.

When people see you, do you bear the stamp of war as a believer in Christ? The apostle Paul in describing himself, said, "Henceforth let no man trouble me for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus." Have you ever thought what Paul must have looked like? Here was a man who had been stoned and left for dead. Three times he had been beaten with a whip called a cat of nine tails. It had nine leather strands with bone or metal at the end of each strand. Thirty-nine lashes was considered the death penalty. Most people would die from bleeding or infection. Paul was beaten three times with a cat of nine tails and lived. Imagine the scars he bore.

Most of us don't bear literal scars for Christ, but if we've been involved in ministry and if we've sought to live for Christ, we know about spiritual warfare. Adrian Rogers said if you never bump into the devil it means you must be going the same direction.

Do you know the Christians I most respect? It is those who bear the stamp of war. They've been in the battle and have not given up or gone AWOL. They've stood their ground.

Jesus said, "Blessed are you when men shall hate you and exclude you and cast out your name as evil on account of the Son of Man, but rejoice and leap for joy, for behold your reward is great in Heaven."

When we come before the Lord at the final judgment I pray Jesus can take one look at us and see that we bear the stamp of war?