

Grace Martial Arts

Training Champions for Christ

My purpose in writing to you is to offer resources that will help kids to stand strong in the face of today's culture.

Grace Martial Arts (GMA) has proven to have an effective strategy for reaching unreached youth and families with the life-changing message of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. GMA has over thirty years of experience in taking Scriptural truths and bringing them to life for kids through martial arts.

Let me share a short story about an 11-year-old farm boy, raised on a 3,000-acre farm by loving, nurturing foster parents. The foster father unexpectedly died. The farm boy was sent to live with his birth mother, two older brothers, an older sister and a rage-filled, alcoholic stepfather, all of whom he scarcely knew. For 3 and 1/2 years, the farm boy's life was a nightmare -- filled with fear, anger, bitterness, rebellion, insecurity, failure, many tears, loneliness and depression. Finally, the authorities removed him from his dysfunctional, chaotic home and placed him in a coed boarding school -- a safe-place away from his destructive home life. Upon his return to his family the farm boy, now nearly 16 years old, failed to suc-

cessfully re-enter his chaotic home environment. He was cared for by friends and lived in their homes until his 17th birthday, at which time he joined the Army Reserves. After the completion of active Army Reserve duty, he began to learn the carpentry trade. Also, he developed a highly dedicated, disciplined pursuit of martial arts training, in order to obtain self-confidence, self-reliance and acceptance. During the next ten years, the farm boy taught martial arts physical education in some of the most affluent prep schools and universities in America. He created the 3-Zone Police Defense program for the Connecticut Police Academy. I was that farm boy!

That farm boy was me!

Yes, I became self-confident, self-reliant and believed that I was accepted. I did not know then that I was not yet accepted in the Beloved. After all, I had just been recruited by the Connecticut Association for Health and Physical Education to develop a martial arts physical education curriculum for girls. The acceptance I enjoyed was completely centered around performance-based approval by significant others, but I was not yet accepted by God through Christ Jesus.

“To the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He hath made us accepted in the Beloved.” Ephesians 1:6

The Lord Jesus Christ had a plan for me! He lead me to become very close friends with Mr. John Chung Li, a highly accomplished, mature Christian Chinese martial arts teacher at Yale University. It was not long before I realized that I had the ladder of my life leaning up against the wrong building. On July 4, 1976, I left the land of independence and self-sufficiency for the land of dependence upon the Lord Jesus Christ. I exchanged self-confidence, self-reliance and acceptance **by people** for **Christ-confidence, Christ-reliance and acceptance in the Beloved.** The Lord sent a mature Christian martial arts teacher all the way from China to invest his life in me and to show me my need to receive Jesus Christ as my personal Lord and Savior. It truly has been a GRACE LIFE that is beyond words.

“Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.”

II Corinthians 1:3 - 4

The knowledge, skills and physical excellence of martial arts originally came from God. There are many wonderful and

exciting Biblical examples of the LORD'S Spirit going before His mighty men of valor. David was the ideal model of a Christian warrior. He knew and loved God intimately. He also knew the Holy Scriptures. He had a heart to defend the honor of Almighty God and to protect his people against the Philistines. Goliath tried to intimidate David, but David did not allow it and shouted back at him, “You come to me with sword, spear and javelin, but I come to you in the name of the LORD Almighty.” David was confident in his God-given martial arts abilities and was secure in his identity. He knew that “the battle is the LORD’S.” David wrote, “Blessed be the LORD my strength, which teaches my hands to war, and my fingers to fight” (Psalms 144:1).

“Satan came to kill, steal and destroy.” Some well-meaning Christians do not understand martial arts, because many of Satan's agents have tied the martial arts to performance-based Eastern religions, philosophies and culture. Satan loves to steal from God. He does so by getting us to listen to and believe his lies. God is reclaiming martial arts to teach a Christian worldview and to bring His Life-changing message to the ends of the earth. Students obtain the same physical, mental and emotional health benefits from good

martial arts training as they would from any other sport!

There are two prerequisites before Christians can legitimately be involved in teaching martial arts from a Christian or Biblical perspective. First, they must completely remove Eastern religious teachings and concepts that have become intertwined with the martial art, self-defense or sport. There absolutely is nothing wrong with martial arts instruction, when the Gospel of the Grace of God is the central teaching. More importantly, students are taught God-confidence and Christ-reliance rather than the humanistic teaching of self-confidence and self-reliance.

The second prerequisite for a Christian to teach martial arts is to replace Eastern religious teachings with Christ-centered teachings. Christian martial arts training, then, becomes a faith-based building tool to establish disciplined direction of a student's life and education.

In addition to the exercise and sport benefits, there are physical, mental and spiritual benefits for those who train in this way. Healthy character assets and Godly intimacy develop as a result of the student's living and walking in the Spirit. God's Word tells us, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." 5

Christian Martial Arts Students

To become an accomplished Christian martial arts student, one must consider learning three forms of defense:

First, students acquire Christ-Defense through Scripture memory, Bible study and prayer. The students develop Biblical life-skills that equip them to readily employ Biblical principles and help them to make wise lifestyle choices.

Second, students acquire Mental-Defense that builds Godly character assets and Christ-centered confidence while strengthening disciplined direction for their life and education.

Third, students acquire age appropriate Physical-Defense with a maximum efficiency of self-defense skill and advanced kinetic movement principles to promote optimal health and well-being.

The media has helped make the martial arts attractive to a large number of today's youth. The Bible tells us to find common ground with others, so that we can bring them to Christ (1 Corinthians 9:19-23). The attraction that youths have to martial arts -- combined with the accompanying mental, physical and spiritual teachings -- establish martial

arts as a potentially powerful outreach tool upon which Christians may capitalize. The Christian martial arts ministry is not about following rules and being regulated by some higher power. Rather, it is about developing an intimate relationship with God The Father -- the Father uniting Himself with us through His Son, who became one of us and died for our sins. It is about God's Spirit working in us and through us. It is about the Word of God producing faith to choose, by our own free will, to have Jesus Christ come into our lives and live His life through us. A Christian martial arts practitioner is one who uses the martial arts as a tool to live his/her life in the Lord Jesus Christ and to help others to know Him and to make Him known.

The Bible tells us, "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."

1 Corinthians 10:31

To become a good servant leader, one often must go against what others would do. Good leaders must develop from being good, faithful followers of Christ. The twelve disciples and the Apostle Paul spent extended time faithfully following their Master Teacher, Jesus Christ. Secular martial arts instructors have to spend time following a training curriculum, before

they can become black belt instructors and lead martial arts programs. In the same way, Christian martial arts instructors must spend time learning a Christ-centered curriculum that teaches the Word of God, rightly-divided. A high-quality Christian black belt will learn how to transform key principles of martial arts into tools for teaching Christ-centered values. An example would be, if you were pushed in a confrontation, you would pull the person to you with love and send him away with forgiveness. *"A soft answer turns away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger."* An accomplished Grace Martial Arts instructor has learned natural ways of relating to people and how to blend the Good News about Christ into his martial arts teaching. A superior leader does not write off sinners or problem students. Instead, he gets involved in their lives and befriends them. The Lord Jesus was known as the friend of sinners. That is one of His secrets by which He demonstrated awe-inspiring leadership.

"For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus Sake."

2 Corinthians 4:5

There are millions of young people in our nation who are desperately needing disciplined direction for their lives. Christian martial arts group mentoring provides an ideal “safe-place” for working with youth, especially “at-risk” youth. An accomplished black belt is highly esteemed and respected by most young people. As Christian martial artists, we are training ourselves to serve in Jesus Christ’s special forces of men and women. We are dedicating ourselves to defend the honor of God and, with God on our side, to protect people in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. We are committed to His service and His mission for mankind. We lay down our lives to follow Him and His ways, and we pray for and guide others to do the same.

Joyfully in Christ’s Love & Grace,

Bob Xavier

Pastor/Missionary

“But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the Gospel of the Grace of God.”

Acts 20:24



**Please, pray that
God’s Word moti-
vates our students
beyond belief to
Convictions!**



**Students are Becoming Ambassadors for Christ,
Serving FROM Acceptance, Not FOR Acceptance.**



Grace Martial Arts is a Ministry of:

Set Free Youth & Family Ministries, Inc.

8113 - 18th Avenue East † Palmetto, FL 34221

(941) 726-5056

† Grace Martial Arts †

Non-Violent Youth Self-defense

Powerfully Connecting With Our Kids' World While
Affirming Them With Vital Christian Family Values

Programs Available for:

† Children † Teens † Adults † Families † Women
† Seniors † Summer Camps † Community Outreach

*Grace Martial Arts provides easy-to-use,
Christ-centered, relational training curriculums
and resources for Christian martial arts practitio-
ners to include in their class instruction. Please,
feel free to call me anytime on my cell phone with
any questions or concerns:*

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CHRIST

Investing In The Lives and
Eternal Destiny of Youth and Families