

THE ROOSTER WARS

Every now and again the news reports a police raid on a cock fight. Game roosters are raised for one reason, to fight. With their sharpened steel spurs, they know but one rule, kill or be killed. They know nothing of kindness, fairness or mercy. Beyond their ability and willingness to fight they are good for nothing. Some folks find a macabre pleasure in watching these birds fight and kill each other.

Some preachers remind us of fighting roosters. They live for the fight. They flog and slash other preachers who can be lured into a fight. They despise such attributes as grace, mercy, kindness, pardon and brotherly love. They know nothing of "speaking the truth in love" (Eph.4:15). They accomplish little good in life, but they hurt lots of fellow preachers and the Cause of Christ. Like the fighting rooster, having inflicted painful wounds on a brother, they flap their wings and crow with pride over their deed.

The fighting rooster's career is always in jeopardy. Just one mistake, one slip and he can be overwhelmed by his latest adversary. Sooner or later he will meet an opponent who is smarter, stronger, more determined and more skilled at inflicting wounds and he will become a victim. The same is true of the preacher who loves to fight with other preachers. Sooner or later he will be like yesterday's news. When his time comes to suffer the wrath of his neighbor, few will be found to extend him mercy. "For judgment is without mercy to him that hath showed no mercy" (Jas. 2:13).

Jesus came as a harmless lamb (Is. 53:7). He sends us forth as lambs among wolves (Luke 10:3). Granted being like a lamb is not as macho and glamorous as being a fighting rooster, but the Good Shepherd knows his sheep by name (John 10:3-4). He leads them in green pastures and along safe paths. He even laid down his life for them (John 10:11). JHW