

Being ready for war! Ephesians 6:10-18

Before an army goes to war against another, it studies the enemy to see how it can defeat it. Sport teams do the same thing; they analyze and study another team strengths and weaknesses in order to defeat it in the competition. You and I are in the battlefield; we are at war. *The moment you chose to pledge your allegiance to Christ, you enter into this conflict, this war. As Christians, we need to know our enemy in order to prevail against its attacks.*

The apostle Paul wrote a letter to a church in Ephesus, one of those churches he planted in his missionary endeavors. (52-55AD)

At the end of this letter he wrote to encourage them to be strong in the Lord as he reminded them of the cosmic battle those in Christ are in.

To fight this battle you need to depend on the Lord's strength. In other words, don't think you are so strong in your own estimation and skills. God doesn't want you to become a casualty of war. He has given us his power and he provides the uniform, clothing and weapon for us to battle against our enemy. There are lots of Christians who live their lives in constant defeat from the enemy. ***Either they didn't depend on God's strength or they ignored the instructions to be ready and suited for battle.***

Paul reminded the Ephesians to put on the full armor of God. Why do we need this armor? So we can stand the ground against the devil's attacks/schemes. Without this armor, you and I don't have a chance against the enemy.

The devil is the enemy: Jesus describes him as a murderer and a liar (**John 8:44-45**); He has been a murderer from the beginning not holding on to the truth. He deceives the world with lies. He deceived a Christian couple in the church in Jerusalem. His main goal is to destroy the work of God in your life.

Peter says our enemy is like a ferocious lion seeking its prey. **1 Pet.5:8-9**

The conflict is cosmic. (v12) We are in a cosmic battle with the devil and his armies.

This is not a physical battle. It is not against flesh and blood.

-rulers and authorities in the dark world

-the spiritual forces of evil.

You and I are battling a powerful enemy, one we can't see, but he does see us and know where to attack us. **How could you possibly stand against a powerful enemy whom you cannot see?**

Standing firm in the LORD- We have to depend on his power

Put on the full armor of God. Paul said in verse 13 Therefore, because of what I told you about the kind of conflict we have, put on the full armor, all of it. So that you can stand your ground when the day of evil comes.

-Stand firm:

Here is the armor:

-Truth (belt of truth)

-Breastplate of Righteousness

- the gospel** (shoes that provide readiness and mobility, foundation)
- faith** (shield)
- Salvation** (helmet)
- Scripture (the Bible)** offensive weapon
- prayer** (*pray constantly in the Spirit*) v.18

Continue to be alert (v.18)

These are spiritual weapons to defeat a spiritual enemy. 2 Cor.10:4-5 For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds. 5We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ.

We have spiritual weapons to stand against the spiritual enemy. An enemy who stands for lie, we defeat with truth; he is all about unrighteousness (injustice), we stand for righteousness. We resist him standing firm on our faith through the gospel. We attack him with the word of God and prayer.

We have to be ready for battle in order to not become a casualty of war. Part of being ready for battle is standing firm in the strength of the Lord. Knowing the enemy and the kind of battle we are fighting (spiritual cosmic battle). Besides, being clothed or dressed for battle is essential. Our Lord has given us weapons in order to stand against our enemy. ***How familiar are you with these weapons? Do you even know how to use them?***

What kind of soldier goes to war without weapons? If you are not ready for battle with the spiritual gear we have been given, then you won't be able to stand a chance against your enemy. Don't become a casualty of war. Be ready! God calls you to be ready!

"The Christian life is not a playground, it's a battleground and we must be on our guard at all times" Warren Wiersbe