



My Dear friends and brothers,

It takes no more than a few minutes and a quick read of the recent messages shared in our group chat to realize that WE ARE AT WAR! While some have been bold enough to share their battles with us, I know that many others of you are in the very midst of your own battles. Being perfectly honest, I am in the midst of some significant warfare myself and have been for a couple weeks.

Some would ask, “Why are we facing such opposition, challenges and battles? “Why do I do all that I know to do, yet feel like I am spinning my wheels and making no progress?”

Please let me first encourage you with the words of Paul the the Galatians,

*Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. **Galatians 6:9***

The fact that we individually as well as corporately are seeking the Lord's face, listening for and to His voice, and obeying it is resulting in the advancement of His kingdom both in the Earth, but even greater still in the heavens. This fact is very displeasing to the prince of the power of the air. Thus, he is going to do all that he can do to resist us continuing in our pursuit of fulfilling all that the Lord has called and created us to be and do for His name's sake.

This is why it is imperative that we realize that it is this warfare that is the source of many of the struggles and trials in which we find ourselves. The battles we are facing are not with spouses, children, friends, bosses or even strangers of this world. As Paul told the Ephesians and reminds us,

*For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. **Ephesians 6:12***

Similarly in Matthew Jesus says, “And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence,” It is for this reason that this passage as well as the one from Ephesians goes on to give clear instructions on fighting this fight. Let's take a moment to consider each of these passages in its entirety.

*And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force. **Matthew 11:12***

*Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. **Ephesians 6:10-17***

Looking first at Jesus' words, it is very clear that spiritual warfare is not something that is done passively. As we have discussed The Kingdom is under violent attack, NOW is the time for us as Men of God to stand up with zealous boldness and aggressively and violently take back the ground the enemy has stolen.

In order to successfully do so we must be properly equipped. This is exactly Ephesians 6 is talking about. Let's take a moment to consider each of these important pieces of armor.

- Belt of Truth

- *Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. **John 14:6***
- *Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. **John 17:17***
- Breastplate of Righteousness
 - *God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. **2 Corinthians 5:2***
- Feet fitted with the Gospel of Peace
 - *And how can anyone preach unless they are sent? As it is written: "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!" **Romans 10:15***
 - *Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid. **John 14:27***
- Shield of Faith
 - *For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— **Ephesians 2:8***
 - *Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see. **Hebrews 11:1***
 - *Jesus replied, "Truly I tell you, if you have faith and do not doubt, not only can you do what was done to the fig tree, but also you can say to this mountain, 'Go, throw yourself into the sea,' and it will be done. If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer." **Matthew 21:21-22***
- Helmet of Salvation
 - *For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile. **Romans 1:16***
- The Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God
 - *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth. **John 1:1, 14***
 - *but the word of the Lord endures forever." And this is the word that was preached to you. **1 Peter 1:25***

In short, what is the common theme running through each of these pieces? JESUS and trust and dependance on Him. We can NOT fight and we can definitely not win this war on our own strength.

*'Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit,' says the Lord Almighty. **Zechariah 4:6***

When we stand and fight and keep standing and keep fighting will full dependency and reliance on HIM then we have this hope and promise,

*no weapon forged against you will prevail, and you will refute every tongue that accuses you. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and this is their vindication from me," declares the Lord. **Isaiah 54:17 NIV***

*"I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world." **John 16:33***

Well, this message did not exactly go as planned, but I hope and pray that it encourages you strengthens you and stirs you in your faith and walk with Him.

Can you hear the call to war?

I know I can.

Will you join me in the fight?

Isaiah 54:17 NIV

[17] no weapon forged against you will prevail, and you will refute every tongue that accuses you. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and this is their vindication from me," declares the Lord.

Psalms 91:9-11

[9] If you say, "The Lord is my refuge," and you make the Most High your dwelling, [10] no harm will overtake you, no disaster will come near your tent. [11] For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways;

Ephesians 6:10-17

[10] Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. [11] Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. [12] For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. [13] Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. [14] Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, [15] and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. [16] In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. [17] Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

John 16:33

[33] "I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."

Matthew 11:12

[12] And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force.

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