

“Preparing for Battle,” *Ephesians 6:10-20*, page 1146

Introduction:

1. Jesus told His disciples to expect:
 - A. They hate me, and they will hate you.
 - B. I was tempted, and you will be tempted.
 - C. I was persecuted, and you will be persecuted.
2. We are caught in the middle of a battle between Satan and God: good and evil.

I. Our battle is against “spiritual forces in heavenly places.”

- A. As Christians, we battle opponents far greater and stronger than we are.
 1. Rulers of the spirit world, *Ephesians 2:1-2*.
 2. They have great authority, *John 14:30*.
 3. They reside in the heavenly realms, *Ephesians 6:12*.
 4. They are an unseen enemy, *Daniel 10:12-14*.
 5. They are not limited by time and space, *Daniel 10:12-14*.
- B. It is good to realize that our spiritual enemies are subject to God and the Holy Spirit.
 1. *Job 1:6-7*.
 2. *Mark 5:1-17*.
- C. Winning this spiritual battle depends on our understanding of the warfare we engage in:
 1. We are not fighting physical flesh and blood, *Ephesians 6:10*.
 2. We cannot hope to win this battle without God helping us, *Ephesians 6:10*.
 3. We must prepare for a spiritual battle, *Ephesians 6:13*.

II. Put on the armor and stand against the devil’s schemes.

- A. When we understand the nature of our battle, it is evident that we need help from God.
- B. We must be prepared for the battle:
 1. “*Belt of truth.*”
 2. “*Breastplate of righteousness.*”
 3. “*Feet fitted with...the gospel of peace.*”
 4. “*Shield of faith.*”
 5. “*Helmet of salvation.*”
 6. “*Sword of the spirit.*”
- D. When equipped for battle, we are instructed to stand firm and hold our ground.
 1. Christians are giving up too much ground to the secular society based on unchristian principles.
 2. We must understand and live our daily lives as God has instructed us in the Bible.
 3. It is up to each of us to be biblically correct and stand on those teachings.
 4. Our greatest defense against the attacks of Satan must be: *Matthew 4:4*: “*But He answered and said, ‘It is written, “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.”’*”
 5. Note also *Hebrews 4:12*: “*For the word of “God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”*”

6. Mark Homes states: “No doubt, Paul’s allegory was influenced by the Roman army, the strongest fighting force known in his day. Supposedly, the strength of this army depended upon the individual soldier’s doing his task. Each soldier was trained to protect a certain space around himself, with the understanding that, in battle, any enemy entering that space did so at the loss of his life...This, no doubt, is Paul’s picture of the Christian army going into conflict with the Enemy—Christians empowered by Body, encased with His armor, equipped with His weaponry, dedicated to stand their ground against the opposition. No wonder, when He spoke of the church, Jesus said that the gates of hell would not be able to stand against it (see *Matthew 16:18*).
- E. What ground/space are we defending?
1. I do not believe Jesus wants us to be a religious fanatic totally separated from society.
 2. I do not believe Jesus wants us to fit comfortably into a non-Christian society and accept unbiblical teachings.
 3. We must allow the Holy Spirit to guide us into finding the lifestyle that is pleasing to God, and then live in that space without compromising personal convictions.
 4. We must be careful to protect the right ground/issue. Some people are battling to protect the wrong issues (music).

III. Be alert and keep praying.

- A. Prayer is our greatest weapon in our spiritual warfare.
- B. Our armor is very important, but prayer is what will win the battle for us.
 1. Our personal experiences will fail us.
 2. Our personal knowledge will be flawed.
 3. Our spiritual gifts will not be enough.
 4. Our friends cannot bail us out.
- C. We must have the “mighty power” of the Lord.
 1. Prayer will enlist help from God.
 2. Daniel prayed, and God delivered the victory for Daniel. *Daniel 10:12-14: “Then he said to me, ‘Do not fear, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand, and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard; and I have come because of your words. But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days; and behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left alone there with the kings of Persia. Now I have come to make you understand what will happen to your people in the latter days, for the vision refers to many days yet to come.’”*

Conclusion:

1. How are you doing in your spiritual battle?
2. We cannot win this battle by ourselves.
 - A. We need God’s help.
 - B. We need to pray daily.
 - C. We need the ministry of the church.
 - D. We need each other.
3. If we read the last chapter of the Bible, we win!