

Who is our enemy? The media is very good at focusing our attention on the enemy. It may be China, Russia, Islamic extremists or even a political figure. But as Christians we are already engaged in a very real war against a vicious enemy who is actively pursuing our destruction.

Many Christians are not even aware of the reality of the spiritual warfare that we face every day. And that is precisely one of Satan's most effective weapons. We cannot fight when we aren't aware of the battle. Satan is the deceiver and the father of lies.

The Apostle Paul closes the letter to the Ephesians with an encouragement to stand firm against the enemy of our souls. We are at war against spiritual forces whose primary objective is taking souls with them to hell.

### **An Already-Won Victory**

But there is good news! This enemy is raging because he is already defeated. When Jesus died and rose again, the victory over Satan was accomplished (see John 12:31).

We live in a broken world, eagerly waiting for Jesus to come again and finally cast Satan and his demons into the eternal fire of Hell. But until that time, we are called to stand firm (see Ephesians 6:10-14).

We stand not in our own strength but in the strength of the omnipotent God of the universe. He is our strength; His is the victory.

*We do not fight for victory, rather we fight from victory.*

*Watchman Nee*

. We frequently ask God to help us to defeat Satan in a certain area of our lives, but I would suggest a paradigm shift. Instead of asking for victory, thank God for the victory that Jesus has already won and ask Him for the strength to stand firm in that victory in the face of temptation.

This means praising God for the miracle of victory even before we experience it—and it requires faith. When you feel oppressed and attacked by Satan's demons, praise God for what He has done and thank Him for the victory, then allow Him to bring about the experience of that reality (see Philippians 4:6).

If only the modern church grasped the truth that we stand from a position of victory! The victory does not occur in the book of Revelation; it has already occurred in the death and resurrection of Jesus two thousand years ago.

### **The Armor for Victory**

God has given us armor to secure our ability to stand against the attacks of the enemy. The apostle Paul used the familiar Roman military armor as a picture of the secure protection that we have as Christians against the attacks of the enemy.

Each piece of the armor serves a vital role in keeping us safe in the battle. There are six pieces of armor that every Christian should know and apply.

#### ***The Belt of Truth***

Questioning the truth has always been one of Satan's choice weapons (see Genesis 3:1). Sin entered the world because he made Eve question the truth. As Christians, we must know and speak the truth (see John 8:32 and John 14:6).

The Belt is our guard against the lies of Satan that often are presented in the form of false teaching. We have the truth in the Word of God. If we neglect to meditate on the truth of God's Word, we will easily be deceived by the lies of Satan.

### ***The Breastplate of Righteousness***

The breastplate covers the chest and the vital organs against the arrows of the enemy. As believers we are covered by the righteousness of Jesus (see 2 Corinthians 5:21), but we are called to pursue holiness and purity in our personal lives.

We must not give one inch to the enemy by our thoughts and actions. We have a new identity, and we are to live as such (see Philippians 4:8).

### ***Shoes of the Gospel***

The Roman soldiers had spikes under their shoes that enabled them to have traction on any terrain. Paul likens the Gospel to a pair of effective shoes that can enable us to have traction even in challenging environments. As we go, we are to declare the Gospel of Peace (see Ephesians 6:15 and Isaiah 52:7).

Are you putting on the right shoes?

### ***The Shield of Faith***

The ancient Roman soldier carried a large shield that could be used to build a wall of protection when standing alongside other soldiers.

The shield is a shield of faith; faith is key to our protection. This shield is more effective when we are gathered in community. When a believer removes themselves from community, they become vulnerable (see Hebrews 10:25).

### ***The Helmet of Salvation***

The Roman helmet was heavy and covered the neck and cheeks of the soldier. It goes without saying that our brains are vulnerable to injury in a battle. Satan also knows that we can be most vulnerable in our thoughts and emotions.

Satan's demons use the darts of fear, depression, discouragement, and anxiety to attack the child of God. As we meditate on the Gospel, we are reminded of God's love and promises towards us.

### ***The Sword of the Spirit***

The Roman soldiers had a short sword that was used in close combat. The enemy often will use people closest to us to hurt us the most. Our battles are often very personal.

This final piece of the armor is the only offensive weapon we have, and it is sufficient. The sword of the Spirit is the Word of God, and it is precise and sharp (see Hebrews 4:12)

When Jesus was tempted by Satan in the wilderness in Matthew 4, he used the Word of God as his only weapon, and Satan left him. Jesus stood firm on the Word, simply stating, "*it is written*".

The Sword of the Spirit is crucial to our victory, but to overcome the enemy, we must know the Word of God. This sword is useless if we keep it in its sheath. The Bible is useless if you never open it and exercise it.

### **A Battle Plan for Victory**

What are you battling with today?

Remember to put on the full armor of God and stand firm in the already won victory.