

THE WARFARE IS REAL!

In 2 Corinthians 2:10-11 ¹⁰ Now whom you forgive anything, I also forgive. For if indeed I have forgiven anything, I have forgiven that one for your sakes in the presence of Christ, ¹¹ lest Satan should take advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices.

The offending man had also sinned against Paul in some way, either directly or indirectly. Paul expected the Corinthian Christians to take the lead in showing the man forgiveness and restoration.

Paul knew this was of special concern because Satan looks to take advantage of our mistakes, as a church and as individuals. It has the idea of cheating someone out of something that belongs to them.

Satan has specific devices (strategies) he uses against us to take advantage of us.

2 Corinthians 10:4 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds,

In this we see Paul speaking to us about spiritual warfare. Pay special attention to the words “carnal, weapons” and “warfare.”

I. FIRST LET'S TALK ABOUT CARNAL

Carnal- In the Greek this word is “sarkos” which describes anything that is of the flesh, fleshly made, or fleshly conjured up or anything that is natural or of an unspiritual nature.

Our God-given weapons are to be used in connection with divine strategy. The battle plan you need is not going to arise out of your own natural talent, mental exercise, or human effort.

II. SECOND, PAUL TELLS US THAT WE HAVE WEAPONS.

These spiritual armaments have been provided by God at our disposal. They are both offensive and defensive weapons. The weapons provided by God enables us to be effective on how Satan attacks.

In Ephesians 6:13-17 Paul describes and draws us to a powerful illustration of Spiritual Warfare.

Ephesians 6:13-17 ¹³ Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. ¹⁴ Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, ¹⁵ and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; ¹⁶ above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. ¹⁷ And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God;

Roman soldiers were dressed in beautiful armor, from head to toe. They were covered with various pieces of weaponry that were designed to protect them and equip them for fighting.

Let's review those weapons.

1. **Belt of Truth-** The soldier's loincloth belt was a piece of the armor that held it all together. The sword was hung by a holster. When not in use the shield was hung on it. Also, what was attached was his pouch of arrows and breastplate. It was also used to tuck in excessive material from his outfit so it would not get tangled up in battle.
2. **Breastplate of Righteousness-** The breast plate was a crucial piece that protected and defended the heart and the central organs of the body against attack.
3. **Shod your Feet with the Preparation of the Gospel of Peace-** The shoes of a Roman Soldier were a vicious weapon. They were used to protect the soldier's legs and feet from treacherous terrain & wild creatures such as snakes and scorpions while they were on their journey as they marched in rank. But also, in battle so that if the enemy wanted to strike their legs they would not be broken. They protected the leg!
 - The enemy wants to stop us from advancing so he will strike to immobilize us
4. **Shield of Faith-** The Roman soldier's shield was large it covered the whole body it was made of leather and larded with oil so it would not fall apart in battle. Before a battle the shield was soaked in water to extinguish the fiery darts of the enemy. But also, used to defend them in close combat from the strike of a sword or blow from a club.
5. **Helmet of Salvation-** The helmet was made of bronze and was adorned with beauty and was engraved with images of the identity of the soldier. It was equipped with pieces to protect the neck, jaw and cheeks. This was worn because in battle the enemy would use a battle ax so a soldier without a helmet was a prime target.
 - If our salvation is not tightly worn around our head, he will hack away at our foundation, make us feel that what Jesus did in our lives is not real
6. **Sword of the Spirit-** The Roman soldier's sword was a dagger-type sword with two blades on both sides, the tip of the sword was twisted upward like a corkscrew and was used in close combat, the blade was 19 inches in length, with a handle that could strike a blow. Paul uses the sword of the spirit which is the word of God as a weapon given to us by Jesus to bring fear and stop the enemy and his force.
7. **Lance of Prayer-** in verse 18 not mentioned but suggested that Paul refers the lance to "praying always" with the lance of prayer each believer can assault the enemy from a distance, doing him so much damage that he is paralyzed in his attempts to come any nearer.

III. LASTLY LET'S TALK ABOUT WARFARE.

Warfare- is taken from a Greek word stratos The word stratos is where we get the word strategy.

This lets us know that spiritual warfare does not occur accidentally, but it is something strategically planned. Just like an army that plans its line of attack before a battle begins, the devil plans a line of attack. He decides which methods he will use and chooses the approach. He plans a well-thought-out assault.

But the word stratos doesn't just describe the devil's strategies. It also tells us that if we listen to the Holy Spirit, He will give us a strategy that is superior to any schemes of the devil. The Holy Spirit always holds the keys to every victory, and He wants to provide us with a divinely-inspired strategy that will render, null and void the works of the devil every time.

FINAL WORDS

Everything the soldier needed to successfully combat his adversary was at his disposal. Likewise, we have been given the whole armor of God-everything we need to successfully combat opposing forces.

Nothing is lacking! Except at times the will to fight and sharpen our cutting edge!

God has provided everything we need to stand up against the devil, to resist him and defeat him. Today will we choose to obey or to ignore the urgent command to put on our armor and inquire of God?

Your success against an enemy that seeks every opportunity to destroy us depends on the choice we make today.