

Dressed For Battle

March 17, 2008

Every day of their lives Christians are faced with a spiritual battle. This battle involves far more people, brings far more destruction, and causes more confusion than any military conflict.

The apostle Peter wrote of this spiritual conflict in 1 Peter 5:8-9, "Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour. Whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world."

Because of Satan's craftiness it is important to identify our enemy and to be aware of the tactics that he uses. Satan desires to render the Christian useless and worthless to the kingdom of God.

The Word describes Satan in a variety of ways. He is called a dragon, a murderer, and the father of lies. His spiritual allies engage Christians in a spiritual battle every day. Satan never gets tired of tempting and harassing Christians.

The activities of Satan seem to be more open today than at any other time. A few years ago you heard very little about the church of Satan or about witchcraft or the occult. This seems to be a pressing problem in some segments of our society today.

Satan tries to distract us from spiritual things. He wants us to focus on things that are material and on selfish desires. The world is full of things that can draw us away.

Satan is the father of lies and his strategy is to deceive the believer. In Genesis, Eve told God, "The serpent deceived me and I ate." Satan misled her by giving her some false information. He told her she would be like God, "Knowing good and evil." Each time we are tempted, Satan tries to deceive us with false information.

One of Satan's favorite means of deception is to try to minimize the consequences of sins. God tells us that we will reap what we sow (Galatians 6:7).

Satan wants us to believe we can pursue the world's value system and remain pure. Adopting the world's system only separates us from a holy God. Satan is the prince of this world system. When we make decisions

based only on the world's principles they are usually disastrous. Yet, Satan never talks about the hurt, pain, broken hearts, and devastation that result from decisions made apart from God's truth.

A spiritual battle requires spiritual weapons. We must realize the seriousness of this battle in which we are engaged. In Ephesians 6:11-18, Paul describes the spiritual armor of God:

1. We must gird our loins with truth. This is an essential part of the soldier's equipment. It keeps the other parts of the armor in place. The girdle of truth protects us from Satan's deception. Truth equips the saint for the spiritual battle against Satan.
2. When we are dressed for battle we have on the "breastplate of righteousness." We are able to counter the temptations of Satan with the truth of God. If we are familiar with God's word, then we know how God wants us to deal with the temptations that arise in our lives. If we do not know God's word, then we are left to handle the assaults of Satan on our own.
3. We are to shod our feet with the "preparation of the gospel of peace." The Christian must have a good foothold. Preparedness is the thought expressed here. When we put on the "sandals of the Gospel of Peace" we are given courage and are ready for the battle against evil.
4. We are to take up the "shield of faith." Shields are used to protect a soldier from the weapons of the enemy. The shield of faith covers us from the fiery attacks of the enemy. No matter how ferocious the attack, the shield of faith provides safe cover for the child of God. The shield of faith defuses two of Satan's most deadly weapons - (1) unbelief and (2) doubt.
5. We are to take the "helmet of salvation." The helmet of salvation is something that we receive. The only way the Christian soldier can take the helmet of salvation is to receive it from God. He receives it from God by obeying the rules and regulations that He has set forth to gain it.
6. The soldier must also take the "sword of the spirit." The sword of the spirit is the Word of God. It can be used offensively and defensively. The Word is the wisdom and power of God. It is a weapon that God has armed his children with. The powers of darkness will flee from it. The Christian finds this to be true in his individual experiences. It dissolves doubts, drives away fears and delivers one from the power of Satan.

In our struggle and battle against Satan's attempts to destroy our effectiveness for Christ, it is essential that we know our enemy. Look

earnestly into your life, and you may recognize things that are keeping you from gaining victory.

We need to be prepared and able to stand against Satan. We have everything to lose if we are defeated and everything to gain if we win. Are you “Dressed for Battle?”

Author: Rick Martin (Old Paths Advocate, August 1, 1992)
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