



A War that Can Be Won

Adapted from "Spiritual Warfare" series by Dennis Marquardt

Most countries will not go to war unless they believe they can win. Also, few will go to war unless they have the equipment to fight.

Yet, many Christians are completely unprepared for spiritual warfare or are unwilling to fight. The fact is, as believers we have been enlisted in a battle against the forces of darkness. Therefore, it behooves us to recognize the importance of the battle and the proper preparations. Spiritual warfare is a fact, not some fanciful concept, it is real. Consider this humorous story:

A friend of my 11-year-old son called one day, announcing he had a problem with spiritual warfare. I asked him what I could do to help, and he replied he wanted to speak with my son, Scott. Proud that my son was being asked for spiritual advice, I later made a point to ask him how the conversation went. "Oh,

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fine," Scott replied. "He just needed help getting to the next level of the 'Spiritual Warfare' Nintendo game."¹

Paul was very clear to the church in Ephesus that they were engaged in a battle, and that there was a proper way to prepare for it. We cannot ignore his teaching on this important subject. We will be fighting the spiritual forces of this world all our lives.

The Bible teaches us that we are to do battle with evil and to properly prepare ourselves to succeed in this battle. God provides the equipment, but we must willingly put it on and engage in the fight.

¹ "Kids of The Kingdom," *Christianity Today*, <http://www.christianity.com/11622246/> (accessed July 6, 2017).

“COURAGE” Level Questions

C1: Entering a war expecting to lose is foolish. Describe a time you entered into battle.

C2: Did you expect to lose? Why or Why not?

C3: How does this mindset carry over into spiritual battles?

Exercise #1: Consider how fire fighters, police personnel, and military personnel all wear specialized equipment and protection. Read and answer the following.

Ephesians 6:10–17 (ESV) Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the

schemes of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. 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 firm. Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

C4: After reading that scripture portion, what specialized equipment should Christians be wearing?

C5: Describe the difference between worldly equipment and spiritual equipment.

C6: After reading what Paul says about the *full armor of God* in **Ephesians 6 (ESV)**. What does each part of the armor look like in your life?

- Belt of truth
- Breastplate of righteousness
- Shoes for your feet, the readiness given by the gospel of peace
- Shield of faith
- Helmet of salvation
- Sword of the Spirit

C7: Why does Paul instruct believers to stand firm after putting all the armor on? What does that look like in your life?

“STRENGTH” Level Questions

Exercise #1: On a scale of 1- 4, with 1 being *very well prepared* and 4 being *not very well prepared*, rate yourself on how prepared and equipped you are for spiritual battle. Write out a plan to improve your readiness.

Read and answer the following.

Ephesians 6:10–17 (ESV)

S1: What does it mean for a man to be fully equipped for an actual battle?



S2: What does it mean for a man to be fully equipped for spiritual battle?

S3: How do you find the courage to stand firm and equip yourself as a man of God?

S4: Paul shares in Eph. 6:12 that your battle is not against flesh and blood. What does that mean?

S5: How can you relate that to facing conflict with your wife, in your family, with men at work, and people in your church community?

S6: Imagine that salvation is like enlisting in the army, but the main battle still needs to be fought. How are you engaging in the battles of spiritual warfare in your life?

S7: What can you do to properly equip yourself and other men for the challenges of spiritual battle? Have you ever drawn up a battle plan for the attacks of Satan, temptation, or other factors? If so, what does that look like?

Exercise #2: In the next 30 days find three men with which to discuss each part of the full armor of God listed in Ephesians 6. In your discussion, relate them to a man's life battling spiritual attacks. Discuss with these men your battle plan against our common spiritual enemy.

“ENDURANCE” Level Questions

Exercise #1: On a scale of 1-4, with 1 being *very well* and 4 being *not very well*, rate yourself on how well you are at recognizing the signs of spiritual warfare taking place and knowing how to prepare for it. Next, write out a plan to improve your battle readiness.

Read and answer the following.

Ephesians 6:10–17 (ESV)

Exercise #2: God provides the equipment for spiritual warfare but we must put the armor on. On a scale of 1-4, with 1 being *very well* and 4 being *not very well*, rate how well you daily put on the full armor of God from Ephesians 6. Next, write out a plan to improve.

Exercise #3: Choose three men in the next 30 days and be intentional about having a meaningful conversation with them about spiritual warfare. Pay close attention to opportunities you will have to pray with them about this subject.

E1: Spiritual warfare cannot be fought or won by worldly means. How important is it to have endurance in putting on the full armor of God daily in a man's life?

E2: Paul shares that after putting on the full armor of God, we are to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. What does "stand firm" mean to you?

E3: How would you describe spiritually "standing firm" to another man?

Read this war story and answer the following.

The port of Aqaba in 1917 seemed impregnable. Any enemy vessel approaching the port would have to face a battery of huge naval guns above the town. Behind Aqaba in every direction lay massive, barren, waterless, inhospitable desert. To the east lay another huge natural barrier, the deadly "anvil of the sun."

The Turks believed Aqaba to be safe from any attack. But they were wrong. British officer T.E. Lawrence (also known as Lawrence of Arabia) led a force of irregular Arab cavalry across the "anvil of the sun." Together, they rallied support among the local people to attack Aqaba.

On July 6, 1917, they swept into Aqaba from the north. The Turks gigantic naval guns were pointed in the wrong direction. Aqaba fell, and the Turkish hold on Palestine was broken, to be replaced by the British mandate and eventually by the state of Israel. The Turks failed to defend Aqaba because they made two

mistakes. They did not know their enemy, and they did not have the right weapons.²

We must be careful not to make the same mistakes. Ephesians 6:12 makes it very clear who our enemy is: *"our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world."*

E4: In the above illustration, the Arabs attack from the blind side. How does the Holy Spirit help us to remove "blind sides" in our walk with Christ?

E5: How important is reliance upon the power of the Holy Spirit is needed to not only wear the armor of God but to use it in spiritual warfare? Why?

² Michael Boyland, Edward K. Rowell ed., "Fresh Illustrations for Preaching & Teaching," *Leadership Journal*, (Baker Books, 2000).
Spiritual Warfare – Lesson 1