

Spiritual Battle

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As Christ followers, we are in a spiritual battle. To best prepare for this battle, we'll begin by getting an understanding of who we're fighting against.

How did this battle begin? (Revelation 12:7-9) _____

Who is Satan? _____

What does he do? (1 Peter 5:8, 2 Corinthians 4:4) _____

Who does Satan have on his side? (Revelation 12:4) _____

He convinced 1/3 of the angels of heaven to rebel against God! How many angels are there? (Revelation 5:11) _____

What happens when we resist Satan? (James 4:7) _____

Satan knows his future. What is it? (Romans 16:20, Revelation 20:10) _____

Christians are in a constant battle. While it may seem that the battle is between the children of God and other people who oppose God, this is just a small indication of what is constantly going on around us. Read Ephesians 6:12.

Who is our battle against? _____

Where is the battle taking place? _____

Now read Ephesians 6:10-17. In this well-known passage, Paul describes how we are to take our stand in spiritual battle.

What are the 3 pieces of armor that we stand firm with? (verses 14-15)

1. _____

This is the Truth of Scripture as opposed to the lies of Satan. Paul is actually reviewing what he has already instructed the Ephesians earlier in the letter. In 4:25, he told the Ephesians that they must "put off falsehood and speak truthfully." In 5:9, he says that the fruit of godliness "consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth." So, this is not a new teaching. What is new for them is to realize that when they speak untruthfully, they give Satan an open door into their lives to create pain and turmoil. Truth, by its very definition, is exclusive. It means something is true and other things are lies. Satan is the father of lies (John 8:44) and every lie finds its origin in him.

Jesus said, "You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (verse 32). The great truths of the Bible – the love of God, salvation through faith in Jesus Christ, the Second Coming, forgiveness of sin, grace and power to live for Jesus – these truths set us free from Satan's lies.

Is there any area of your life where you have moved away from biblical truths? _____

2. _____
Righteousness protects our hearts. Obedience to God is a protection for your heart from being wounded by sin. The Bible is clear that none of us are righteous in ourselves (Romans 3:10) ... It is Christ's righteousness – not our own righteousness – that covers and protects us. Regarding righteousness, Paul is alluding to the behavior found in Ephesians 4:25-5:7. Read this passage and jot down both the negative and positive behavior Paul has in mind: _____

3. _____
As soldier of Christ, we must constantly be wearing "gospel shoes" that will allow us to march wherever God leads us. Satan will try to place obstacles in our path, but in Jesus' strength we can walk forward, obeying Him, and advancing the gospel. How is evangelism a protection in this spiritual battle? _____

How does not being willing to speak about Christ open a door for Satan? _____

What are the 3 pieces that we take up for battle? (verses 16-17)

1. _____
The shield of faith deflects "all the fiery darts of the wicked one" (Ephesians 6:16). Romans 12:3 tells us that God has distributed faith to each of us. Jesus is the founder and perfecter of our faith (Hebrews 12:2). As we walk with Him, that faith grows and develops until it becomes a shield, protecting us and allowing us to live a victorious life in Christ.
2. _____
The helmet protects the head – perhaps the most vital part of the body since it is the seat of thought and the mind. Since we are sure of our salvation, we will not be moved by Satan's deceptions. We have a peace that nothing can disturb.
3. _____
God's Word – the Bible – is "living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword" (Hebrews 4:12). Jesus used this weapon when Satan tempted Him in the wilderness. In response to each of Satan's temptations, Jesus replied, "it is written..." and proceeded to quote Scripture to destroy Satan's temptations. God's Word is truth (John 17:17). That is why it is so powerful. That is why it is so important that we study the Bible and become familiar with its truths and its power.

Paul closes his list by saying, "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit" (Ephesians 6:18). Even when you are clothed with the armor of God, you need to bathe everything in prayer. Without prayer, without reliance upon God, our efforts at spiritual warfare are empty and futile. Prayer brings you into communion and fellowship with God so that His

armor can protect you. In Ephesians 1:15-23 and 3:14-21, we get large samples of that which Paul prayed. Among other things, he prays for wisdom, strength, unity, and maturity for the Ephesians.

When was a time recently where you became more aware of the spiritual war that is going on behind the scenes? _____

Is there any area that Satan already has a foothold in your life? _____

Scripture does not tell us to fear our enemy, only to be vigilant in not giving him a foothold in our lives!

Memorize Ephesians 6:11

Memorize Belt (of truth); Breastplate (of righteousness); Shoes (readiness that comes from the Gospel); Shield (of faith); Helmet (of salvation); Sword (of the Spirit)