

Fighting The Good Fight of Faith

Introduction

If we're living the Christian life, we are in a battle. God's people need faith and courage to fight the good fight of faith. I Timothy 6:12; Ephesians 6:10-18

Discussion

I. The Nature of The Battle - Spiritual Warfare

A. Ephesians 6:12 - we do fight against a frail human enemy, but against spiritual forces of the devil.

B. II Corinthians 10:3-5 - we don't go out and burn down buildings where false teaching is taught; or tear down night clubs, etc. but we use the sword of the Spirit (Eph. 6:17; Heb. 4:12) to conquer the hearts of men.

C. John 18:36 - the kingdom of Christ was not established, nor is it defended or extended by carnal means nor by a social gospel.

II. The Nature of the Army

A. **Volunteers** - we were not drafted or forced to serve, but we willingly chose to be a soldier; so there should be no grudging on our part when duty calls.

B. **Well defined cause** - there is much to fight for as we stand for truth against error and sin (1 Tim. 6:12).

C. **Infallible Captain** - an army is lost and defeated without adequate leadership. Our captain is "King of kings and Lord of lords" (Rev. 7:14; 19:11).

D. **Same side** - we are fighting as allies on the same side with those who take their stand for truth (1 Cor. 3:5-7).

III. The Nature of the Soldier - II Timothy 2:3,4 - A Good Soldier:

A. **Endures Hardness** - no matter how hot or tough the battle may become we continue to persevere (Hebrews 12:2,3).

B. **Does not become entangled** - no matter how busy we are with the affairs of this life, we must always be ready for duty (Titus 2:14; 3:1,14).

C. **Pleases his commanding officer** - Christ is the captain of His army and we must obey His orders (Matt. 7:21-23).

IV. The Armour of God - Ephesians 6:14-18

A. **"The Girdle of Truth" vs 14** - a huge leather girdle or belt that went about the mid-section (like a prize fighter wears).

1. This the foundation of all the armour that the Roman soldier will put on.

2. This the foundation for the Christian soldier - THE TRUTH - without it, there is no need to fight the battle. It is the basis for all that we do and fight for.

3. The Roman soldier was expected to fight in battle for 42 - 72 hours without relief. The truth will enable us to "stand" and prevail.

B. **"The breastplate of righteousness" vs 14** - hooks into the girdle of truth and form one unified piece of armour.

1. This is the righteousness which is only through Jesus Christ (Phil. 3:9).

2. Without righteousness we will never be able to fight the battle. We cannot influence others and win souls to Christ unless we are what we claim to be.

C. **"Your feet shod with the gospel of peace" vs 15** - the Roman soldier didn't go into battle in Italian sandals, but in heavy bronze greaves.

1. We must believe in the power of the gospel in order to gain victory (Rom 1:16).

2. Notice of the order: first truth and righteousness, then peace. We must never seek to maintain peace at the expense of what is truth and right. In the home (Matt. 10:34-37) or even in the church (Eph. 4:3; 15).

D. **"Taking the shield of faith" vs 16** - this was oftentimes the shield that the Roman soldier advanced behind and was usually the size of a huge oak door.

1. We are often failing in our efforts in the work of the Lord because of a lack of "shields" or faith. But faith is what gives us the victory! (I John 5:4)

2. Notice the Old Testament examples:

a. God destroyed 185,000 Assyrian soldiers in one night because of the FAITH of a righteous king and prophet! (Isaiah 37)

b. Gideon and his army - Judges 7 - with only 300 men went against the host of the Midianites by FAITH and God gave them the victory!

3. In the New Testament, the early Christians preached the gospel and did the Lord's work by FAITH. (Acts 5:28)

4. God's people today are too often found "at ease in Zion" and making excuses for not getting "in the trenches" and fighting the battle.

E. **"The helmet of salvation" vs 17** - hooked into the breastplate of the armour, so that the Roman soldier was one solid piece of armour from head to toe. There was only one place where there was no armour - in the back - because a Roman soldier never retreated!

F. **"The sword of the Spirit" vs 17** - the soldier of Christ has but one offensive weapon with which to confront the enemy; and we wield this sword in gentleness and in love (Eph. 4:15; II Timothy 2:24-26).

Conclusion

God has given us the armour to stand. If we will put on the whole armour of God we can gain the victory through Jesus Christ our Lord. Romans 8:31-39