

speaking to God's people

freegiftfromgod

bible studies

Subject: **This is War**

Scripture

Introduction

Commentary

If you are a Christian you are at war. Make no mistake we are fighting a fight for our lives and our eternal salvation. This has been made clear in many scriptures in the Bible. And it is something we must take to heart and prepare for so that we can not only fight this war, but be confident of winning.

The war that we are involved in is not a physical war. There are no guns, cannon, bombs, rockets and so on, which are the weapons of human wars. Instead this war is a war of the spirit. It is a war between the powers of good on the side of Jesus Christ versus the powers of evil that surround this world.

What we need to understand in this war, like any war, is the rules of the war, the rules of engagement and the weapons of this war so that we can fight on the side of the right. We need to take steps to ensure that we achieve the victory that is set before us so that we can stand with Christ when the time comes.

So let us look at the nature of this war briefly and then identify some of the ways that this war is being conducted. When we understand these things we have a better chance of winning the war.

James 4:1-4

In the book of James we see what the nature of this war is all about. James wrote:

1 What causes wars, and what causes fightings among you? Is it not your passions that are at war in your members?

2 You desire and do not have; so you kill. And you covet and cannot obtain; so you fight and wage war. You do not have, because you do not ask.

3 You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions.

What we see here is that the war we are fighting is a spiritual war. The battleground of this war is within each of us because the battle is being fought against the human passions and desires that rage within each of us that lead us into the ways of sin.

Human passion is not aligned with the will of God. It is human passion that leads us to all manner of wrongdoing. As James says, "You desire and do not have; so you kill." How many human wars have been fought because someone sought to have power over someone else? How many human fights have been caused because someone was jealous or envious of someone else and in their passion sought to bring the other person down?

It is human passion that is causing mankind to lead a sinful life, and it is the will of God in Jesus Christ that we overcome human passion. And this is not a new issue. It has been an issue since the beginning of the human race. It was human passion that caused the fall of mankind in the Garden of Eden. And Cain was warned by God about passion which leads to sin.

Cain was envious of his brother Abel when God accepted Abel's offering but not Cain's. So the Lord said to Cain, "Why has your countenance fallen? If you do well will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin is couching at the door; its desire is for you, but you must master it." (Genesis 4:6-7)

Sin was couching at the door because of Cain's passion. Passion leads to sin if it is not checked and if allowed to form sin it will overcome you as it overcame Cain leading him to murder his brother Abel.

1 Peter 2:11	<p>The apostle Peter echoed these words in his first letter. He wrote:</p> <p><i>“Beloved, I beseech you as aliens and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh that wage war against your soul.”</i></p> <p>How are we to win this war that rages within us? By abstaining from the passions of the flesh.</p> <p>If we are able to control the passions of the flesh we can control the urges that lead to sin. And if we take away the power of sin we can win the war that rages within us.</p> <p>But man is not able to do this in his own strength. The passions of human nature are so much a part of the make-up of man that it is not possible for man to make himself righteous. So the Lord has prepared a way for us so that He will help us in our time of need.</p> <p>Jesus died so that we could be set free from sin and he gave us gifts, the most important of which is the Holy Spirit. If we are to fight this spiritual war we need weapons of the Spirit for human weapons are useless in this war. God has provided us with those weapons, which we can receive through the working of Jesus Christ in our life.</p>
2 Cor 10:3-6	<p>Paul made the point in this section of the scripture that:</p> <p><i>“For though we live in the world we are not carrying on a worldly war” (Verse 3)</i></p> <p>This is the point I have been trying to make also. And Paul goes on then to discuss how it is that this war is and will be waged. He says:</p> <p><i>4 for the weapons of our warfare are not worldly but have divine power to destroy strongholds. 5 We destroy arguments and every proud obstacle to the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ, 6 being ready to punish every disobedience, when your obedience is complete.</i></p>

	<p>This is the key to fighting and winning this war. The weapons of this war are not physical weapons they are spiritual. The reason why is because the war is being fought on a spiritual battlefield. This war is being waged in our minds, which is why Paul says we destroy arguments and every proud obstacle, that is, pride. We must also take our thoughts captive to obey Christ. Every thought that enters our mind must be examined, reviewed and accepted or rejected on the basis of whether it is aligned to the truth of the New Covenant or if it stands against the truth. This is how the battle is being fought and what needs to occur if we are to win it.</p> <p>But how do we fight this battle? We are talking of weapons and warfare and a spiritual battle, so what are the weapons that we must use to overcome in a spiritual war?</p>
Eph 6:11-17	<p>Again Paul instructs us in his letter to the Ephesians. In this set of scriptures Paul writes about the weapons of this spiritual warfare. Look at what he has to say and how he describes the weapons.</p> <p><i>11 Put on the whole armour of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.</i> <i>12 For we are not contending against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world rulers of this present darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.</i> <i>13 Therefore take the whole armour of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.</i> <i>14 Stand therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness,</i> <i>15 and having shod your feet with the equipment of the gospel of peace;</i> <i>16 besides all these, taking the shield of faith, with which you can quench all the flaming darts of the evil one.</i> <i>17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.</i></p> <p>These words describe the armour that God has given us so that we can withstand and stand in this war of the Spirit. We are not fighting against flesh and blood and so different armour is required.</p>

	<p>Paul instructs us to be decked out in the armour of truth, righteousness, the gospel of peace, faith and salvation. These things are our armour in which we stand. They are the things that will enable us to withstand the flaming darts of Satan. That is, the evil thoughts, desires and passions of the flesh that the evil one throws against us to cause us to fall.</p> <p>To take hold of this armour we need to know what these things all are and how they impact our spiritual life and our walk with Christ. If we do not have a firm grip on the teachings of truth, salvation, faith and so on, how can we wear that part of the armour of God? And if we are not fully dressed in the armour of the Lord, then we leave parts of our life exposed like a soldier who is not fully clad, and we become vulnerable.</p> <p>Then we see in verse 17 the last part of the armour, the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. Unlike the rest of the armour, this is not only defensive but a weapon of attack. The sword of the Spirit enables us to fight back against the wiles of the devil and so push him back. Again, how can we wield the sword of the Spirit unless we learn the truth of the gospel and immerse ourselves in the words of the Bible? When the times arise that we need to go into battle, if we have learned the words of the truth of the New Covenant, then we shall have the answers at hand to send the devil packing.</p>
2 Cor 6:3-7	<p>In addition to using the armour of the Lord we also overcome by other means too, as we see in this section of scripture:</p> <p><i>3 We put no obstacle in any one's way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, 4 but as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: through great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, 5 beatings, imprisonments, tumults, labours, watching, hunger; 6 by purity, knowledge, forbearance, kindness, the Holy Spirit, genuine love, 7 truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left</i></p> <p>These are some of the issues that we may face in this world and they will require endurance and spiritual as</p>

	<p>well as physical stamina. So the methods by which we overcome in addition to the use of the armour of God are those things shown in verses 6 & 7. You will note also that many of these link back directly to the armour and expand upon it.</p> <p>If and when we apply these in all situations we have the power to stand in the face of opposition. These weapons will bring us to a place of victory. Even though they do appear to be weapons in the normal sense, each of these has the power to overcome spiritual opposition. They can diffuse arguments, turn away anger, overcome malice and put you in a better position to deal with whatever comes against you.</p> <p>In addition we see that one of these weapons again is the Holy Spirit who guides, guards, leads, counsels and comforts us when we have received the Holy Spirit. He can bring the full power of God to bear on situations if it becomes necessary.</p>
Rom 8:31-39	<p>As a result of all of these we can have the victory and our victory is not our own alone or because of anything we have done. The victory we have comes through Jesus Christ and the application of his words and teachings in our life.</p> <p>As Paul wrote in this section of scripture:</p> <p><i>31 What then shall we say to this? If God is for us, who is against us?</i> <i>32 He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, will he not also give us all things with him?</i> <i>33 Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies;</i> <i>34 who is to condemn? Is it Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised from the dead, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us?</i> <i>35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?</i> <i>36 As it is written, "For thy sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered."</i> <i>37 No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.</i></p>

	<p><i>38 For I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers,</i> <i>39 nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.</i></p> <p>Yes indeed we are more than conquerors through Jesus Christ our Lord. We stand not because of what we have done, but because of what he has done for us. And in Jesus Christ nothing will be able to take us out of the hand of God or separate us from the love of God.</p>
So what next?	<p>This is war as I said at the beginning. There is much more that can be said on this subject, and I may continue in this vein in the next study. I plan to do a little more detail on each of the items of the armour of God to give you some insight into what they are and how they work. Perhaps you too can add to this with any questions or insights you have had and what has worked for you in your battle against the flesh and the devil.</p> <p>So now it's your turn. What would you like to add to this conversation? Send me an email (link below) or engage with me on Twitter (@JohnBLemmon) and let's have the discussion continue.</p> <p>Feel free also to send this to others so they can join the conversation, as there is so much more I could add, but then that leaves nothing for you to say. I hope this has added value to your own walk with Christ.</p>

This Bible Study has been brought to you by www.freegiftfromgod.com. It is a brief look at this subject and can be greatly expanded upon. I would be happy to hear any thoughts or additions you may wish to share, as well as any suggestions for other studies in the future. If you would like to make any comments or suggestions, please feel free to [email me](mailto:john@freegiftfromgod.com) at <mailto:john@freegiftfromgod.com> & I hope you found something of value here.