

Christian commitment as an army 1 message 2020

Here today we want to share about our role as an army as Christians. Previously we have been sharing on our commitment as a team and as a family. Both of those concepts are essential to this one and must be working in this role as well.

Introduction

In our world we live in today, people fight people and seek to kill each other to win a battle. The apostle Paul was talking to the Corinthian church at a time where the Roman Empire was in full force and where warfare to sustain their grasp on this empire was ongoing. If you defied Rome, physical harm would come to you. Rome for a while did not care much about this new group of so called, religious people called Christians because they were not a threat to the empire. Eventually, when there became a voice against wrongdoing and how Rome was immoral in its ways, then persecution came to the believers. This was why Nero burnt Rome and blamed it on the Christians. Jesus had to fight against this idea of waring physically against Rome because in His own disciples there were zealots who thought Jesus was here to overthrow the Romans. Jesus was actually after the hearts of men and women everywhere, Roman or not, to cause them to want to come into the kingdom of Heaven not the kingdom of the earth.

Today we want to share about what it means to be in God's army.

2 Corinthians 10:1-6 New International Version (NIV)

By the humility and gentleness of Christ, I appeal to you—I, Paul, who am “timid” when face to face with you, but “bold” toward you when away! ² I beg you that when I come I may not have to be as bold as I expect to be toward some people who think that we live by the standards of this world. ³ For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. ⁴ The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. ⁵ We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ. ⁶ And we will be ready to punish every act of disobedience, once your obedience is complete.

Luke 8:1-15 New International Version (NIV)

After this, Jesus traveled about from one town and village to another, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom of God. The Twelve were with him,² and also some women who had been cured of evil spirits and diseases: Mary (called Magdalene) from whom seven demons had come out;³ Joanna the wife of Chuza, the manager of Herod's household; Susanna; and many others. These women were helping to support them out of their own means.

⁴ While a large crowd was gathering and people were coming to Jesus from town after town, he told this parable:⁵ "A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path; it was trampled on, and the birds ate it up.⁶ Some fell on rocky ground, and when it came up, the plants withered because they had no moisture.⁷ Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up with it and choked the plants.⁸ Still other seed fell on good soil. It came up and yielded a crop, a hundred times more than was sown."

When he said this, he called out, "Whoever has ears to hear, let them hear."

⁹ His disciples asked him what this parable meant.¹⁰ He said, "The knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of God has been given to you, but to others I speak in parables, so that, "though seeing, they may not see;

though hearing, they may not understand.'^[a]

¹¹ "This is the meaning of the parable: The seed is the word of God.¹² Those along the path are the ones who hear, and then the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts, so that they may not believe and be saved.¹³ Those on the rocky ground are the ones who receive the word with joy when they hear it, but they have no root. They believe for a while, but in the time of testing they fall away.¹⁴ The seed that fell among thorns stands for those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by life's worries, riches and pleasures, and they do not mature.¹⁵ But the seed on good soil stands for those with a noble and good heart, who hear the word, retain it, and by persevering produce a crop.

The Christian perspective in spiritual warfare

Have you ever really thought of yourself as a Christian really being in a battle and being part of God's army? You are. You must be focused on the why you are there- It is the mission. Every soldier knows if he is not focused on the mission of the why, then he can falter in his passion to accomplish it, he could falter in the complete commitment he needs to have

to be the best and most effective he can be. The enemy also can gain an advantage if the soldier lets his guard down and is not vigilant in being careful of traps.

Christians needs to be very much alike to this in the spiritual battle they are in.

Things a Christian needs to be aware of:

- Careful of the enemy's traps,
- vigilant to live according to God's wishes and what the bible says
- keep their weapons ready and in good condition.

We are going to talk about weapons next week.

They need to know what the mission is and be totally bought into it.

Illustration

If you were driving along a highway and came upon an accident where there was someone trapped in a burning car wreck, would you not jump out and try to pry them to safety? It would be strange indeed to have someone try to hinder you from prying the victim loose. That is happening everyday with the human race and what Satan does. It happens for those trapped in Satan's grasp who need rescue and won't be rescued unless God's family fights and joins the battle to help save them.

Genesis 3:15 [Full Chapter]

And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel."

Here God is revealing ahead of time that those who follow Christ will crush the serpent or the devil's head destroying his works and the devil will bruise those who know Christ. The believers are able to be deadly to the work Satan does when relying on God's power. It is God's army (the believers) fighting against the devil and His demons (servants). The battle was announced back then already. As soon as sin entered the world, the battle to rescue the human race began.

Who or what are we fighting?

We don't fight people. We fight for the rescue of lives from the grasp of Satan who wants to destroy people. We also fight against the enemy's tactics to make us do wrong and make us try to say no to what Jesus wants

us to do. The Lord Jesus wants us to grow into being holy, perfect, and people who follow Jesus rightly or in righteousness. Satan doesn't stop and neither does the Lord Jesus, so we don't either. The battleground is the hearts and minds of all people. People will act on what they think and believe. We will act on what we believe. People fight people. God fights against things that hurt inside, in our minds, and hearts. The unseen is eternal and you don't need to be in person to win against it. Satan knows this just as much as the Lord Jesus does. If people's hearts and minds can be convinced to agree to a hurtful or damaging way of life, then that is what they will receive when they act on what they think or believe. We are not fighting people. We are not trying to hurt people who disagree or are nasty, doing hurtful things. We are fighting the spirit behind them who is instructing and causing them to think a certain way and then to act in a hurtful and damaging way. We are also fighting against the ideas and ways of Satan who wants us to believe:

- that evangelism is for someone else or other time
- that healing is for another day
- that evil is to be tolerated
- that living as a Christian with immoral behaviour is ok
- that being on fire (passionate) for God is weird
- that praying is optional
- that leaders of our nation cannot be influenced to do what God wants

Jesus says

John 11:25

Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die;

God's way of doing things and what He desires is very different from the world's way because the world has no power of itself and has no choice but to go the way Satan wills it to go. They have no power over Satan and his tactics.

Jesus comes to us all and seeks our best because He is God, is all powerful, and knows best.

Why are you fighting

Because anything that stands up against what Jesus wants and says is damaging and is promoted by evil, to accomplish evil, and to do evil to people. Jesus wants His kingdom to be established so everyone can come

to a restored relationship with Him. You are fighting Satan's tactics which are unseen and the results are eternal. Satan's idea is to keep at it until everyone is destroyed.

Matthew 18:6

"If anyone causes one of these little ones—those who believe in me—to stumble, it would be better for them to have a large millstone hung around their neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea.

Mark 16:16

Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.

Jesus cares about every one of the human race and wants us all to come to Him and be saved and to walk with Him daily so our lives can realize everything He has in store for us.

2 Peter 3:9

The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to **repentance**.

2 Corinthians 9:8

And God is able to bless you **abundantly**, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.

What happens when are you fighting

It is work. It requires being watchful, committed, being armed with the armour of God Eph 6, and the power of the Holy Spirit to enable us to work for the Lord effectively. We pray for others to see that Jesus is the way to life eternal. We show God's love to them so others can see God's love and how it works.

Not all people sadly, will respond to receive Jesus as their Saviour. Some may even be very much against it. There is a fight going on in their heart as to who they will listen to. Pray for them and seek to offer helps that they can see Jesus' love thru you and where you can share Jesus with them. You may be seeding the Words of God to them. Take care of that seed. Water it, cultivate it. Offer it. It is all work and it is all necessary.

There is also a battle in our own personal lives where Satan wants us to go astray and disobey God in our lives daily. He wants to rob you of your peace, joy, love, and everything else Jesus gives us. He wants us to forget

we represent the Saviour to the world and need to treat others as Jesus would. If we go about our daily lives in a worldly way treating others with worldly values and poor attitudes and ethics, the world will not see Jesus and will stumble from our example of being one of Jesus disciples or followers.

How will you fight

Passive action is futile and won't win the day. There is nothing passive about Jesus' message and desire to save the lost. It is an active one all the way. It is also very much active in keeping ourselves living according to Jesus' standards and staying away from Satan's traps he sets for us. If you know Jesus as your Saviour, you are recruited. In any battle there are 2 sides. This is the way it is in the unseen world as well. Satan fights against everything that is good and Godly by trying to undermine its value. He tries to make things look like they are good but are not. His pattern is to lie and try to deceive people, entrap them, and then put them in bondage to His will. He wants them to believe that to do wrong is good and fun and has no consequence to it. If people buy what he says, then they move to His side of the battle. If we receive what Jesus says and believe Him, then we come along His side, the winning side. God always wants everyone to come to His side where blessing, goodness, eternal life and restoration are. Satan's side has no good no matter how much he tries to say so. When you know the truth, it will set you free and it will not put you into bondage.

John 8:31-36 New International Version (NIV)

³¹ To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. ³² Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

³³ They answered him, "We are Abraham's descendants and have never been slaves of anyone. How can you say that we shall be set free?"

³⁴ Jesus replied, "Very truly I tell you, everyone who sins is a slave to sin. ³⁵ Now a slave has no permanent place in the family, but a son belongs to it forever. ³⁶ So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.

The family of God is real for the believer and is where the army of God is drawn from for God's plan.

There are many illustrations (testimonies) to show us what Satan does and what God does. Have you ever seen a happy demoniac? Our job is to reveal the truth Jesus has already said, so others will believe and then act to come along side the Saviour.

Our job is to fight against falsehoods and ideas that seek to deceive people, resulting in them getting confused and choosing the wrong way. God's Word, the bible, is powerful whenever used and can break thru strongholds that Satan has set in place meant to make it hard for people to come to Jesus. We are to share God's words to others so they can see the path to Jesus. We are to testify or tell how Jesus has done this for us so others can know the way.

Luke 7:22

So he replied to the messengers, "Go back and report to John what you have seen and heard: The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is proclaimed to the poor.

Here Jesus told John the Baptist disciples to tell John to compare what Jesus was doing to the prophecy of what the Saviour would be like.

Acts 4:20

As for us, we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard."

The disciples responded by saying they were unable to stop telling others what Jesus had done for them.

Romans 10:12-15 New International Version (NIV)

¹² For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile—the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him, ¹³ for, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

¹⁴ How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? ¹⁵ And how can anyone preach unless they are sent? As it is written: "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!"

James 4:1-8 New International Version (NIV)

⁴ What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you? ² You desire but do not have, so you kill. You covet but you cannot get what you want, so you quarrel and fight. You do not have because you do not ask God. ³ When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.

⁴ You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world means enmity against God? Therefore, anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God. ⁵ Or do you think Scripture

says without reason that he jealously longs for the spirit he has caused to dwell in us? ⁶ But he gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says: “God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble.”

⁷ Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. ⁸ Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded.

Conclusion

John 10:10 [Full Chapter]

The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have **life**, and have it to the full.

You and I are in a battle. If you know Jesus as your Saviour, you are recruited in His army to rescue the souls of people so they can come to know Jesus as their Saviour and be made new creations of God. The army is also to keep the family of God strong. No army recruit goes into battle without armour and without the army. The army of God comes from the family of God. Because the family of God cares deeply for the family, it also cares deeply for the army and each other. It leaves no wounded soldier behind. If someone is hurting, we help, we pray, we fight for their protection too. This caring carries over into the purpose of the battle to rescue others so they too come under the covering and saving power of the Saviour Jesus. We do not leave the lost and dying world to the enemy of our souls so He can destroy them either. Maybe this hasn't dawned on you and you are a believer but are not wanting to engage. Join the army of God. You are on the winning team. Remember we don't fight people; we fight against the powers of Satan who wishes to harm people and destroy them. God is calling. Get committed and realize the reason for battle. It is so Jesus can save people and rescue them from Satan's deceptive and destructive ways and to strengthen the family of God with absolute focus. Will you fight the battle with the Lord Jesus? Be ready to strengthen someone with words of life from Jesus and encouragement to come to Him. Amen.