

## Christian Warfare

1 Timothy 1:18

“Timothy, my son, here are my instructions for you, based on the prophetic words spoken about you earlier. May they help you fight well in the Lord’s battles.”

**The Christian is in a war!** It is the war of all wars. And it has nothing to do, ultimately, with the arms race, military initiatives, "Star Wars," detente or international relationships with world leaders. **Those things are but a temporal and earthly reflection of the true war that is being fought in the heavenlies.** The great spiritual battle between God and the devil is being waged on the battleground of our souls, with all eternity hung in the balance.

**We face an enemy.** He is the enemy of our souls. He has only one plan for our lives, and it is a terrible plan. **So we are called today to be soldiers in helping to bring about the final victory.** We have a part to play.

**God won't do it all by Himself.** He is calling us to volunteer for this tour of duty, to become mighty warriors. He wants us to discover how to fight and win the battles we face as we take authority over the enemy. He wants to make us victors until that great day when the heavens open and Jesus returns to establish His rule and reign over the entire earth.

**There are two verses of Scripture to which I draw your attention.** In Luke 12:32 Jesus says, "Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." And then in Matthew 11:12 He says this, "And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force."

**On one hand, Jesus says that God wants to give us the kingdom.** On the other, Jesus says the kingdom of God will be taken by force. How is it that God wants to give us the kingdom, yet we must take it by force?

The reason for the seeming paradox is this: **Someone wants to keep us from receiving and experiencing the very thing that God wants to give us.**

**We know this someone is a thief.** In John 10:10 the apostle John describes him as one who “comes to steal, kill and destroy.” Peter tells us in 1 Peter 5:8 that he is our “adversary” who “walks about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.” **He is Satan, the devil, and the devourer.** Because of Satan, we must become the violent ones who take the kingdom by force if we are ever to receive the very thing that God wants us to have.

**We should consider carefully the time we live in, a time not unlike the days of John the Baptist.** John lived between two dispensations the dispensation of law and the dispensation of grace. Today the church is also crouched between two dispensations the dispensation of grace and the dispensation of the millennial reign of Jesus Christ. We are inching right up to eternity.

**Satan has only a little time left.** So he's unleashing all of his anger, his evil, and his fury upon the world. And because he is the great deceiver, the greatest trick he is playing upon the American church today is the lie that "everything is all right. Everything will come out in the wash. We don't have anything to worry about. Get comfortable, enjoy life, and everything will turn out OK." Despite such lies, you can be assured of one thing today: Satan hates you and has a terrible plan for your life.

**God is calling for His church to awake.** If we are to be the church triumphant, we must become the church militant in this hour. God has freely given us the kingdom, but because we face an

intervening enemy, we will have to take our rightful entry into the kingdom by force.

Please do not misunderstand what I am saying this has nothing to do with our being saved we are saved by grace through faith! This has to do with our victory. Although we have been given the victory, Satan desires to steal it from us through deception.

Please understand that technically Satan was defeated when Jesus Christ died on the Cross and rose again on the third day. But until Jesus comes again in victory to establish His kingdom officially and to force Satan to surrender all authority to Him, the church is engaged in the final throes of the war. So we are experiencing intense opposition and some of the "bloodiest" fighting of all time, spiritually speaking.

If you don't think the church is under siege by an enemy, then visit the hospitals or sit in my office and answer the telephone calls. Ladies and gentlemen, there are hundreds, yea, even millions of Christians who are broken in their hearts, bodies, minds and homes!

Let this fact sink into your minds today: Satan is running rampant, looking for his opportunity to nail you in defeat!! He is not just the adversary; he is your adversary. He is not just *the* enemy; he is *your* enemy. He is not just the liar and thief; he is the one who is lying to you, telling you that everything will be fine if you just lay low and don't do anything to rock the boat. He is the thief who is ripping *you* off. He is the one who comes to destroy *you*.

As a child of God, we must break through the enemy ranks to give Jesus reign over every aspect of our lives: our minds, emotions and bodies; our finances, jobs and businesses; our homes, marriages and families. And in order for Jesus to establish His righteousness, peace and joy there, we must develop the mentality of a warrior.

**Satan wants us to believe that defeat is just a part of living.**

And some people simply view the enemy's attack as a fact to be accepted: "Oh, she's sick and that's just the way it is." Or "They're having trouble in their family and it will probably end in divorce. That's just part of life." "Times are tough and bankruptcy is just a fact of our society."

When I hear statements like these, everything in me cries out, "No!" **That just isn't the way it is in God's eyes.** It is a lie of the enemy that bad things must happen to God's people because "that's just the way it is in life." **Too many bad things are happening because God's people are allowing them to happen.** They are not standing up to say, "I have a warrior's mentality and I'm determined to see the victory established in my life. I'm determined to fight with all my might against the enemy. I'm determined to win this battle and ultimately the war."

**Our concept of the devil will determine if we live in victory or live in defeat!** Do you want to *lose* a fight? Get hit and then start backing up. You will get hit again!

**Do you want to win a fight?** Then no matter how hard you are hit, stand firm, swing back and keep swinging. Plant your feet as if in concrete, and get your arms swinging as fast as you can and make them go. Then watch what happens!

**What does our concept of Satan have to do with our spiritual battles?** If you are afraid of Satan, when you get hit, you will try to back away! But if you understand your authority over Satan, when you get hit, you will resist his attack! And when that happens, the Word of God says you will send him fleeing!

Let me remind you once again of 1 John 4:4, "He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world." Child of God, when you have the power of God in your life, when you have Jesus ruling and reigning on the throne of your heart, then He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.

**There are four things that will guarantee victory in your life, if you will take authority over the devil by faith:**

**First, the devil cannot penetrate the blood of Jesus.** The blood of Jesus has already broken the power of the devil, and it is a force, a power, and an entity in the universe available to every child of God for deliverance and salvation from every situation, circumstance or sin.

**Do you remember the first Passover in the book of Exodus when the death angel was sent by God throughout the land of Egypt to destroy the firstborn of every living thing, (Exodus 14)?** The only place that the death angel could not go was into those homes where the blood had been applied to the doorpost. That kind of protection is ours today: The devil cannot penetrate where the blood of Jesus is applied.

**Second, the devil cannot harm you if you put on the whole armor of God every day and claim your authority in Jesus Christ.** The Bible clearly tells us in Ephesians 6:10-11 to be "strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might." It says that when we put on the whole armor of God we will be in a position to "stand against the wiles of the devil."

**Third, the devil cannot read your mind.** We know that God is omnipresent and omnipotent that He is everywhere and can do anything. But we must also realize that God is omniscient that is He knows everything.

**Listen carefully, Satan cannot read your mind; therefore, he is limited in what he knows.** He knows what you say. So be careful what you say. It is no accident that we have been told in Proverbs 18:21, "Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruit." And that leads us to Hebrews 13:15, "Let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips giving

thanks to His name." God wants us to walk in continual praise and a continual attitude of gratitude because God knows and the devil knows that the spirit realm operates through our words.

**Four, the devil won't leave unless you cast him out.** Matthew 12:25ff. tells us the Pharisees once confronted Jesus with the accusation that He cast out demons by the name and power of Beelzebub, the prince of demons. They were saying that Jesus Himself was demon possessed and that His miracles were done by the power of Satan working in His life.

Jesus responded to them by saying, "A house divided against itself cannot stand, and if Satan cast out Satan, then his house will fall." **He went on to say that if someone wants to steal something from a strong man's house, then he must first come in and bind up the strong man.** The major point of His response was this: "Satan will not cast out Satan."

**Child of God, our enemy is mortally wounded and ultimately defeated, but today, right now, in your life, and in mine, he is still very active.** He's building strongholds of lies, doubts, deceit and terror. And he is doing it with just one goal: to steal everything that is worth something in our lives.