

Soldiers of Christ, Arise; Deuteronomy 20:1-4

- I. Warfare
 - a. A Christians life is warfare
 - b. Ephesians 6:12 (ESV) ¹² For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.
 - c. We are soldiers of Christ
 - i. A soldier commits to give their all for the cause
 - ii. I have had to send many people home because they did not commit to give their all
 - iii. “Hacksaw Ridge” is a movie about a conscientious objector who, while not wanting to use a weapon, was still willing to give his all as a medic
 - iv. Our Armed Forces are made up of young men and women who have made a commitment to sacrifice their lives in service to our country
 - v. Military rules are very strict and members even volunteer to forego some of their freedoms in this service
 - vi. It is very easy to see why Paul uses this analogy in
 - vii. 2 Timothy 2:3 (ESV) ³ Share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus.
 - d. Just like any other soldier, we sacrifice for Christ
- II. Strength
 - a. “Soldiers of Christ arise, and put your armor on”
 - b. Be prepared
 - i. Who goes to war unprepared (without the necessary tools)?
 - ii. I went through several levels of combat and weapons training to prepare me for the job of defending air bases
 - iii. Helmet, flak vest, weapon, ammo, etc.
 - iv. There is a lot of equipment needed for war
 - v. Ephesians 6:13 (ESV) ¹³ Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm.
 - vi. He has given us everything we need to fight these battles
 - vii. Galatians 5:22–23 (ESV) ²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.
 - viii. 2 Peter 1:5–8 (ESV) ⁵ For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, ⁶ and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, ⁷ and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love. ⁸ For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

- ix. 2 Peter 1:10 (ESV) ¹⁰ Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to confirm your calling and election, for if you practice these qualities you will never fall.
- x. Through the Gospel we find the belt of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the shoes of peace, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit
- c. “Strong in the strength which God supplies through His beloved Son”

III. Virtue

- a. “Leave no unguarded place, no weakness of the soul”
- b. How many of us have plans to combat our weaknesses?
 - i. God provided a plan for the Israelites’ weaknesses
 - ii. Deuteronomy 20:5–8 (ESV) ⁵ Then the officers shall speak to the people, saying, ‘Is there any man who has built a new house and has not dedicated it? Let him go back to his house, lest he die in the battle and another man dedicate it. ⁶ And is there any man who has planted a vineyard and has not enjoyed its fruit? Let him go back to his house, lest he die in the battle and another man enjoy its fruit. ⁷ And is there any man who has betrothed a wife and has not taken her? Let him go back to his house, lest he die in the battle and another man take her.’ ⁸ And the officers shall speak further to the people, and say, ‘Is there any man who is fearful and fainthearted? Let him go back to his house, lest he make the heart of his fellows melt like his own.’
 - iii. For Christians, the battle is thrust upon us and there is no option to leave the battle to others
 - iv. When we put on Christ, we pledge ourselves to the battle, committing our very lives to the cause
 - v. We must plan for our weaknesses because Satan will not attack us where we are strong
 - 1. I have struggled with my weight since I joined the military
 - 2. I was 5 pounds overweight (185) when I went to the recruiter, and he told me I had to lose it before I could join (I did)
 - 3. I hovered between 175 and 195 my entire career
 - 4. Sunset had something they called the freshman 20, meaning new students usually gained 20 pounds in the first semester; I gained 40
 - 5. I know my weakness involving my weight (or health), I just don’t do enough to guard against it
 - 6. Leaving the battle is not an option for me, so I must do better to guard against my weaknesses
 - 7. Knowing what they are is a priority for me (and should be for you as well)
 - 8. We don’t mention gluttony much; I am not saying that everyone who is overweight is a glutton

9. 1 John 2:16 (ESV) ¹⁶ For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life—is not from the Father but is from the world.

- c. We have all of Satan's routes of attack
 - i. We must set up our defenses, our fields of fire, our final protective line
 - ii. We must constantly review the plan because our lives can change so easily and dramatically
 - iii. We must constantly (and consistently) practice the plan
 - iv. We must give others our defense plan
 - d. "Take every virtue every grace and fortify the whole"
- IV. Soldiers of Christ, Arise
- a. We are in the fight
 - b. We must put on our armor (the Gospel of Jesus)
 - c. We must increase the fruit of the Spirit in our lives
 - d. We must practice the qualities of righteousness given to us in 2 Peter
 - e. We must guard against our weaknesses and plan our defenses
 - f. "That having all things done, and all your conflicts past, you may overcome through Christ alone and stand entire at last"