

Fight a Good Fight

1 Timothy 6:12

Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.

Lesson 1

“We are in a War”

Introduction

1. Scriptures for this lesson

a. 1 Peter 5:8

i. KJV

Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:

ii. CE

Be on your guard and stay awake. Your enemy, the devil, is like a roaring lion, sneaking around to find someone to attack.

iii. AMP

Be well balanced (temperate, sober of mind), be vigilant *and* cautious at all times; for that enemy of yours, the devil, roams around like a lion roaring [in fierce hunger], seeking someone to seize upon *and* devour.

b. Revelations 12:10

And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.

2. We are in a War

a. God’s enemy, and our enemy, satan, is out to destroy us

b. This war began when Lucifer rebelled against God before creation of the earth

i. In Ezekiel 28, we see that the fall of Lucifer was pride

1) v15...

Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee.

2) v17...His beauty caused his heart to be lifted up, exalted

Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness:...

Note: One writer said that Lucifer's beauty was greater than anything else in heaven, except for the eternal Son, and when Lucifer would come before God, the Eternal Son, from beside the Eternal Father shined brighter than Lucifer, which caused jealousy, which corrupted his wisdom because of his pride in his own beauty.

ii. In Isaiah 14:12-15, we see the result of the corruptness of Lucifer's wisdom, as he tried to overthrow the King of Kings and Lord of Lords

1) Lucifer's words in v13-14, which he declared in his heart

a) I will ascend into heaven,

b) I will exalt my throne above the stars of God:

c) I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north

d) I will ascend above the heights of the clouds;

e) I will be like the most High.

2) Then, we see God's words in v15

Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit.

c. This war continued

i. As satan deceived Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, where he attacked the very integrity of God with his words

1) God said in Genesis 2:17b, concerning the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil

...Thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

2) The Woman said in Genesis 3:3

...Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.

Note: She added to what God had said, for God did not use the phrase “touch it,” for some reason, she had added this to her belief system. We have to be careful that we do not take away from the Scripture, and at the same time, we must be careful that we do not add to what God says

3) In Genesis 3:4, satan completely contradicted God...Ye shall not surely die:

4) Then, in v5, satan accused God of withholding knowledge from them

5) For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.

ii. An insight to the war between satan and God and satan and man is seen in the book of Job, and we get a glimpse of what is happening in the spiritual realm

1) Job 1

a) Job

i) Was a man that was perfect and upright,

ii) Was a man that feared God, and eschewed (avoided, shunned) evil

iii) Was a blessed man with 10 children and many possessions

b) There came a day that the members of the heavenly court came to present themselves before the Lord, and satan, the adversary and accuser came with them

Note: It almost looks like God calls the members of His court together for an accounting

i. Hebrews 1:14 (Amp)

Are not the angels all ministering spirits (servants) sent out in the service [of God for the assistance] of those who are to inherit salvation?

ii. They report back to the throne room of their service, and the condition of those who are to inherit salvation

iii. Quote Mark's story concerning Sister Philip's death

An angel was beckoned to the throne room, who was tired and weary from his work among the people of earth. He was given an important task, which was to go to the home of a saint, and that night gather her spirit and soul from her body and usher it from earth into heaven, into the presence of God, into the place of her eternal reward.

This angel had saw a lot of the bad that was happening in the world, but on this occasion, he was sent to serve and minister to one who had lived her life for the glory of God.

c) Among these angels, was the “accuser of the Brethren,” satan.

i) God asked him what he had been doing

ii) Satan said that he had been traveling to and fro upon the earth

iii) God asked him if he had considered His servant Job,

8) ...that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?

iv) Satan said that he had, but, (here he accuses Job)

1) Doth Job fear God for naught?

2) Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side?

3) Thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land.

4) But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy

Note: God allows satan to test Job, because God knew that Job served Him because he loved his God, not just for the blessings, but because He was God.

2) In Job 2, we see almost the same scenario

a) Let us look at what God says about Job in verse 3

3) And the Lord said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? and still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movedst me against him, to destroy him without cause.

b) Satan again accuses Job in v4

4) And Satan answered the Lord, and said, Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life. 5) But put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face.

c) God’s response is in verse 6...Behold, he is in thine hand; but save his life.

3) A few things that I want to point out in Job

1st in Chapter 1 v12

And the Lord said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand.

2nd in chapter 2 v6...Behold, he is in thine hand; but save his life.

Note: Remember that in the midst of the battle, satan is still limited, and there is still a hedge around you and I, and we can overcome

i. 1 Corinthians 10:13

There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.

ii. John 14:6

Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

iii. John 16:33

These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.

Note: Do not forget that Jesus is our Victory. He is our Way, and thus He will make a Way that through every battle of the war in which we are engaged, we can come through victorious, for there is still a hedge about us, which shows us that our enemy can never have his way completely concerning our lives

3rd is Job's attitude in 1:20-22 and 2:9-10

a) Job 1:20-22

i) v20...He worshipped

20) Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped,

ii) v21...He declared his faith and allegiance

21) And said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.

iii) v22...In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly.

b) Job 2:9-10

i) v9...His wife questioned Him

9) Then said his wife unto him, Dost thou still retain thine integrity? curse God, and die.

ii) v10)...He declares his faith and allegiance

10 But he said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?

iii) v10...In all this did not Job sin with his lips.

Note: There will be times things go awry, but what will we do? Will we defect because things go wrong, or will we stay with God?

i. Will we be a Daniel who refuses to eat of the king's meat and drink of the king's drink, even though it appears that God has left them to their own

ii. Or, can we be like the three Hebrew Children in Daniel 3:16b-18

16) ...O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter. 17) If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. 18) But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.

iii. Mark said in one of his sermons from Daniel concerning this thought that he loved the phrase of the song, which comes from Job,

You Give and take away; You Give and take away; My heart will chose to say Blessed be Your name

1) Like Job's wife, will you only serve God in the good times

2) Will you defect (desert) when times or rough

a) Benedict Arnold deserted when times were rough, and he became a man without a country

b) Judas deserted when times got rough

c) Daniel, The three Hebrew Children, did not desert, or leave just because things became difficult, but they continued in their faith

d) My parents did not defect (desert) during the difficult times

i) My mother was a Christian about 2 years at the age of 20, and my dad was a Christian about year at the age of 30, yet, when their 3 month old baby son died in 1953, they refused to defect, or desert the Lord who had saved them, instead, their faith was increased, and about 20 years later, Mom had a dream, or a vision of a tall red headed son in Heaven

ii) Do not desert or defect because you go through the sorrow of a loss on this earth, but understand, that we the Children of God never really die, and we have a loved one secure in the presence of God

3) I choose to be like Daniel...I will serve God when God is blessing me, and I choose to serve the Lord when I cannot feel God, for I have done it

4) At the danger of losing everything a few times, I still chose to serve the Lord just like the Three Hebrew Children

5) We have got to have this mindset, that we will serve the Lord regardless of what comes and what goes

6) In health, I will serve the Lord, and in sickness, I will serve the Lord

7) In life, I will serve the Lord, and in times of death, I will serve the Lord

8) I choose to show you how to live and serve God, and when it comes my time to die, I will show you how to die for God

9) We have served God when we did not have anything, when we struggled with every payment, when we struggled to have food on the table, and now when things are better, when we have a home, when we have an automobile that will get us to down and back without fear of breaking down, when we can go out to eat almost whenever we desire, we will show you how to serve God

iii. We see another view of this war when Jesus talks with Peter in Luke 22:31-32

1) v31...Like Simon, satan desires to have you

31) And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat:

2) v32...Like Simon, Jesus has prayed for you

32) But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.

- 3) v32...Like Simon, Jesus desires for you to strengthen your brethren
- 4) James 5:16...Pray for one another that you will be healed of your faults (sin)
- 5) James 5:19...Convert one another when you see someone fail

4. We are in a war

- a. This war is spiritual, but, yet we have to fight it in the natural as well
- b. We have an enemy who is out to destroy us
- c. We need to understand that we cannot live a victorious live and be ignorant of the devil and his demons
 - i. There are those who hide their head in the sand, hoping it will go away, but we must learn to fight the fight of faith to overcome the enemy who is out to destroy every facet of our being
 - ii. One lady said...
I had such a happy Christian life before I was told of all this fighting
- d. Let me read a quote from Super Wars written by Paul Jackson

Remember, one can be a happy person and still not be an effective Christian. A person may have a happy life, but if the life is free from conflict, warfare and struggle, then it is not the Christian life. Someone might be morally, ethically, and religiously acceptable and still be lost. Spiritual warfare is not just a compartment of the Christian life.

- e. Ignorance is not bliss, and there is no security in ignorance
 - i. In ignorance there is tremendous danger, even in the spiritual realm
 - ii. One lady said...Don't you think we would be better off if we just left this stuff alone, and lived the "spirit filled life"
 - iii. It is impossible to live an effective Christian life without being informed of the supernatural and the warfare that is happening in the spiritual realm
- #### 5. Let us understand that we are in a war, which is why we need the Holy Spirit
- a. John 14:26...But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name,
 - i. The Holy Ghost...shall teach you all things (including how to fight a warfare)

ii. The Holy Ghost shall...bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you. (Scriptures to fight the fight of faith)

b. John 15:26...But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me:

Note: The Holy Ghost will be a witness in us and through us of how to fight this spiritual warfare, even in the natural

c. John 16:13-15... Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come,

i. He will guide you into all truth...So you can fight a good fight

ii. He shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak

iii. He will shew you things to come...So you can be prepared for the battle

iv. He shall glorify me...So you and I can glorify Christ also in victorious living

v. He shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you...

So we will know what to do and how to do and how to be

Note v15

All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you.

6. No wonder Jesus said in

a. John 14:27

Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

Note: Jesus the Prince of Peace left us Peace so we are not troubled or afraid, because we know that our God is leading us through this warfare to eternal victory

b. John 16:33

These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.

7. We are in a war, but Jesus has given us everything we need to fight the war, and the Holy Ghost, like the CIA, is giving us continual intel so we can be prepared for any and every onslaught of our enemy, and can resist him in the faith, victorious in Christ

8. Let me leave you with this Scripture in 1 Timothy 1:17-19, which will be out text next week, where Timothy, and us, are challenged to “war a good warfare”

17) Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory forever and ever. Amen. 18) This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare; 19) Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck: 20) Of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme

Note: Here is our outline for Next week

I. The Winner of the Warfare

II. The Way of the Warfare

III. The Word of the Warfare

IV. The Walk of the Warfare

V. The Warning of the Warfare