

## *Ephesians 6:10-20*

### *There's a War Going On--We're in a War, a Raging Battle*

In Jim Wilson's "Principles of War" he says this "war" we're in is more deadly than any man has ever fought--the war of the soul. ["Principles of War: How to Use Proven Military Strategies in Spiritual Warfare" by James I. Wilson, available online from <http://www.amazon.com> ] The spiritual warfare in New England appears to be more intense than in southern California. It is harder for Christians to do things for the Lord in this area than it has ever been for us out in California. Daniel 10 shows us there is a battle going on that we don't even see. I have seen a great opposition to us right here in New England. It is very intense.

**Ephesians 6:10-20, "Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints. Pray also for me, that whenever I open my mouth, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should. Finally Brethren, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power." Ephesians 1:15-23 and 3:1-7, 14-20 cross references to this thought. Ephesians 1:15-23, "For this reason, ever since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, I have not stopped giving thanks**

for you, remembering you in my prayers. I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is like the working of his mighty strength, which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.” Ephesians 3:1-7,14-21, “For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles--Surely you have heard about the administration of God’s grace that was given to me for you, that is, the mystery made known to me by revelation, as I have already written briefly. In reading this, then, you will be able to understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, which was not made known to men in other generations as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to God’s holy apostles and prophets. This mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise of Christ Jesus. I became a servant of this gospel by the gift of God’s grace given me through the working of his power...” (vs. 14-21) “For this reason I kneel before the Father, from whom his whole family in heaven and on earth derives its name. I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love that surpasses knowledge--that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God. Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.” You can know about the power of God, but you need it *in you* to accomplish victory. Our opponent is too great for us alone, but he and those that are his are not too great for God’s power. When I think of New England, I think of Gideon. He was the least of the least in Israel. 130,000 Midianite soldiers opposed him. There is a direct correlation between physical warfare and spiritual warfare.

Jim Wilson outlines 11 principles of warfare every army must follow to succeed. I managed to get 8 of them here:

1. Every army or fighting unit needs an **objective**.
2. You must be on the **offensive**, not defensive.
3. **Concentration** of forces [brings max. fire-power to bear on the target]
4. **Mobility** [for when you meet an obstacle, you can go around it.]
5. **Cooperation** [team work facilitates mobility, concentration of forces, being on the offensive, economy of forces and pursuit of the enemy. This one's very important!]
6. **Economy** of forces [no wasted actions, firepower or manpower]
7. **Pursuit** of the enemy [cousin to being on the offensive. Taking the battle to his doorstep, instead of letting him show up on yours.]
8. **Obedience** [Our marching orders in detail, showing the specifics of the territory and battle we're to fight, including minefields to avoid and other pitfalls and snares the enemy has laid out. The Law of God contains all of this information. Jesus indwelling in us through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit makes obedience possible. On our own it is not possible.]

1. What is our **objective**? Evangelism and reaping the harvest (making disciples), isn't it? This is the stated mission assigned by our Commander-in-Chief, Jesus Christ. **Matthew 28:18-20, "Then Jesus came to them and said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.'"** [refer to link article "What is Evangelism?" for an in-depth description of our marching orders, evangelism see <https://unityinchrist.com/evangelism/1.htm>]

2. An army on the **offensive** has a military advantage. God's crippling blow against Satan was Christ's death, burial and resurrection. A very good analogy was the crippling blow the United States Navy delivered to the Japanese Navy at the Battle of Midway. This one naval battle ended Japanese Naval superiority. The rest of the war, although extremely deadly, was a mop-up operation. The carriers the Japanese lost in that battle

was their famed Kido Buti, their famed fast powerful carrier strike force which had hit Pearl Harbor. After that battle, the Japanese had lost their offensive strike weapon--from experienced pilots to the carrier force itself--they lost the whole offensive strike weapon. Our armour is intended to be offensive in nature, helping us to go **into** harm's way. It is God's will that we be exposed to attack, but not defeated. It's quite likely Paul was chained to a Roman soldier as he wrote this passage in Ephesians 6. We are told to put on Christ here. We're told to put on the whole armour of God. **Romans 13:11-14, "And do this, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in licentiousness and lewdness, not in strife and envy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts."** We can see here that putting on the armor of light is accomplished by putting on Jesus Christ. Jesus is the armor of God, the armor of light. King David put off his armor in his castle when he should have been in battle and he was hit harder than ever by Satan (the Bathsheba incident). To put on the armor of God is to hang out with the Lord. We don't have a choice here. **John 14:6, "Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.'" Hebrews 12:2, "Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God."** [Hudson Taylor finally learned what it is to "put on Christ." Refer back to the section about Hudson Taylor to more fully understand this essential principle.]

Standing militarily equals:

1. Having good intelligence, knowing your enemy's plans.
2. Having good protection, offensive armour. [putting on Jesus.]
3. Having good offensive weaponry.

Who's our enemy? **Isaiah 14:12-15, "How you have fallen from heaven, O morning star, son of the dawn! You have been cast down to the earth, you who once laid low the nations! You said in your heart, 'I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars [angels] of God; I will sit enthroned on the mount of assembly, on the utmost heights of the sacred mountain [Hebrew: *sides of the north*]. I will ascend above the tops of the**

clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.’ But you are brought down to the grave, to the depths of the pit.” Revelation 12:3-4, 7-12, “Then another sign appeared in heaven: an enormous red dragon with seven heads and ten horns and seven crowns on his heads. His tail swept a third of the stars [the word stars can symbolically refer to angels when used in certain contexts] out of the sky and flung them to the earth...And there was war in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back. But he was not strong enough, and they lost their place in heaven. The great dragon was hurled down--that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him. Then I heard a loud voice in heaven say: ‘Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Christ. For the accuser of our brothers, who accuses them before our God day and night has been hurled down. They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death. Therefore rejoice, you heavens and you who dwell in them! But woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has gone down to you! He is filled with fury, because he knows that his time is short.’” There could be billions of angels in existence. Satan deceived and drew one third of all of them to himself. Satan or his demon allies are **not** Omnipotent, or omnipresent like God is. Satan may have been the counterpart of Michael. Satan is called a roaring lion by Peter. **1<sup>st</sup> Peter 5:8, “Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings.”** **2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 11:13-15, “For such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, masquerading as apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light. It is not surprising then, if his servants masquerade as servants of righteousness. Their end will be what their actions deserve.”** **2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 4:3-4, “And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.”** [for my about knowing your enemy, Satan, see <https://unityinchrist.com/Satan/satan.htm>] The mind of the enemy: Read Job 1:6-22; 2:1-10. God uses Satan. Look also at Joseph's life. His brothers meant evil, but God worked it to the good. Satan's weapons are **ignorance**, and **lies**. The external weapon he uses is the world, his societies which make up the world we live in.

The internal weapon he uses against us are the desires of the flesh. God's ultimate weapon is Love, Agape Love, and forgiveness. Forgiveness and love disarms the enemy and his works. Your battle is never against people. **Daniel 10:4-14, "On the twenty-fourth day of the first month, as I was standing on the bank of the great river, the Tigris, I looked up and there before me was a man dressed in linen, with a belt of the finest gold around his waist. His body was like chrysolite, his face like lightning, his eyes like flaming torches, his arms and legs like the gleam of burnished bronze, and his voice like the sound of a multitude. I Daniel, was the only one who saw the vision; the men with me did not see it, but such terror overwhelmed them that they fled and hid themselves. So I was left alone, gazing at this great vision; I had no strength left, my face turned deathly pale and I was helpless. Then I heard him speaking, and as I listened to him, I fell into a deep sleep, my face to the ground. A hand touched me and set me trembling on my hands and knees. He said, 'Daniel, you who are highly esteemed, consider carefully the words I am about to speak to you, and stand up, for I have now been sent to you.' And when he said this to me, I stood up trembling. Then he continued, 'Do not be afraid, Daniel. Since the first day that you set your mind to gain understanding and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come in response to them. But the prince of the Persian kingdom resisted me twenty-one days. Then Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, because I was detained there with the king of Persia. [A spirit king, the prince of Persia] Now I have come to explain to you what will happen to your people in the future, for the vision concerns a time yet to come."**

**Ephesians 6:12-13, "For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand." Verses 14-19, "Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints. Pray also for me, that whenever I open my mouth,**

**words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should.”**

*The first article of our armor is the “belt of truth*

There are two interpretations for this *belt*.

1. The Word of God [but the "sword of the Spirit" is defined as the word of God.
2. A true sincere life without hypocrisy.

A hypocritical life will lead to defeat. You're an easy target for Satan if you're a hypocrite. Satan is “the accuser of the brethren.” Don't give him ammo! John defines spiritual hypocrisy pretty accurately. **1st John 1:1-8, “That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched--this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us. We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. We write this to make our joy complete. This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin. If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word has no place in our lives.”**

John here either gives you confidence that you are in the Lord, or a hypocrite, with you pants down around your ankles! It's hard to fight with your pants down around your ankles. That's why the admonition to put on the “**belt of truth.**” Our heart should be to do the truth, to live it. God is not into lip-service. Obedience is very important in warfare, especially spiritual warfare. When the church

is girded in truth it is strong. When it is girded in disobedience it is broken down and weak. Obedience is like a soldier's marching orders for a particular upcoming battle. You follow them. You don't neglect specific details in these orders which tell you to go this way or not to go that way—to avoid pitfalls in the terrain or enemy entrapments and minefields. Remember, obedience is the 8<sup>th</sup> principle of waging successful warfare. Being 8<sup>th</sup> doesn't make it less important. Missing any one of these points can cause failure. If you don't think so, watch a real war movie about soldiers who unknowingly walked into a minefield. A Roman soldier's belt also held the famous Roman short-sword. This weapon was a superior weapon in close combat situations. **Verse 17, "Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God."** Jesus took up and used the **"sword of the Spirit"** against Satan in his titanic battle with the devil in the desert. Matthew 4:1-11.

## *Our Armour & Weaponry*

### The Belt of Truth and the Breastplate of Righteousness

**Ephesians 6:14-19, "Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints. Pray also for me, that whenever I open my mouth, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should."** Of the two articles of our armor we'll look at today, the belt of truth was an article used to secure the soldiers armor and weapons. To have a loose belt would be to fight with your pants down, so to speak. There are two interpretations for the belt,



but since the word of God is the sword of the Spirit, the second one seems to apply.

1. The Word of God
2. The true sincere life without hypocrisy. A hypocritical life will lead to spiritual defeat. You're an easy target for Satan if you're a hypocrite. Satan is called the "accuser of the brethren." (Rev. 12) Don't give him ammo!

**1<sup>st</sup> John 1:1-8, "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched--this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us. We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. We write this to make our [Some manuscripts *your*] joy complete. This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in darkness, we lie and do not live in the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin. If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word has no place in our lives."** 1<sup>st</sup> John 1:1-8 either gives you confidence that you are in the Lord, or as hypocrite, with your pants down around your ankles! Our heart should be to do the truth. God is not into lip-service. He is into life-service. **1<sup>st</sup> Peter 2:11-12, "Dear friends, I urge you, as aliens and strangers in the world, to abstain from sinful desires, which war against your soul. Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us."** What Peter is saying is that obedience is important in warfare, especially spiritual warfare. When the Church is girded in disobedience it is broken down and weak. **Psalm 119:1-16, "Blessed are they whose ways are blameless, who walk according to the law of the Lord. Blessed are they who keep his statutes and seek him with all their heart. They do nothing wrong; they walk in his ways. You have laid down precepts that are to be fully obeyed. Oh, that my ways were steadfast in obeying your decrees! Then I would not be put to shame when I consider all your commands. I will**

**praise your righteous laws. I will obey your decrees; do not utterly forsake me. How can a young man keep his way pure? By living according to your word. I seek you with all my heart; do not let me stray from your commands. I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you. Praise be to you, O Lord; teach me your decrees. With my lips I recount all the laws that come from your mouth. I rejoice in following your statutes as one rejoices in great riches. I meditate on your precepts and consider your ways. I delight in your decrees; I will not neglect your word.”** For a Christian, Jesus defined the law of God right down to its spiritual intent in Matthew 5:17-48. Read this section and meditate on it. This is the heart and core of God’s law that we are to live by and fashion our lives around. Living by this law girds the ***belt of truth*** to us firmly. Meditating on it fastens it into our minds if the Spirit of God dwells in us. Stop right here and turn to Matthew 5:17-48 and read it through meditatively. Do so for a week and see what happens. You are fastening the mind of Christ in you. Follow what you read and hypocrisy will flee you. The belt is tight now. Now gird on the sword of the Spirit.

### *The Sword Of The Spirit*

A Roman’s belt also held the famous Roman short-sword. This sword was a superior weapon in close combat situations. Let’s see Jesus himself in action with his spiritual Roman short-sword which he used against Satan. We find Jesus led of the Spirit into the desert, where he fasted for forty days and nights (Matthew 4:1-2). When you fast like this, you’re hungry. For the first two or three days you are hungry, and then that hunger goes away. Then when you are about to die (some time after forty days if you’re real strong or have a lot of fat on your bones), the hunger comes back with a vengeance. Satan hit at this time, trying to defocus Jesus and refocus his attention on the physical. Jesus defense was this offensive statement. He took a particular part of Scripture and used it to destroy Satan’s plan and temptation. **Verse 3-4, “The tempter came to him and said, ‘If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread.’ [Satan was also tempting Jesus with pride, with the statement, “If you are the Son of God.”] “Jesus answered, ‘It is written: ‘Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.’ [Deuteronomy 8:3] Verses 5-7, “Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. ‘If you are the Son of God,’ he said, ‘throw yourself down, for it is written:**

***'He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your food against a stone.'* [Psalm 91:11-12]**

**Jesus answered him, 'It is also written: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.' [Deuteronomy 6:16] Verses 8-11, "Again the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. 'All this I will give you,' he said, 'If you will bow down and worship me.' Jesus said to him, 'Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.'" [Deuteronomy 6:13.] Satan is not only the "accuser of the brethren" but the great tempter. The sword of the Spirit can be used successfully against the temptations of both Satan, his demons, and the world. We will cover this weapon in a later study with some more Scriptural details.**

### *The Breastplate Of Righteousness*

The breastplate of righteousness--Jesus in you is the breastplate of righteousness. It's not our own righteousness, but his. Jesus is also the shield of faith which has the special ability to quench the flaming arrows of Satan. **Ephesians 6:10, "Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power."**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Chronicles 14:2-15, "Asa did what was good and right in the eyes of the Lord his God. He removed the foreign altars and the high places, smashed the sacred stones and cut down the Asherah poles. He commanded Judah to seek the Lord, the God of their fathers, and to obey his laws and commands. He removed the high places and incense altars in every town in Judah, and the kingdom was at peace under him. He built up the fortified cities of Judah, since the land was at peace. No one was at war with him during those years, for the Lord gave him rest. 'Let us build up these towns,' he said to Judah, 'and put walls around them, with towers, gates and bars. The land is still ours, because we have sought the Lord our God; we sought him and he has given us rest on every side.' So they built and prospered. Asa had an army of three hundred thousand men from Judah, equipped with large shields and with spears, and two hundred and eighty thousand from Benjamin, armed with small shields and with bows. All these were brave fighting men.**

Zerah the Cushite marched out against them with a vast army [Hebrew *with an army of a thousand thousands (i.e. a million man army!)*], and three hundred chariots, and came as far as Mareshah. Asa went out to meet him, and they took up battle positions in the Valley of Zephathah near Mareshah. Then Asa called to the Lord his God and said, ‘Lord, there is no one like you to help the powerless against the mighty. Help us, O Lord our God, for we rely on you, and in your name we have come against this vast army. O Lord, you are our God; do not let man prevail against you.’ The Lord struck down the Cushites before Asa and Judah. The Cushites fled, and Asa and his army pursued them as far as Gerar. Such a great number of Cushites fell that they could not recover; they were crushed before the Lord and his forces. The men of Judah carried off a large amount of plunder. They destroyed all the villages around Gerar, for the terror of the Lord had fallen upon them. They plundered all these villages, since there was much booty there. They also attacked the camps of the herdsmen and carried off droves of sheep and goats and camels. Then they returned to Jerusalem.” Then read 2<sup>nd</sup> Chronicles 16:1-14. Asa stopped relying on God but tried to rely on his own wit and schemes. God was testing the heart of Asa. He knew previously that he couldn’t stand against that million-man army without a divine miracle, but this problem wasn’t so bad, so he reasoned that he could figure a way out on his own without relying on the Lord. **Verses 8-9 of 2<sup>nd</sup> Chronicles holds the key. “Were not the Cushites and Libyans a mighty army with great numbers of chariots and horsemen? Yet when you relied on the Lord, he delivered them into your hand. For the eyes of the Lord range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him. You have done a foolish thing, and from now on you will be at war.”** As a church and as individuals, we have to **“be strong in the Lord.”**

### *Our Army Boots, Roman Military Sandals Of The Gospel*

**Ephesians 6:15, “and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace...”** Shoes, or army boots, or in Paul’s case, Roman military sandals, were defensive, giving a sure foothold to the soldier wearing them. If the enemy can knock you over or off balance, you’re an easy kill. The gospel of peace, if you

rest in the gospel of peace, the gospel of Christ, you can't be toppled over. [Romans 1-8 is the clearest description of the gospel of Christ ever written, and Paul gives a one-chapter version of the whole Gospel in 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 15. What is the Gospel? see <https://unityinchrist.com/misc/WhatIsTheGospel%20.htm>]  
**Psalm 94:18, "When I said, 'My foot is slipping,' your love, O Lord, supported me."**

**Psalm 34:17-22, "The righteous cry out, and the Lord hears them; he delivers them from all their troubles. The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit. A righteous man may have many troubles, but the Lord delivers him from them all; he protects all his bones, not one of them will be broken. Evil will slay the wicked; the foes of the righteous will be condemned. The Lord redeems his servants; no one will be condemned who takes refuge in him." Psalm 40:1-2, "I waited patiently for the Lord; he turned to me and heard my cry. He lifted me out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and mire; he set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand."** Cry out to God for his power. Remember our primary objective? Matthew 28:18-20 if anyone forgot. It is to evangelize. **Ephesians 6:15 (new King James), "and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace."** Isaiah 52:7 shows this gospel being offensively brought, and makes direct reference to the feet of those who bring it. **"How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, 'Your God reigns!'" Romans 10:14-15, "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? And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, 'How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!'"**

### *The Shield Of Faith*

**The Shield of Faith:** The Roman shields could be interconnected so they could march right into and through the hostile fire of the enemy, until they broke through the enemy lines. It was a defensive weapon used for offensive fighting. When flaming arrows were being shot, they locked shields and marched forward into the hostile fire,

not away from it. **Hebrews 11:30-39, “By faith the walls of Jericho fell, after the people had marched around them for seven days. By faith the prostitute Rahab, because she welcomed the spies, was not killed with those who were disobedient. And what more shall I say? I do not have the time to tell about Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel and the prophets, who through faith conquered kingdoms, administered justice, and gained what was promised; who shut the mouths of lions, quenched the fury of flames, and escaped the edge of the sword; whose weakness was turned to strength; and who became powerful in battle and routed foreign armies. Women who received back their dead, raised to life again. Others were tortured and refused to be released, so that they might gain a better resurrection. Some faced jeers and flogging, while still others were chained and put in prison. They were stoned; they were sawed in two; they were put to death by the sword. They went about in sheepskins and goatskins, destitute, persecuted and mistreated--the world was not worthy of them. They wandered in deserts and mountains, and in caves and holes in the ground. These were all commended for their faith, yet none of them received what had been promised. God had planned something better for us so that only together with us would they be made perfect.”** [cf. 1 Corinthians 15:49-54.] When the allies took Normandy the war was already won, so to speak [and giving much thanks to the Soviet Russians, see <https://unityinchrist.com/topical%20studies/America-ModernRomans1.htm>] All in Europe knew it was won. But there were battles that still needed to be won to bring ultimate victory. The Nazi's were no longer conquering the world, they were in the process of being conquered. The key battle of Midway spelled the doom of the Japanese Navy, which was their only offensive tool for conquering the Pacific empire they were building. This victory at Midway won the war for us. The next four years brought fierce battles, but they were all mop-up battles which would bring ultimate victory. The war was already in the bag after Midway--the Japanese offensive strike weapon, the Kido-Buti had been destroyed in one day. Jesus at the cross destroyed Satan's victory over mankind. The redemption of mankind was a sure thing after this. When Joshua conquered Jericho all the inhabitants of the land of Canaan knew they had lost the war--that they were goners. But the conquering of Canaan required years of battles to finish the job. Read the book of Joshua. We are in the spiritual counterpart of what Joshua and his soldiers did. Joshua was a symbol for Jesus Christ, and we are in the army of Jesus Christ, fighting spiritual battles that are just as real, for spiritual territory--the souls of men and women around the world.

## *The Helmet Of Salvation*

**The Helmet of Salvation: 1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 5:7-11, “For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, get drunk at night. But since we belong to the day, let us be self-controlled, putting on faith and love as a breastplate, and the hope of salvation as a helmet. For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. He died for us so that, whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with him. Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.”**

The hope of salvation--the hope of your future--the kingdom of heaven--starting with tomorrows world spent ruling in the Millennial Kingdom of God as immortal kings and priests under Jesus Christ our King of kings and Lord of lords (cf. Revelation 5:9-10; 1 Corinthians 15:49-54). The Old Testament is chuck full of prophecies about the kingdom Jesus will usher in when he returns to earth. Revelation 19-20 just gives a peek into the beginning of it. Read Isaiah 11, Jeremiah 31, Ezekiel 36 and Zechariah 14 just for starters. Then read Revelation 2-3; 5:9-10. Revelation 20:4-6. Our hope is in the future. Right now we're in a war. [see <https://unityinchrist.com/Prophets Prophecy.html>]

## **Ephesians 6:17,**

### *The Sword of the Spirit*

In John White's book "The Fight" he mentions some college students who came to Christ. He mentioned how that their initial conversion seemed real enough, but that as he observed them immediately after their coming to Christ, he said, "They seemed like an unlikely bunch." They just didn't seem with it spiritually. Their actions and language didn't seem to fit with those of other Christians. What he was getting at was that these young men seemed to be more *in the world* in their actions and language, than in Christ. But they *were* in the Word, studying God's Word on a daily basis. Then *lo and behold* when he had opportunity to observe this same group a year later, they were transformed. He knew by observing their actions and language that they *were indeed* Christians. What happened?

The simple answer: Their conversion had been genuine enough. When God the Father *draws us to Jesus* (John 6:44), he draws many of us *just as we are*. You're familiar with the song, "*Come as you are*." But these young men studied the Word of God, delved into it, on a daily basis. And with Jesus in them, his Word had a transforming effect. The key for them was studying the Word of God on a daily basis. When we're alone with God in His Word on a daily consistent pattern, change is going to happen. We grow in grace and knowledge. How many times have you studied the Word of God this week? If you haven't been effectively studying the Word of God on a daily basis, you're like a soldier without a sword--without his or her weapon. Without personal daily Bible study it's like going into battle in 'Nam or Desert Storm without your ammo clip. You have an empty gun. Someone who seeks God is going to be in the Word daily. **Ephesians 6:17, "Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God."** The sixth article mentioned in Ephesians 6 is the *sword of the Spirit*, which is defined right there as *the word of God*. The word used for "*word*" here in Greek is *Rema* which means a small portion of Scripture. This denotes that a Scripture will come into your mind at a specific time to help you fight a specific battle. Jesus Christ's prime example of this use of the sword of the Spirit is found in Matthew 4:1-11. Each time (as we saw earlier) that Satan tempted Jesus, Jesus countered Satan with a specific Scripture. But without being in the Word on a consistent daily basis, over a period of time, your mind and the Spirit of Jesus won't be able to call up the right or appropriate Scripture needed to fight a temptation or guide us in a questionable situation. It's that simple. There are three ways the sword can be used:

1. To bring about personal growth,
2. To guide us,
3. To guard us.

**Point 1. The Word of God causes growth** in us when we study it to commune with God. We as Christians are in a spiritual battle with Satan and his world. Satan won't stop attacking us because we don't have our sword in our hands. **2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy 2:15, "Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth."** Paul has this to say about people who don't effectively gird on their sword. **Hebrews 5:11-14, "We have much to say about this, but it is hard to explain because you are slow to learn. In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths**



**of God's word all over again. You need milk, not solid food! Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness. But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use [i.e. constant daily Bible study--communing with God in His Word] have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil.** You don't learn about God just by having a Bible in the house. You must *open* it, *study* it, and *learn* it. When you study, it helps if you kneel down at first and pray, **"God I want to encounter you."**

**Point 2. God's Word guides us.** David in one of his psalms says it's a lamp to our feet, lighting up the path we're walking on in life. David prayed, **"Let no iniquity rule over me."** God's Word provides moral guidelines. It is for any person in any society. The truths in God's Word are for any age. Scripture reveals God himself. Scripture will do more than tell you a certain thing or contemplated action is *right or wrong*, Scripture *liberates us*. **Hebrews 4:12, "For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart."** God's Word helps us look right into our own minds, hearts, soul, where our attitudes are formed. Then through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit of God, Jesus in us (John 14), the active Word of God, the Logos, *changes us, our thoughts, our attitudes and then downstream from that, our actions!!!* In my personal life, right this morning, I had just woken up, and started to daydream about this girl. Immediately a specific Scripture flashed into my mind. **Matthew 5:27-28, "You have heard that it was said, 'Do not commit adultery.' But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully [and that includes mentally, daydreaming] has already committed adultery with her in his heart."** Now this Scripture fit, because I am married. When this Scripture flashed into my mind, I threw the daydream out of my mind and got up to make some coffee. The sword had protected me once again, and character was built up and not destroyed. But had I not been familiar with the words of Jesus in Matthew 5, what would I have done? The Word of God in us stops sin in its' tracks, before it has time to fester and grow! [The Jews and some old Sabbath-keeping Church of God groups celebrate the Passover and Days of Unleavened Bread. These Days of Unleavened Bread are observed for one week, where they have to get rid of all leavened products and keep them out of their homes and not eat them for one week, starting at the Passover. (They have to eat Unleavened Bread instead, for

those seven days.) One of the symbolic meanings for leaven in Scripture is that it represents sin. The Jews know this, as well as the Sabbath-keeping Churches of God fellowships. Leaven is all around us. It's in the air as tiny microscopic spores. The evil broadcast of Satan is all around us also, putting sinful thoughts into the unsuspecting simple-minded souls. The Days of Unleavened Bread, a part of God's Old Testament law, was not done away for Christians, as many believe. They were transformed and made active and new. The spiritual intent of the Days, the reality of them, is lived in us whenever we cast out sinful thoughts and/or actions, and replace them with eating the Unleavened Bread of Jesus (John 6). The Holy Days the ancient Hebrews observed, the Holy Days observed by the Jews to this day, Paul said were a shadow for what the Lord does in us. If you are living in the Word, and it is active in you, you are casting out the leaven of Satan, the spores of his evil thoughts which fill the air. He is the prince of the power of the air, Paul said. We today can understand better than those before us how he charges the airwaves with his evil broadcasts. We have modern radio and television. And I don't just mean he uses these, although he does. He broadcasts his attitudes and even sinful thoughts into the minds of unsuspecting mankind. So in a very real sense, these Days of Unleavened Bread are observed by Christians, as they live in the Word of God, casting out the leaven of Satan and his societies of man.] And it is the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God, which and who is actively in us performing this work. Jesus wants us to be intimately acquainted with the process in this battle, and thus we're responsible for putting the knowledge of God's Word within our minds. Then he, the Logos, Jesus Christ through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, will *paint or illuminate* a specific Scripture when it is needed. He will not always do this if we have not effectively placed enough Scriptural emmo into our minds. In modern warfare, with the use of laser targeting devices, we have the term *to paint a target*. This means that "recon" soldiers use invisible lasers to paint or point out an enemy target. Then other forces "home in" on this target and destroy it. In a much similar way, Jesus can *paint* a spiritual target with a specific Scripture, and then when we see it illuminated, we can destroy it. He did just that this morning. Jesus, the living Logos painted up a target in my mind with Matthew 5:27-28. Then I destroyed the target! And that gets us into the third point. Even David pointed out the *light* bearing qualities of the Word of God. **Psalm 119: 105, "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path."**

**Point 3. God's Word will guard you. Psalm 119:9-11,33-37, 43-48, "How can a young man keep his way pure? By living according to your word. I seek you with all my heart; do not let me stray from your commands. I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you...Teach me, O Lord, to follow your decrees; then I will keep them to the end. Give me understanding, and I will keep your law and obey it with all my heart. Direct me in the path of your commands, for there I find delight. Turn my heart toward your statutes and not toward selfish gain. Turn my eyes away from worthless things; preserve my life according to your word...Do not snatch the word of truth from my mouth, for I have put my hope in your laws. I will always obey your law, for ever and ever. I will walk about in freedom, for I have sought out your precepts. I will speak of your statutes before kings and will not be put to shame, for I delight in your commands because I love them. I lift up my hands to your commands, which I love, and I meditate on your decrees."** Wow! Read the whole psalm. Then you will come to realize why God promised that he would place king David as resurrected immortal king over the twelve tribes of Israel upon the return of Jesus to set up the kingdom of God on earth! Even the twelve apostles, promised to rule each over one tribe apiece, will have David as their immediate king over them (read Ezekiel 37:21-22, 24). Is it any wonder? A whole book of the Bible is devoted to the precepts of God. Let's take a short look at it. **Proverbs 6:20-29, 32-35, "My son, keep your father's commands and do not forsake your mother's teaching. Bind them upon your heart forever; fasten them around your neck. When you walk, they will guide you; when you sleep, they will watch over you; when you awake, they will speak to you. For these commands are a lamp, this teaching is a light, and the corrections of discipline are the way to life, keeping you from the immoral woman, from the smooth tongue of the wayward wife. Do not lust in your heart after her beauty or let her captivate you with her eyes, for the prostitute reduces you to a loaf of bread, and the adulteress preys upon your very life. Can a man scoop fire into his lap without his clothes being burned? Can a man walk on hot coals without his feet being scorched? So is he who sleeps with another man's wife; no one who touches her will go unpunished...But a man who commits adultery lacks judgment; whoever does so destroys himself. Blows and disgrace are his lot, and his shame will never be wiped away; for jealousy arouses a husband's fury, and he will show no mercy when he takes revenge. He will not accept the bribe, however great it is."** The Word of God is another big part of revival. **Hebrews 11:3, "By faith**

**we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible.”** God is invisible, but he's there. He's a consuming fire. Satan our enemy and his host of demons are there also. They are also invisible. We are at war with a powerful invisible enemy. Our ammunition is the Word of God. The sword of the Spirit is the Word of God. Jesus is the active living Word of God, the Logos (read John 1:1-11). Jesus gave us an example of how the sword of the Spirit is to be used in Matthew 4:1-11. No matter what weapon analogy you chose to use, let's pick up our weapons, our ammo clips, and let's fight!