

WORD PICTURES OF THE CHURCH

THE CHURCH - The Army of God

Matthew 16:18

“...on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”

Here we see the “The devil and his demons are on the run, they are in a defensive mode, somebody’s attacking them. Who? The church. The devil and his army are hiding behind the gates, and the church, with its gospel-battering rams, is attacking the gate! The church is on the offensive, the church is the aggressor!” ~ Gordon Cook

As an army, Paul describes the manner in which we wage war...

2 Corinthians 10:3–5 (NIV)

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.

As a soldier, Paul describes the equipment that must be worn if we are to win the battles.

Ephesians 6:10–18 (ESV)¹⁰ Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. ¹¹ Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. 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. 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. ¹⁴ Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, ¹⁵ and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. ¹⁶ In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; ¹⁷ and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, ¹⁸ praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints,

What are we standing against? “*the schemes of the devil.*”

Who are we not fighting against? “*For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood,*”

Who is our battle is against? “*the rulers, authorities, cosmic powers, spiritual forces of evil*”

Where does this battle take place? “*in the heavenly places*” In the spiritual realm

What must we do? “take up the whole armor of God”

God gives us all the protection that we need.

We must see

- * that there is a “ring of truth” about our walk with the Lord,
- * that our lives are right (“righteous”) with God and with one another,
- * that we seek to make peace wherever we go,
- * that we lift up that shield of faith together to quench the flaming darts of the evil one,
- * that we protect our minds from fears and anxieties that easily assail,
- * and that we use God’s Word to good effect in the power of the Spirit.’

~ David Watson (discipleship)

REFLECTION:

As I go through my day, do I live in the awareness that I am in a battlefield?

Do I recognize God in every situation I find myself?

Do I see people as my battle, or do I see the spiritual dimension behind all issues?