

“Discipleship Is Warfare!”

Ephesians 6:11b

June 25, 2017

VIDEO: *“The Human Side”* by Ryan Stevenson

INTRO:

TEXT: *Put on the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil.*

BIG IDEA: **Biblical discipleship IS Spiritual warfare.**

PREVIEW:

- A. *Reality* of spiritual warfare
- B. *Clarity* on spiritual warfare
- C. *Victory* in spiritual warfare

I. REALITY

a. Spiritual REALM

QUOTE: *To understand the battle, we need to begin with acknowledging that there is a spiritual realm & spiritual war...*

It will do us no good to educate ourselves on the battle if we see no reason for the fight.

b. Spiritual RUMBLE (war)

Ephesians 6:12

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.

2 Kings 6:11-17 = Elisha see's God's army!

Job = spiritual conflict in the physical form victor in obedience!

c. Spiritual **READINESS**

Victory begins with learning the truth of God's Word and dispelling the lies of the enemy.

At this point, many will ask questions like Didn't Jesus take care of all this...? Do I really have to think this much about my faith & spiritual warfare?" The Christian life is not passive.

II. **CLARITY**

a. What's the fight for?

i. Ultimately: **The glory of God & salvation of souls**

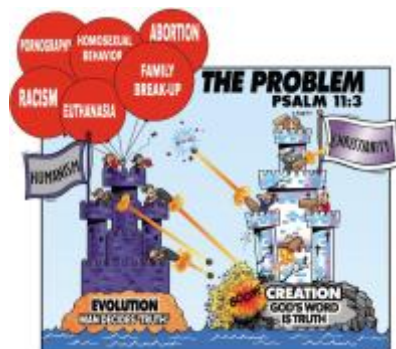
ii. Daily:

1. Truth (a battle over the Bible & obedience)

*** 2 Timothy 3:16-17

*** Romans 10:17

*** John 17:17



(See the "friendly fire")

- i. God
 - 1. Biblical
 - 2. Trinity
 - 3. Genesis 1&3 plus John 1&3
- ii. Gospel
 - 1. **mMm**
 - 2. Corruption, Christ, Commission
 - 3. **Ephesians 2:8-10**
 - a. NOT “cheap grace”
 - b. NOT “earned grace”
 - c. NOT by works; *for works*
- iii. Great C’s
 - 1. Great Commandments
 - 2. Great Commission
 - a. *John 20:21*
 - b. *Acts 1:8*
 - i. Kent Island
 - ii. Eastern Shore...
 - iii. Annapolis
 - iv. Baltimore
 - v. St. J, Vermont
 - vi. VT’s NEK... 52
 - vii. Churches in China
 - viii. BRIDGE Uganda
 - ix. Seychelles
 - x. BRIDGE in India
 - xi. BRIDGE in Kenya
 - c. *Matthew 28:18-20*
 - i. Making disciples
 - ii. Ambassadors
 - iii. Aroma
 - iv. Army
 - 3. Great Church
 - a. *Message*

- b. *Messiah*
- c. *Message*
- d. *Methodologies*
- e. *Membership*
- f. *Mess/Mission*
- g. *Manifesto*

4. **Great Conflict**

- a. *Put on the full armor...*
- b. *Look to the cross...*
- c. *Pick up yours...*

5. **Great Consequences**

*Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him. – **John 3:36***

2. **Love**

- a. *Vertical*
- b. *Internal*
- c. *External*
- d. *Missional*
- e. John 3:16 *“For God so loved...”*
- f. 1 John 3:16:

By this we know what love is, He laid down His life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers.

- g. John 14:15 *“IF you love Me...”*
- h. 1 John 3:18 *“...but in action & truth!”*

3. **Witness**

- a. Acts 1:8 (local, regional, global)
- b. John 13:35 *“...by your love...”*
- c. *Live a life worthy of your calling!*

b. What are the fight’s fronts? (The World, Flesh, Devil)

Ephesians 2:2-3:

...you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— 3 among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh...

Our 3 enemies (world/flesh/devil) overlap...

- i. **World** = system of opposition & rebellion! (1 John 2:15-17)

We are sent into the world to be a Christian witness/martyr for Christ. This is a miraculous calling and it takes the miracle of the Holy Spirit living in us to fulfill it. It also takes training to discern between the ways of God and the ways of the world... We have to be transformed to understand God's ways (Romans 12:3). His ways are not natural to us. We constantly need to crucify our natural inclinations and desires...

Remember... the world makes promises it can't keep!

*Jesus understood the temptations of the world.
(PARABLE of the SOILS)*

- ii. **Flesh**

"...our fallen internal resistance to obey God, which puts our own self-interests above God's interests." - Driscoll

The flesh never gets any better; we don't reform the flesh. It never wants to do the right and godly thing. No matter how long you have been a believer, no matter how much you have studied God's word, the flesh never gets any better. There will never be a time in which you can put your Christian life on auto pilot or cruise control. If you do, you have already started the downward spiral into sin. We must constantly be on our guard.

Hence: 1 Timothy 4:16...

For some of us, the hardest battles are fought within ourselves. We can understand the circumstances and situations that the enemy tries to use to destroy us. We can also accept the truth of how the world lures and tempts us. We can even understand, to some degree, the battle in the spiritual realm... But... getting a grasp on what is going on within our own hearts and minds can be the hardest, most exhausting, battle of all.

“Remember... what you believe is who you become!” – JDP

Put off the old nature and put on the new! - Colossians 3:8-13.

The Lord has given us His Spirit to empower us for overwhelming overcoming... but we must be willing to abide & obey!
(see Romans 8:37; John 15... 2 Peter 1:3 & Philippians 4:13)

iii. **Devil** *The quarterback...of the “unholy trinity”.*

1 Peter 5:8... Satan is like a roaring lion

John 8:44 “*a murderer*” & “*a liar*”

2 Corinthians 11:13-14 “*Satan disguises himself as an angel of light.*” false teachers = Satan’s servants

c. **How is the fight fought?** (Listen to *Screwtape TALK*)

“*One of our best weapons is contented worldliness...”*

“*A modified religion is as good for us as no religion at all – and it’s more amusing.*”

“*Indeed the safest road to hell is the gradual one – the gentle slope...*”

“...our best weapon... is the belief of ignorant humans, that there is no hope of getting rid of us except by giving-up or yielding...”

It is funny how mortals always picture us putting things into their minds: when our best work is done by keeping things out.

i. Know the enemy's **TARGETS:**

1. Purposes of the Church... SWORD

- a. Prayer
- b. Service/Slaves
- c. Worship
- d. Outreach/Great Commission
- e. Relationships (koinonia)
- f. Disciplines/Development

2. Beatitudes for the Believer

- a. Poor in spirit
- b. Mourn (for sin)
- c. Meek (power under control)
- d. Righteousness (hunger & thirsted for)
- e. Merciful
- f. Pure in Heart
- g. Peace-makers
- h. Persecution (3X)

3. Armor of God for God's Army

- a. Belt of Truth
- b. Helmet of Salvation
- c. Breastplate of Righteousness
- d. Cleats of Peace
- e. Shield of Faith
- f. Sword of the Spirit
- g. Prayer to stand & persevere.

4. Fruit of the Spirit in Faithful Saints

- a. Love
- b. Joy
- c. Peace
- d. Patience
- e. Kindness
- f. Goodness
- g. Faithfulness
- h. Gentleness
- i. Self-control

5. And Any & ALL fruit of faithful obedience...

- a. Sacrifice
- b. Self-less-ness
- c. Christ-like Courage (#1 “fear not”)
- d. Christian Character
- e. Walking by faith
- f. Working as unto the Lord...
- g. Etc.

ii. Know the enemy’s weaponry & arsenal

See Satan & sin’s top 10 weapons/ammunition:

- **Disobedience - SIN**
- **Darkness** – “people loved darkness > light” (**John 3:19**)
- **Doubt** – “Did God really say....?”
- **Distractions** – Hebrews 12:1-2
- **Deception**
 - False prophets: “Peace, peace... no peace!”
 - False teachers say: “what itching ears want”
 - False family: 1st John warns/defends against...
 - False confidence: Matthew 7:21ff
 - False character/leaders: Titus 1:10-16
- **Devils/wolves** – Jesus & Paul warn of wolves!

- Matthew 7:15
 - *“...you will know them by their fruit...”*
 - Acts 20:28-32
 - Beware “Broken Wolves” (TGC blog)
 - *Authentic*
 - *Beyond criticism*
 - *Appealing*
 - **Dilutions**
 - Half-truths...
 - Middle-roaders...
 - Rich Young Ruler...
 - **Distortions**
 - 2 Timothy 3:16-17
 - Titus 2:1 & 15
 - Jude 1:3-4
 - **Divisiveness**
 - Acts 2:41-47 (**divisive vs. devoted**)
 - Ephesians 4:1-3
 - 1 John 2:19
 - Titus 1:11
 - **“Darts”** (fiery darts) of the Enemy
- iii. Know how to defeat the enemy (see Victory below)

III. **VICTORY**

a. **Temporal vs. Eternal**

F.A.T. families are fit to fight! - JDP

Biblical truth-tellers, be they Old Testament prophets, New Testament Apostles, present-day pastors, or Kingdom-devoted disciples all over the world... true truth-tellers share God’s gospel, God’s guardrails, and God’s guidelines. They exemplify

the very heart of Christ & Christ-likeness. They lovingly carry the Scriptural truth of the “text,” in the “context” of real life, all the while applying it to the “subtext,” or underlying motivations behind people’s attitudes & actions. For such service, when completed righteously & right-heartedly, biblical truth-tellers are to expect temporal trouble and eternal blessing. - JDP

b. Battles

A. VICTORY over the WORLD?

John 2:15 – **Don’t love the world**

James 4:4 – Don’t befriend the world

Romans 12:2 – Don’t conform to this world

Galatians 6:14

But far be it from me to boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.

B. VICTORY over the FLESH?

Galatians 5:16 – “...walk by the Spirit and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.” Note it does NOT say desire goes away!

1 Corinthians 10:13 = empowered to resist temptation.

Romans 13:13-14 – “put on” Jesus & “...make no provision...”

Become like young David & inspire more spiritual giant slayers!

C. VICTORY over SATAN?

He's put to flight when we resist him by the Spirit, because **Jesus has triumphed over him** (James 4:7; Col. 2:15).

Jesus quoted Scripture 3X. "...the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." (Ephesians 6:17)

God uses His word to transform us, correct us, protect us and keep us on the right track. - JDP (2 Timothy 3:16-17)

God gives us everything we need to be victorious

COMMUNION (*Holding Nothing Back* by Ryan Stevenson)

c. War

- i. It is finished!
- ii. I have overcome the world!
 - 1. Live IN Christ... He will build His Church!
 - 2. Pray & Obey God's Word & Will
 - 3. Walk & worship in faithful obedience

CLOSE:

The Barbarian Way: "Crash of Rhinos vs. Bloat of Hippos"

Those soldiers who advance on their knees never retreat!

&

His is no fool who gives away what he cannot keep... to gain what he cannot lose. - Jim Elliot

Let's PRAY

(closing worship: [BRIDGE Uganda](#); [The Church](#); [Our God Reigns](#))