Battle Worn

Deut. 3:22 / Ephesians 6:10-18

6/12/22

It seems these days, more than any time before, most days are difficult & even hard to get through. We feel exhausted. Worn. Tired of fighting. About ready to give up. Feeling like we can’t go on. Struggling through defeat. And that’s even if you keep the enemy of our souls out of the pictures...If you are a born again Christian and have Christ truly living in your heart, then you know the enemy seems to be hot on our trail. This can become tiresome and overwhelming, as all we feel we are doing is fighting...Either against the enemy, or even our own selfishness! Some of us this morning may be weary, tired, and even exhausted...You are battle worn.

For those who are battle-weary & worn, the Lord desires to encourage you this morning. Psalms 34:17 tells us “The Lord hears his people when they call to him for help. He rescues them from all their troubles.” This is His Truth over us for this day…

* We’re not alone. Not ever. God won’t let go, though we may struggle with the lies that He’s left us fending for ourselves in hard times. His Word is filled with reminders that He fights for us still today.
	+ *Deut. 3:22 - You shall not fear them, for it is the LORD your God who fights for you.*
	+ *Duet 31:8 - Do not be afraid or discouraged, for the Lord will personally go ahead of you. He will be with you; he will neither fail you nor abandon you.”*
	+ Ps. 46:1 *“God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble.”*
* He never says this life will be easy. He never promises that we won’t get weary, or that we won’t face an enemy or a giant. But He does say we can come to Him, and He will give us rest.
	+ *Matt. 11:28 Then Jesus said, “Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest.*
* He promises to fill us with the power of His Spirit
	+ *Act 1:8 – But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you...*
* His joy will be our strength.
	+ *Nehemiah 8:10, Ezra says “The joy of the Lord is our strength”*
* He reminds us that the battle is not ours but the His.
	+ 2 Chronicles 20:15 – “... This is what the LORD says: Do not be afraid! Don’t be discouraged by this mighty army, for the battle is not yours, but God’s”
* And He make sure we know that who we’re fighting
	+ Eph. 6:12 - *“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.”*

In Exodus 17, the Israelites were facing a fierce enemy. The Amakelites were approaching. These people killed for sport and were on their way to attack and destroy God’s people. Moses told them that as Joshua led the people in battle, he would go up to the top of the hill and hold out the staff of the Lord over them. The Bible tells us that for as long as his hands were held up, the Israelites would be winning, but when his arms got weary, and he would begin to drop them, the enemy would begin to overtake them. So, Aaron and Hur went to Moses and held up his hands. One on one side, and one on the other. And a miracle happened that day. Even though all odds were stacked against them, the people defeated this strong enemy. This story reminds us that some days, even the best of leaders, even the strongest…can get weary.

Even those who know Truth, or walk closely with God, or who believe in Him and in His power, even they can get tired. None of us are immune. Life is hard and is it’s not going to get any easier. Often there’s not even just one “big” thing, but just lots of little battles that can drain us dry. Parenting, marriage, job, relationships, fears, worries about the future, experiencing loss, discouragement, illness, money problems – it all can leave us beaten down and worn.

Whether you are in a battle this morning, just came out of a battle, or in between battles, what we need to be reminded of today is that Jesus has already defeated every enemy when He died on the cross and conquered the grave three days later. It is from confidence in His victory that we can know we are victorious in our fighting!

I want to ask a question this morning, that I have asked even as recent ago as of Sept. of last year when we talked about this? Are you wearing your spiritual armor daily? It’s through the victory of the cross we have the opportunity to put on the full armor of God and then be able stand firm in our daily battles.

\*Read Ephesians 6:10–18

This morning it’s no secret that we are in a daily, sometime moment by moment war and that it can be and is exhausting, but God has said today in our scriptures, “I Got This” ... But with that He knows we are in a daily battle for our souls and are very lives, so He’s given us His equipment to help. Now if it’s not your daily routine to put this armor on, then you have no chance to be victorious. You will live defeated. But with this we can know that as the Lord is fighting for us, we are protected and prepared for anything the enemy throws at us. Briefly, let’s look at your armor today, the armor of God, piece by piece, and I want to provide you some practical ways to use each of them.

#1 Belt of Truth

A soldier is only ready for battle when he is girded with his belt. A Roman soldier’s belt was made of metal and thick heavy leather and was the carrying place for his sword. It also had a protective piece that hung down in the front. His belt held all other pieces of his armor together. To be fitted with his belt, meant he was ready to face action.

Truth is the belt that holds the believers’ armor together as well. Ultimate Truth can be found in God’s Word and in the person of Jesus Christ. We must know this Truth in order to protect ourselves against our flesh, the world, and the father of lies. Truth grounds us and reminds us of our identity in Christ.

**How to Use the Belt of Truth**

* Start your day in the Word

How you start your day is vital to winning the daily battles that you will inevitably face. It is important that you are able to immerse yourself in scripture without distraction.

* End your day in the Word

In a quiet place before you lay down, dedicate time to studying the word.

* Memorize Scripture based on the battles you are struggling with.

The Bible is the guidebook for life, which was written by our God. No matter what you are struggling with, there is scripture to point you in the right direction. Do a Google search for “Bible verses on \_\_\_\_” to find a verse that speaks directly to your heart. Then memorize it and speak it aloud whenever Satan attacks you.

#2 Breastplate of Righteousness

The Roman soldier was always equipped with a breastplate. This piece of armor protected his vital organs in the heat of the battle – when he wasn’t quick enough to take up his shield. The breastplate was for the quick and unexpected advances of the enemy.

As believers, we have no righteousness apart from that which has been given us by Christ. Our breastplate is His righteousness. His righteousness will never fail. Though we have no righteousness of our own, we must still, by His power, chose to do right. Living a right life, rooted in God’s Word is powerful in protecting our heart, killing our flesh, and defeating the enemy.

**How to Use the Breastplate of Righteousness**

* Identify righteous activities in your life that strengthen you.

Do something that builds on the character of Christ. Buy a cup of coffee for a stranger. Say hello to a person you’re not a big fan of.

* Identify unrighteous activities in your life that weaken you.

Be careful what you watch/listen to. By intentionally exposing yourself to immoral behavior, you’re allowing Satan to weaken the walls that Christ had built around you.

#3 Sandals with the Gospel of Peace

Roman soldier’s feet were fitted with sandals, and they were made to help protect soldier’s feet during their long marches into battle. They had extremely thick soles and wrapped perfectly around their ankles in a way that protected against blistering. They also had spikes on the bottom to help them stand firm as they traveled. This helped them have a firm foundation.

Believers should also have a firm foundation in the Gospel. As believers, we have peace in knowing we are secure in what Jesus has done for us.

**How to Use the Gospel of Peace**

* Preach the Gospel to yourself daily.

Remind yourself of the hope you have in Jesus Christ. Because of His sacrifice and your belief in Him, you shall not perish but have eternal life. Do not wait until the hardship to remind yourself of this. Build your foundation on a daily reminder of this hope, and you will be able to get through anything.

* Share your testimonies with others.

The easiest and most effective way to share the Gospel with others is to tell your story of how Jesus changed your life.

* Be a living example.

The way you walk through life will be seen by many. When you carry yourself with the fruit of the spirt, people will stop and notice.

#4 Shield of Faith

The Roman soldier’s shield was a complex piece of armor. The shield was a soldier’s primary defensive weapon. It was made of impenetrable wood, leather, canvas, and metal and could be doused in water to extinguish the fiery arrows of the enemy.

Faith is the shield of the believer. Trusting in God’s power and protection is imperative in remaining steadfast. When the battle rages, we must remember that God works all things for good to those who believe...or have faith and remember He is always true to His promises.

**How to Use the Shield of Faith**

* Take time to remember the promises of God.

When fiery darts try to impact your heart, extinguish them with reminders of God’s goodness over your circumstance. Here are some of His promises…

* + He will never forsake you (Deuteronomy 31:6).
	+ He will meet all your needs (Phil 4:19).
	+ Call on Him and He will answer (Psalm 50:10).
	+ He will make your path straight (Proverbs 3:5-6)
* A soldier’s shield was strongest when linked with another.

Band together with other believers in the fight of faith. The best way to band together is through the closeness of a small group. This is how the church began in the first century, and this is where the strongest bonds are made today.

* Recount God’s past victories in your life.

In the movie The War Room, Miss Clara had a framed plaque on her wall with all of her answered prayers. Make a list of all the ways God has come through for you in the past. Whenever your faith waivers, recite this list and remember in detail how God made a way.

#5 Helmet of Salvation

The Soldier’s head is one of his most vulnerable areas. Without his helmet, one blow to the head would prove fatal. His helmet covered his entire head, facial area, and between the eyes. His armor would prove useless if he wasn’t equipped with his helmet.

The believer’s helmet of salvation is the most crucial piece of armor for the Christian.

**How to Use the Helmet of Salvation**

* Stand on the conviction of your salvation.

When you know without a doubt that you are going to heaven because of what Christ did on the cross, not even death can defeat you. We will all face extremely dark times. In these times, our salvation will light the way and carry us home.

* Placing your thoughts on things above

Be intentional about feeding your mind with spiritual food throughout the day. The Word, podcast, Christian music...Ensure your mind is fit when the enemy tries to come and lie to you about who you are in Christ, or anything else he tries.

#6 Sword of the Spirit

All other pieces of the soldier’s arsenal are defensive weapons, but not his sword. The sword was a deadly weapon. In the hands of a skilled warrior, he could pierce through even the strongest armor.

Our sword is the Word of God, both the written and the incarnate Word. Every other piece of armor protects us against attacks. With God’s Word, we are truly able to fight and defeat all enemies. Christ used Scripture to defeat Satan when He was tempted in the desert. We must do the same.

**How to Use the Sword of the Spirit**

* Arm yourself.

Be intentional about reading scripture. As I mentioned earlier, find a time that you can dedicate reading and studying the word of God where you are free of distractions.

* When attacked, fight back with the Word of God.

When Satan attacked Christ in the desert he told him, “No…. for it is written…” Use Christ’s example when Satan tries to come after you.

* When beaten down, immerse yourself in the Bible.

Even those with great faith are going to have days when they feel like they are barely hanging on. On these days, ten minutes of time in the Word is just not enough. Take a reasonable amount of time and immerse yourself in His Word

Closing:

This morning, for the heart that is weary, God is your strength. For the soul that is aching, God is your comfort. For the spirit that is failing, God is your hope

There’s one last piece needed to help us when we find ourselves battle worn...Prayer. In prayer, we show our reliance upon God to act and move. Our entire armor is rooted in His strength, but without His presence, we are powerless in the fight. We must learn that the fight is on our knees. The One who has won the war is with us in the battle and we need to know that even though we are tired, through faith, commitment, and prayer we will see a victory when we fight in His power. Pray with out ceasing! Pray when your eyes open every morning. Pray impulsively throughout the day. Have a conversation with God on your knees before you go to sleep.

Although the war has been won, the daily battles must be fought. May we be encouraged today that with every fight we face, that the Lord is gone before us, is fighting for us, and has provided us everything we need with His armor & the weapons of His Word and Prayer to help us defeat the enemy.

I praise God because the Lord is encouraging us today to press on, but He also reminds us to encourage one another. He has given us one another to help in times when we just feel like we “can’t anymore…” 1 Thess. tells us to “*encourage each other and build each other up, just as you are already doing*.”

So, knowing that we’re all in this life thing together, let’s begin to help each other. Give an encouraging word, smile at someone, write a note, send a text, buy someone a coffee, pray for one another, and let them know that you’re praying. I t can be anything, just remind each other that you’re holding up their battle-weary arms. And that you’re with them.

Psalm 121:1-2 says *“1 I look up to the mountains—does my help come from there? 2 My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth!*

Weary Warrior, the Maker of heaven and earth holds you securely in His hand and close to His heart. Turn your gaze upwards, you are not alone. God truly is with you. Even when the mountains crumble and the earth shake violently below you, you feel like the world is crushing you and every battle is intensifying to the point of almost giving up, know this, He will preserve and protect you. Entrust the cares of this world to God’s all-wise, all-loving care and don’t forget who’s fighting for you...In this closing moment, I’d like to “RALLY THE TROOPS” and remind you, in case the enemy has caused you to forget, or you’ve become battle worn, and not sure how much more you can take...

* He is the Lord, the Most High God who reigns over all.
* He’s Abba Father when we need fathering.
* He is All-sufficient in our hardest situations
* The Author of faith in our unbelief and doubt.
* He’s Broken and spilled out for us when we feel used.
* He’s our Sure foundation when we’re shaking and insecure
* He’s our Fullness when we’re empty.
* He’s the God of love when we feel unloved.
* He is God with us when we feel alone or abandoned
* He’s our Guide and the Way when we’re confused and need direction.
* He is Healer for our woundedness, rejection, and physical sickness.
* He’s our Hope when we’re discouraged and want to quit
* He’s our Joy when we’re depressed.
* He’s our Keeper and Protector when we’re vulnerable
* The Lifter of our head when we’re feeling oppressed.
* He’s never failing when we’re faithless.
* He’s the Prince of Peace when we’re stressed, worried, and confused
* Our Provider for every need.
* He’s the Quieter of the storm for our struggles without and within
* Our Rest when we’re tired and can’t go on.
* He’s the restorer of our soul when we’re bruised and beaten down,
* Our Reviver and Living Water when we are depleted, barren and thirsty.
* He is our Song and our Praise when we’re joyless and heavy of heart
* He is Strong when we’re weak.
* He is Truth in spite of what the world says
* Our Vindicator when we’ve been wronged.
* Our Wisdom for our hardest choices
* And He’s the Waymaker when it seems impossible!

Be encouraged today that God is with us. He hasn’t turned a blind eye to your battles and struggles. But… be encouraged because “When you go through deep waters, “He” will be with you. When you go through rivers of difficulty, you will not drown. When you walk through the fire of oppression, you will not be burned up; the flames will not consume you.”

“He (Jesus) disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in Him. (Col. 2:15)

And because of that we can walk in today knowing that “in all these things we are MORE THAN conquerors through him who loved us. (Romans 8:37)

Press on Warrior…God already has today & tomorrow laid out in Victory for you!!!