Prepare For War!

Mark 9:14-29

9/25/22

I want you to listen to this sound.

(Audio sound of a Battle Ships call to Battle Stations)

That is the sound of a “call to battle stations” aboard a Naval Battleship. Its sound is haunting, and it strikes fear and emotion in the heart of anyone who hears it. Its purpose is to alert the crew that the time for battle has arrived, and they are to immediately man their prepared battle station for the ensuing war.

Church, I have spoken to this before, but there needs to be a battle cry going forth from all the churches in the world today. And it must originate in the hearts of our Pastors, and it must be sounded aloud from the pulpits across this land! We must prepare the battle stations for the ensuing war! However, as I have also spoken, I am afraid we have fallen and are falling asleep on our watch. And instead of Sounding the battle cry, we are preaching and teaching a social gospel, a feel-good gospel, and an itchy ear gospel. Listen my friends, time is short, and our days are numbered. Sin is ever increasing, what was unheard of 50 years ago is commonplace and the norm in today’s society.

* Lawlessness and idolatry abound as if it was to be this way since creation.
* Character and ethics are a thing of the past and have been replaced with materialism and Post Modernism, where today’s generation believes that there are no absolute truths, and you are to get what belongs to you at any cost and by any means.

No, I am sorry to say that as “The Church” we have not sounded the call to battle stations but we have retreated to a safe place. My friends God can’t stand safe places, He abhors safe places, listen to the words of John:

* Revelation 3:13-16

*13 “Anyone with ears to hear must listen to the Spirit and understand what he is saying to the churches. 14 “Write this letter to the angel of the church in Laodicea. This is the message from the one who is the Amen—the faithful and true witness, the beginning[a] of God’s new creation: 15 “I know all the things you do, that you are neither hot nor cold. I wish that you were one or the other! 16 But since you are like lukewarm water, neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth!*

We have become the Laodicean church, and we have been this way for far too long! We need to sound the alarm, man the battle stations, and **PREPARE FOR WAR!** For too long we have been in retreat. We need to start living out what is says in Proverbs 28:1 “*The wicked run away when no one is chasing them, but the godly are as bold as lions.*

It’s time that the Church found its voice in this wayward and completely evil society. It’s time we truly rise up and take a stand like we have never done before.

Does what I say bother you? Are you getting offended? If so, then you need to ask yourself one question “what does the battle cry of the church sound like?” If you couldn’t answer, then you are just like me. We recognize right away when we hear the Naval Call to Battle Stations but yet the Church’s Battle cry goes unheard, unrecognizable, undefined, and undermanned. If this concerns you as much it does me, then great, we are in the same mindset. Let’s figure out what to do.

From our scripture text, we see Jesus, preparing for war. When an army prepares for war the first objective of the war is to identify your enemy. First and foremost, you have to know whom you are fighting against, because things are not always as they seem. You have to be able to identify the enemy and destroy him.

* Listen to me for a second here, the enemy is not socialism, the enemy is not materialism, the enemy is not the left or right of politics, the enemy is not “my body, my choice, the enemy is not the homosexual, or who I choose to identify as. Truth is these all may be tactics the enemy deploys but the real enemy of our war as a Child of God is Satan. The old devil himself, Lucifer.
* Now once you have figured out who your real enemy is then you can determine what are the enemies’ tactics, what type of battle tactics is he using.
	+ For example, you wouldn’t send Naval Destroyers to the dessert, and you don’t use tanks in the ocean. Before we sound the call to battle stations, we must understand what type of battle we are fighting. If we don’t understand what type of war, we are in then we will make the mistakes of sending ships to the dessert and tanks to the ocean and we will find ourselves in the situation we are in currently, in a position of retreat, rather than a position of advance! We will find ourselves acting like goats instead of lions. This is what Jesus is trying to teach His disciples in Mark chapter 9. He is trying to teach them the principle found in Ephesians 6:12 “*For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.*

Church, we know this, yet chose not to acknowledge that we are in a spiritual war! This war is not fought with Ships and tanks and artillery and mortars, and it’s not fought in the desserts and the oceans and the mountain tops or the jungles. But it’s a war that takes place in a dimension that we cannot see “The Spiritual” and it’s fought with weapons that are not of this world. We are called to wage war in the Heavenlies, tearing down principalities, against everything that exalts itself against the power and knowledge of God! A spiritual war fought with spiritual weapons against a spiritual enemy. You can’t fight this war with strength or military prowess; no man-made weapons are effective on this adversary. Satan is wiser and stronger than any army the world has ever seen. His battle tactics are unlike anything the world has known. **Notice I said the world, not the Church!** Because for those of us who call Jesus God, read the Bible and believe it to be the authoritative word of God inspired and God breathed, we understand the tactics deployed by the enemy of our souls,

Let’s take a look at a few of his favorite weapons:

1. To control you without you knowing it

* He puts vices and temptations in our path that just seem to appear by chance, but there not by chance they are strategically deployed from Satan himself.

2. Make crooked the straight

* He is the father of all lies; he wants to turn the truth into a lie, and he will always choose the crooked path and try to distort the truth and the Word of God. He is the accuser of the brethren, and he will use this tactic as often as he can

3. To snare you or trap you and bind you making you ineffective for kingdom work

* He wants to steal your testimony, he wants to throw it back in your face, His primary goal is to render you, the Christian ineffective in the Kingdom of God, in a state of retreat rather than advance.

4. To make you behave like him

* He wants to make as many disciples as possible to carry out his work, He is and always has been a mocker of Christ.

5. To lead you into greater levels of darkness (to keep you blind)

* He uses the trick of making the sin you partake in seem to be insignificant and small at the time, but his ultimate goal is to entice you with a small sin to entrap you into a life of great darkness.

So now we know who the enemy is and what type of war we are fighting, and we understand the tactics Satan deploys. So let me ask you another question. Do you think the disciples knew who the enemy was and what type of battle they were in? Was this what Jesus was trying to teach them? I don’t think so. I think they are much like us in a way. We understand who the enemy is, and we understand what type of battle we are fighting, but I think where we fall short is that same place the disciples fell short and that is understanding what the weapons of our warfare consist of.

This morning I want to share with you what I consider to be the most powerful weapons of spiritual warfare in the arsenal of the Christian.

**1. Admit there is a fight**

The first thing the Christian must do in preparing for war is to admit there is a war. Stop letting the enemy lull you to sleep thinking that this war is just for the pastors and the preachers and the teachers. We must get out of denial and come to realize that we ALL are in a war whether we want it or not. Satan is waging war on your soul, your mind, your family, and your very way of life! He not going to ask you beforehand and he has declared war against you as a child of God! So, why don’t we today declare war on Him?

How do we declare war on Satan? How do we fight against his tactics? What weapon should I use first? Make a personal declaration of war in your life. How do we do this? It’s not as you might think. We don’t run around shouting at the top of our lungs I am at war with the enemy, I am at war with Satan, no we find this weapon in James 4:7

* James 4:7

*So, humble yourselves before God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.*

We find the weapon to use in making a declaration of war is to SUBMIT TO GOD. That’s where it all starts; complete and utter submission to God is the first weapon of the Christian. To surrender your will and your way to His will and His way. And when we can get out of denial and admit that there is a fight and we can submit to God, that gives us a Heavenly Armor that empowers us to resist the Devil and we will reap the benefit of watching him flee from our lives!

**2. Put on The Armor**

Now that we know we are in a war we must prepare for war, and we do that by putting on the armor of God. We have spoken in detail many times of this armor and its importance. This is a spiritual armor. Remember if this is a spiritual war then we must have our spiritual armor.

Eph.6: 13-18

***13****Therefore, put on every piece of God’s armor so you will be able to resist the enemy in the time of evil. Then after the battle you will still be standing firm.****14****Stand your ground, putting on the belt of truth and the body armor of God’s righteousness.****15****For shoes, put on the peace that comes from the Good News so that you will be fully prepared.****16****In addition to all of these, hold up the shield of faith to stop the fiery arrows of the devil.****17****Put on salvation as your helmet, and take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.* ***18****Pray in the Spirit at all times and on every occasion. Stay alert and be persistent in your prayers for all believers everywhere.*

The spiritual armor of God is fitted with weaponry of our Lord Jesus Christ, and it is what we are to deploy in fighting against the Tactics of the Enemy.

Here are the weapons:

A) Truth

B) Righteousness

C) The Gospel of Peace

D) Faith

E) Salvation

F) Praying In The Spirit

Learn these weapons well, know them inside and out, like a soldier who knows his rifle, he knows every part. He knows how to put it together in the worst of situations and circumstances because he knows his life may depend on it!

So it is with the Christian, we must know our weapons inside and out We must know

* How to speak the truth
* We must live righteously
* We must shed the Gospel of Peace
* We must live a life of Faith
* We must cling to our salvation and work it out daily in our life
* And we must, we must pray in the Spirit at all times. Because our lives and the lives of our loved ones depend on it!

**3. Prayer & Fasting**

From our scripture text. This use of this weapon is what Jesus was trying to teach his disciples. This is the lesson that Jesus is trying to get across to His disciples. Prayer and fasting is the most powerful weapon of the Christian, and it’s the most underutilized and least taught. Jesus was always involved in the two most powerful weapons in his arsenal. Prayer and fasting unleash the full power of heaven in our lives and the enemy feels the full brunt of the Hand of God when we allow use this weapon!

\*Look at v28-29 again.

There are some areas and attacks in your life that are only going to be defeated through prayer and fasting, fasting and prayer, seeking God and denying ourselves. Killing our flesh and feeding our spiritual man.

Notice the type of spirit that this man had, and please pay attention here this is very important.

* v17 *Then one of the crowd answered and said, “Teacher, I brought You my son, who has a mute spirit.*

In my opinion the greats tactic of the devil is to keep the Church deaf and mute! Keep us in a state where we aren’t willing or capable to sound the call to battle stations. And we have to ask ourselves why? Why, because we are falling asleep on our watch, and we are not praying and fasting. Notice it took prayer and fasting to rebuke the deaf and mute spirit of the young boy.

Oh, my friends if the Church would begin to pray and if the church would begin to fast then truly believe the deaf and mute spirit that’s hindered this generations church would be lifted off the church and we would be able rise and take a stand like hasn’t been done since the early church of Acts!

We would find our voice in this wayward generation and the lost would come ruining to the churches and to the cross. I believe the spirit of gender identity, right to abortion, and all these other immoral and disgusting things the devil is bringing forth through this Godless society would begin to shutter! My God hasn’t lost a battle yet and let me tell you He’s not going to start today!!!! He’s just waiting for His Church to WAKE UP AND PREPARE FOR WAR!

And please do me a favor...Don’t let the enemy blind you to the fact that things will get better if we just sit around on our blessed assurance. No... Starting this morning, we must sound the alarm, and prepare for war and MUST PRAY AND FAST. We can’t wait until tomorrow because our nation, our kids, our families, people’s lives, peoples very souls is at stake.

Prepare for War……..