

Peace Comes Only At the End of the War...Or Does It?

If you are truly in Christ – a born-again biblical Christian – you are at war. Sadly, the reality of this biblical tenet has gotten lost in too many churches today, perhaps for fear of offending someone. If you are my brother or sister in Christ, we are not teammates. We are fellow warriors in the same army of God. But it is a most peculiar and unusual kind of war. It is *spiritual warfare* the Apostle Paul described.

“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.” (Ephesians 6: 12 ESV)

How do we fight such an invisible war? Paul gave us the answer, strange as it may seem to some. We fight spiritual war with spiritual weapons provided by God the Holy Spirit.

“For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds.” (2 Corinthians 10: 4 ESV)

*“Therefore (put on) the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm...having fastened on the **belt of truth**, and having put on the **breastplate of righteousness**...having put on the readiness given by **the gospel of peace**. In all circumstances take up **the shield of faith**, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; and take the **helmet of salvation**, and the sword of the Spirit, which is **the word of God**, **praying** at all times in the Spirit* (Ephesians 6: 11-17 ESV)

Our war is first against sin in our own lives – wars within ourselves. God has a right to complete dominion in and over us. The spiritual forces of evil (Satan) war against that while they can.

We win that war by following the advice in Monday's devotion...complete surrender—not to the enemy, but to the Lord who empowers and equips us for such battles. Peace comes in that surrender.

For those who do not know Jesus as Savior, true peace will only when you come by faith and surrender to Him, repenting of your sins asking for His salvation. God made a way of peace for you only through Jesus Who utterly defeated sin by His blood, death, and resurrection. Apart from Him, you will only ever know war, and that in your spirit.

"Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." (Romans 5: 1
ESV)

For those of us in Christ who find ourselves in the heat of battles and wonder where is this *peace* Jesus promised, remember Jesus promised a different kind of peace that is out of this world.

"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid." (John 14: 27 ESV)

His is the peace that "passes all understanding" (even in the fires) available to Christians who don the full armor of God and do not forget to apply the final command once you are so clad—"***praying at all times in the Spirit***".

Your fellow warrior in Christ,

Walter