

The Good Fight Victorious

Twenty-first century military threats keep countless souls awake at night pondering the “what if’s” of activated nuclear missiles/warheads; high-powered land mines; weather-war strategies; cyber space sabotage; USSR psycho-warfare; Global Magnetic Warfare to electronically incite large populations to unstable behavior, and more. Sadly, most dismiss the single, most powerful weapon known to mankind—namely, the sword, but not just *any* sword.

Along with a spear, the sword is the most ancient weapon fashioned by man. Dozens of massive battles mentioned in the Bible were fought with swords and spears. In New Testament times, Roman soldiers, in part, assailed their enemies with javelins and darts—this, from a distance—but God does not give that option “to him who overcomes.”[\[i\]](#) Our spiritual enemy[\[ii\]](#) is too close for anything but hand-to-hand fighting; therefore, a spear will not do, nor bow and arrow. Christian warriors need only one weapon—namely, *the sword* of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.[\[iii\]](#)

Weapon of Intimidation

Historically, skillfully brandished swords greatly intimidated enemies because, after all, a sword could slice through body armor, shields of leather or thin metal. Swung with both hands, the large broadsword would hack at enemies; and a shorter, two-edged sword would cut and thrust. Even as God used naked intimidation of threat to deliver the Israelites from their foes, He likewise empowers His spoken Word to fell spiritual rulers of darkness and their dupes. Miraculously, Gideon and his 300 men routed the entire Midianite camp when, on signal, they blew trumpets, broke the pitchers covering their torches, and shouted, “The sword of the Lord and of Gideon!” Before the Israelites even had a chance to reach for swords, God plunged the enemy camp into chaos and wild defeat

by setting every man's sword against his companion. [\[iv\]](#)

♣ Used Offensively

In New Testament times, the Roman "short sword" was worn by the hundreds of thousands of soldiers in the Roman legions. It was thick, powerful, and efficient for close up combat. A Roman infantryman would go into battle armed with a dagger (*pugio*), several one-time use spears (*pila*), and lead-weighted darts (*plumbatae*). His primary weapon, however, was his *gladius*. Adapted from a Spanish design, the prowess of the *gladius*, while engaged in close-range combat, made it a fearsome tool. When sharpened, its dual edges wreaked havoc on unarmored foes, and its tapered point pierced through even the heaviest of armor metal. For good reason, the Roman *gladius* has become known as "the sword that conquered the world." Shields and helmets are excellent for defense, but useless for tearing down strongholds. Significantly, the one offensive weapon in the full armor of God is the *gladius*.

♣ Used Defensively

A boxer restricted to blocking punches will not stand for long! Recall that, when sorely tempted, Jesus responded *defensively* with a specific, appropriate Scripture; however, *offensive* thrusts with the Word ultimately prevailed against the lust of the flesh (appetite) and of the eyes (the world's glory and pleasures), as well as the pride of life (putting God to the test). [\[v\]](#)

A Cutting Weapon

By no means carnal, spiritual weaponry is "mighty through God." [\[vi\]](#) In its primary function, the sword is a cutting weapon. The written Word (*logos*) is the basis for specific sword thrusts of the spoken word (*rhema*). The sword of the spirit, which is the Word of God, cleaves a man's spirit from head to foot. Without fail, it cuts straight to the core of a matter, uncovers Truth, and uses it to surgically remove

offending thoughts and actions. Indeed, the Word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.”[\[vii\]](#)

A Symbol of Authority

In the ancient world, a sword symbolized authority. Only defeated generals yielded their swords to victors. As the sword clave to the hand of David’s mighty man in defying the Philistines,[\[viii\]](#) so must the Word of God cleave to the Christian warrior until he morphs, as it were, into a “living epistle,” written “not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts.”[\[ix\]](#) As Jesus countered Satan’s attacks with scripture, we too must also learn to live “by every [word] that proceeds from the mouth of God,” so much so that we *become* it! The one weapon never to be forfeited in battle is the sword of the Spirit.

A Penetrating Weapon (Inwardly and Outwardly)

Paul preached the Word to Lydia to “open her heart.” As a result, she was converted. Be sure God’s Word has power to penetrate even a hardened, unconverted heart of stone to impart *inner* wisdom and godly character at the same time it fights despondency and despair. With assured promise of divine impact, the Word likewise penetrates *outwardly*. Martin Luther acknowledged that it takes but one little Word to fell devils threatening to undo believers. Indeed, that very Word will not return empty without having accomplished God’s desired end. It will succeed in the matter for which God sent it.[\[x\]](#) God’s promises are settled: “Indeed I have spoken it; I will also bring it to pass. I have purposed it; I will also do it.”[\[xi\]](#)

Weapon of Spirit (Illumination)

Not made of metal, the sword of the Spirit—more precisely,

“the sword that comes from the Spirit”—is the cutting, authoritative, penetrating Word of God. Never does the Spirit contradict the Word, which is spiritually inspired, powerful, and functional for teaching, reproof, correction, and training in righteousness.[\[xii\]](#)

The Word is Spiritually Inspired

“All Scripture,” we read, is inspired by God.[\[xiii\]](#) The Greek word for “inspired” is *theopneustos* (2315), combining *theo* (“God”) with *pneustos* (“breathed”).[\[xiv\]](#) Therefore, the word *inspired* literally means “God-breathed.”

The words “breath” and “spirit” are one and the same. God breathed out the Word through human authors with unique personalities and gifts, but the written Word originated with God.

♣ The Word is Spiritually Powerful

The Word is “the power of God unto salvation.” Charles Hodge wrote,[\[xv\]](#) “All [the church’s] triumphs over sin and error have been affected by the Word of God. So long as she uses this and relies on it alone, she goes on conquering; but when anything else, be it reason, science, tradition, or the commandments of men, is allowed to take its place or to share its office, then the church, or the Christian, is at the mercy of the adversary.” The archangel Michael effectively used the “sword of the Spirit,” the Word of God, to rebuke the devil.[\[xvi\]](#) So powerful is God’s Word that, with the breath of His mouth, the Lord will slay and thereby bring to an end even Satan incarnate, the Antichrist,[\[xvii\]](#) who (along with his False Prophet[\[xviii\]](#)) will desecrate all that is holy while, at the same time, deceiving many with lying wonders.

♣ The Word is Spiritually Functional

Skillfully, carefully applied to particular situations, God’s Word is a lamp to the believer’s feet and a light to his

path.[\[xix\]](#) When believers exchange their own ideas, or strength, with God's inspired Word, that Word illuminates the way to accomplish God's sovereign purposes—namely, to expose sin, save sinners, restore souls, and equip believers for good works.

1. His Word Accomplishes God's Sovereign Purpose.

Unlike idle tweeting, God's Word is unfailingly efficacious, even as "evil men and seducers wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived."[\[xx\]](#) "For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return there without watering the earth and making it bear and sprout, and furnishing seed to the sower and bread to the eater; so will My word be which goes forth from My mouth; it will not return to Me empty, without accomplishing what I desire, and without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it."[\[xxi\]](#) God's Word accomplishes His sovereign purpose.

2. His Word Exposes Sin to Save Sinners.

God's spoken word is powerful to slay the wicked,[\[xxii\]](#) but also to save sinners and consecrate the redeemed.[\[xxiii\]](#) In holding up a mirror of God's holy standard to our soiled hearts and lives, the Word exposes sin.[\[xxiv\]](#) Be they celebrities or politicians, outed sexual predators of late have discovered this to be true. The good news is that exposure can inspire purity. Jesus' prayer in John 17:17 was that His disciples would be sanctified by God's truth. "With open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord," we are changed into the selfsame image—this, "from glory to glory," by the Spirit of the Lord, which is the Word of God.[\[xxv\]](#)

3. His Word Restores Souls.

The Word wounds hearts in conviction, as on the day of Pentecost, when Peter's preaching of the Word "cut to the heart."[\[xxvi\]](#) Even more, the law of the Lord is perfect in

restoring souls. [\[xxvii\]](#) When our souls cleave to the dust below our feet, God revives [\[xxviii\]](#) and comforts us in affliction. [\[xxix\]](#) In the preface to the Geneva Bible, Puritans noted, The Bible is “the light to our paths, the key of the kingdom of heaven, our comfort in affliction, our shield and sword against Satan, the school of all wisdom, the glass wherein we behold God’s face, the testimony of his favor, and the only food and nourishment of our souls” (cited by Ryken, *ibid.*, p. 154).

4. His Word Equips Believers for Good Works.

The Word of God was made flesh and literally “tabernacled among us.” [\[xxx\]](#) As many as received Him, to them gave power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name. [\[xxxi\]](#) The Word is profitable for those “begotten” or “born” (Greek: *gennao*) of God to affect “all good works” [\[xxxii\]](#) –notably, evangelizing the lost.

Conclusion

In scaling the complex political landscape of our troubled world, we best keep perspective. Ours is a spiritual battle, not flesh-and-blood combat. As living epistles, Christian warriors use God’s Word—*defensively*, yes; but more importantly *offensively* in preaching sound doctrine (not ear-tickling platitudes). Without anointed wielding of the God-breathed, inerrant Word, victory (at every level, on every battle field of engagement) is unattainable. With the Word, we are more than conquerors (SUPER conquerors, as it were!) through Him who loved us. [\[xxxiii\]](#)

Human readiness stages the battle, but victory belongs to the Lord. [\[xxxiv\]](#) All thanks belongs to God, who gives us strength [\[xxxv\]](#) and victory through our Lord, Jesus Christ. [\[xxxvi\]](#) When Samson forfeited his strength for worldly pleasure, the Philistines overtook, blinded, and made sport of him. In a final act of God’s grace, Samson’s strength was

renewed;[\[xxxvii\]](#) but contrast Samson with David, whom God afforded victory “wherever he went.”[\[xxxviii\]](#)

Though arguably flawed, David persisted in maintaining the source of his strength. “A man after God’s own heart,”[\[xxxix\]](#) he did everything God wanted him to do. In perilous times, as these, we best follow the example of David. Our charge, as Christian patriots, is to know the enemy, yes, but most importantly, we are to prevail in fervent, faith-infused intercessory prayer, impassioned by God-breathed Scripture.

We must understand the times, be awakened to our enemies’ strategies, and sound the alarm as good watchmen on the wall. Our hope in spiritual warfare is to take the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, and pray always in the Spirit,[\[xl\]](#) remembering that, in the future, those faithful among us shall be awarded a crown of righteousness for having loved His appearing.[\[xli\]](#) Hence, may our joyful, collective cry be, “Even so, Come, Lord Jesus.”[\[xlii\]](#)

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Footnotes:

[\[i\]](#) Revelation 2:7, 11, 17, 26 and 3:5, 12 and 21.

[\[ii\]](#) Ephesians 6:12–“For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.”

[\[iii\]](#) Ephesians 6:17–“And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.”

[\[iv\]](#) Judges 7:20.

[\[v\]](#) Luke 4:1-13 with 1 John 2:16–“For all that *is* in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and

the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.”

[\[vi\]](#) 2 Corinthians 10:4-5—“For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds.”

[\[vii\]](#) Hebrews 4:12.

[\[viii\]](#) 2 Samuel 23:8-10—“... and the LORD wrought a great victory that day ...”

[\[ix\]](#) 2 Corinthians 3:3—“Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart.”

[\[x\]](#) Isaiah 55:11.

[\[xi\]](#) Isaiah 46:11.

[\[xii\]](#) 2 Timothy 3:16-17.

[\[xiii\]](#) 2 Timothy 3:16-17.

[\[xiv\]](#) *Pneustos* is the predicate adjective form of the word *pneo*, which means “to breathe.”

[\[xv\]](#) *Commentary on the Epistle to the Ephesians* [Eerdmans], p. 389.

[\[xvi\]](#) Jude 1 :8,9—In a dispute between Michael, a powerful archangel at the same rank in God’s kingdom as was Lucifer, Michael refrained from bringing “railing accusation” against Satan. Rather, he deferred to the spiritual power of God by pronouncing the words, “The Lord rebuke thee!”

[\[xvii\]](#) “Antichrist” refers to a literal man present in type, or picture, throughout history (e.g., in Nebuchadnezzar, Antiochus Epiphanes, Nero, Napoleon Bonaparte, Hitler, Lenin, Stalin, Hussein, Kim Jong-un, to name a few). A latter-day

visionary, the Antichrist will become the greatest dictator the world has ever known. In time, he will demand loyalty, even worship (Revelation 7:14 and Revelation 13:7b-8).

[\[xviii\]](#) Future head of the one-world false religious system described in the book of Revelation (17: 5) as “Mystery, Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the Earth.” According to Revelation 13: 4-18, this False Prophet will come alongside Antichrist to cause all – under threat of death – to receive a sort of brand (Mark of the Beast) without which buying and selling will be forbidden in the New World Order. The False Prophet will perform deceiving miracles (16: 13-14) and will kill those who refuse to worship the image of Antichrist (19: 20).

[\[xix\]](#) Psalm 119:105.

[\[xx\]](#) 2 Timothy 3:13-15.

[\[xxi\]](#) Isaiah 55:10-11.

[\[xxii\]](#) “And He will strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, and with the breath of His lips He will slay the wicked” (Isaiah 11:4). “Therefore repent; or else I am coming to you quickly, and I will make war against them with the sword of My mouth.” (Revelation 2:16).

[\[xxiii\]](#) 1 Peter 1:23–We are born again by the Word of God.

[\[xxiv\]](#) Luke 12:2–“For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known.”

[\[xxv\]](#) 2 Corinthians 3:18–“But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.”

[\[xxvi\]](#) Acts 2:32-37.

[\[xxvii\]](#) Psalm 19:7, NAS–“The law of the LORD is perfect,

restoring the soul; The testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple.”

[\[xxviii\]](#) Psalm 119:25.

[\[xxix\]](#) Psalm 119:50; see also, 93, 107, 149, 154, 156, 159.

[\[xxx\]](#) John 1: 1-14.

[\[xxxi\]](#) John 1:12.

[\[xxxii\]](#) 2 Timothy 3:16,17.

[\[xxxiii\]](#) Romans 8:37.

[\[xxxiv\]](#) Proverbs 21:31.

[\[xxxv\]](#) Philippians 4:13.

[\[xxxvi\]](#) 1 Corinthians 15:57.

[\[xxxvii\]](#) Judges 16.

[\[xxxviii\]](#) 1 Chronicles 18:6.

[\[xxxix\]](#) Acts 13:22.

[\[xl\]](#) Ephesians 6:17-18.

[\[xli\]](#) 2 Timothy 4:8.

[\[xlii\]](#) Revelation 22:20.