

Bible Themes: Warfare & Victory

Warfare in the OT vs. NT: A Dilemma for the Christian?

Recall the biblical critique: **A Differing God of OT vs. NT?**

How do we reconcile God's use of **war, killing, destruction in the OT** with ...

Christ's message of **peace and love in the NT?**

Mat 5:43 "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor, and hate your enemy.' 44 "But I say to you, **love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you**((NAS)

Mat 26:51 And behold, one of those who were with Jesus reached and drew out his sword, and struck the slave of the high priest, and cut off his ear. 52 Then Jesus said to him, "Put your sword back into its place; for **all those who take up the sword shall perish by the sword.** (NAS)

These verses depict Jesus in a "safe" and "acceptable" role the world views Him.

Yet Jesus described His role as much more complicated than that ...

Mat 10:34 "Do not think that I came to bring peace on the earth; I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. (NAS)

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Christian Pacifism vs. Military Service

What about the *Christian and Military Service*?

In the Church today this is largely accepted as a matter of personal liberty and not one of doctrinal issue nor as a test of fellowship.

This was not the case in the early 20th Century. There was an often contentious debate over the question of Military Service vs. Christian Pacifism.

The question today is mostly centered on the question of killing in battle.

Mat 5:21-22 "You have heard that the ancients were told, 'You shall not commit murder' and 'Whoever commits murder shall be liable to the court.' 22 "But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be guilty before the court; and whoever shall say to his brother, ; 'Raca,' shall be guilty before the supreme court; and whoever shall say, 'You fool,' shall be guilty enough to go into the fiery hell.

How one applies the definition or "murder" will largely decide his stance on whether the Christian can serve in the military in combat status.

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The Warfare of the Saints ...

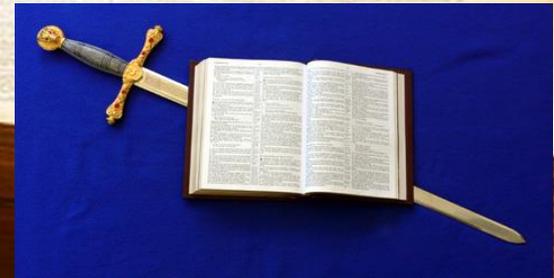
Is not of the flesh:

3 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh,
4 for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. (2Co 10:3-4 NAS)

Is a good warfare:

18 This command I entrust to you, Timothy, my son, in accordance with the prophecies previously made concerning you, that by them you may fight the good fight,
19 keeping faith and a good conscience, which some have rejected and suffered shipwreck in regard to their faith. (1Ti 1:18-19 NAS)

Fight the good fight of faith; take hold of the eternal life to which you were called, and you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses. (1Ti 6:12 NAS)



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The Warfare of the Saints is Against ...

The Devil:



Gen 3:15 And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, And you shall bruise him on the heel." (NAS)

Eph 6:12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. (NAS)

Jam 4:7 Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. (NAS)

Rev 12:17 And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and went off to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus. (NAS)



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The Warfare of the Saints is Against ...

The Flesh:

but I see a different law in the **members of my body, waging** war against the law of my mind, and making me a prisoner of the law of sin which is in my members. (Rom 7:23 NAS)

And because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, for this reason, to keep me from exalting myself, there was given me a **thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet me** -- to keep me from exalting myself! (2Co 12:7 NAS)

Gal 5:17 For the **flesh sets its desire against the Spirit**, and the **Spirit against the flesh**; for these are in **opposition** to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please.

Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to **abstain from fleshly lusts, which wage war against the soul**. (1Pe 2:11 NAS)



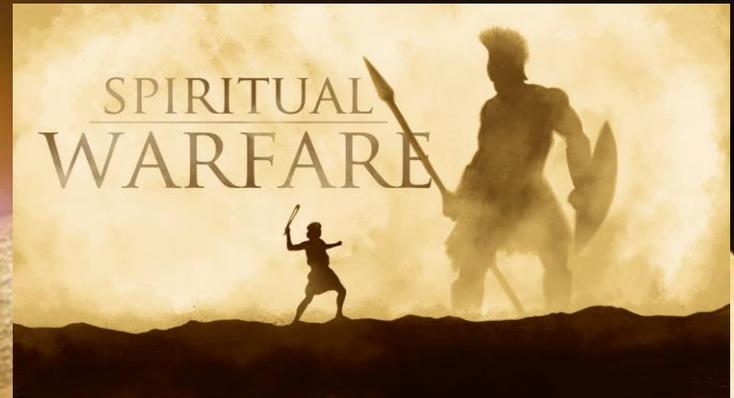
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The Warfare of the Saints is Against ...

Death Itself

1Co 15:26 The last enemy that will be abolished is death. (NAS)

Heb 2:14-15 Since then the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil; 15 and might deliver those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives. (NAS)



The OT focus on earthly warfare has now shifted ...

to our NT warfare against the devil, against the flesh, against death itself ...

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How is the Christian Soldier Equipped?

Please notice the more family friendly Christian Soldier ...



Eph 6:13 Therefore, take up the full armor of God, that you may be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm.

14 Stand firm therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness,

15 and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace;

16 in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming missiles of the evil one.

17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God (NAS)

A necessary requirement is that we **put on** the armor and **take up** the weapons!

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Our Victory is Assured!

Victory is from God through Christ:

but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. (1Co 15:57 NAS)

But thanks be to God, who always leads us in His triumph in Christ, and manifests through us the sweet aroma of the knowledge of Him in every place. (2Co 2:14 NAS)

Victory comes by our Faith:

4 For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world--our faith.

5 And who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God? (1Jo 5:4-5 NAS)



Victory over the Devil:

And the God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. (Rom 16:20 NAS)

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Our Victory over Death is Assured!

Isa 25:8 He will **swallow up death for all time**, And the Lord God will wipe tears away from all faces (NAS)

Isa 26:19 Your **dead will live**; Their **corpses will rise**. You who **lie in the dust**, awake and shout for joy, For your dew is as the dew of the dawn, And the earth will give birth to the **departed spirits**. (NAS)

Hos 13:14 Shall I **ransom** them from the **power of Sheol**? Shall I **redeem** them from **death**? O Death, where are your thorns? O Sheol, where is your sting? Compassion will be hidden from My sight. (NAS)



And these questions are answered for the Christian ...

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Our Victory over Death is Assured!

1Co 15:54 But when this perishable will have put on the **imperishable**, and this mortal will have put on **immortality**, then will come about the saying that is written, "Death is swallowed up in victory. 55 "O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?" 56 The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law; 57 but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

(NAS)



Rom 8:37 But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through **Him who loved us.**

(NAS)