

ARMED & DANGEROUS (Part 2)

TEXT: 2 Corinthians 10:3-6

THESIS: To delineate the believer's battle, battlefield & ultimate victory.

INTRO.: A. Because of the wimps of Christianity like Norman Vincent Peale, the average person in America thinks that becoming a Christian means the end of all woes & trouble. Paul presented the Christian life as warfare! (I find Peale appalling & Paul appeal-ing!) Instead of a cross today, men want a couch. Instead of a battlefield men want a beauty parlor. Instead of believers being **"ARMED & DANGEROUS"** they are disarmed & frivolous. As Lester Roloff said: "It's a battlefield brother, not a recreation room, it's fight & not a game!"

B. In our text Paul sends a declaration of war to His critics (v.1-3). They had bombarded him w/their "heavy artillery" of vilification & slander. They called him a coward. They mistook meekness for weakness. He responds with "fighting words" & puts them on notice that Corinth is only one small skirmish & lets them know that he is engaged in warfare on a wide battlefield. The metaphor of warfare is a recurring theme in Paul's epistles...

I. THE WARRIOR:

A. Enlistment:

1. Perhaps the reason we have so few willing to do battle is that we have so few who are really soldiers!
2. Better be sure you are in the army before you decide to do battle in the spiritual arena.

QUOTE: Dr. Bob Gray (FL): "No one will rise to defend something of which he himself is not sure." Anyone can be called a soldier, but only someone highly trained can be thrust into the battle w/any hope of success or victory. The person who walks an aisle & makes a profession is not ready to be a warrior! He needs to be seasoned in battle. He had better be sure of salvation, not base his "enlistment" on emotions!

By the way, one sure way of determining if a believer is a true soldier is to check out his uniform! Some of today's professed "soldiers" go to battle w/earrings & necklaces instead of swords & weapons of war. John the Baptist was a true soldier.

Matt.11:8-9 *But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? behold, they that wear soft clothing are in kings' houses. But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet.*

B. Not Entanglement:

2 Tim.2:4 *No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.*

1. They mistook the fact that Paul was a mere man for a lack of spiritual power. Cf. v.2,3
2. Separation from the world characterizes a true soldier of the cross.

ILLUS.: We have things backwards today. The church is trying to look, sound & act more & more like the world. We have more of the world in the church instead of getting the church out into the world to reach them & do battle w/the enemy. What would you think of soldiers in time of war wearing the uniforms of the enemy & fraternizing w/the enemy?!

II. THE WEAPONS:

A. Spiritual Weapons: v.4

1. The warfare we are engaged in is spiritual and the warriors must be spiritual, so our weapons must also be spiritual.
2. We need to use the Sword of the Spirit, i.e. a weapon forged by Him!
3. We need to have the power of the Spirit, i.e., be filled w/Him!

B. Scriptural Weapons: (Eph.6:10-17)

1. The girdle protects our loins, which speak of spiritual reproduction.
2. The breastplate protects our heart.
3. The sandals guard our feet so we can go w/the Gospel.
4. The shield of faith guards against the "fiery darts of the wicked" one.
5. The helmet of salvation protects our mind where the battle rages.
6. The sword of the Spirit not only protects us, but places us on the offensive.
7. The Spirit-filled prayers of the believer keep him walking w/the Lord.

C. Successful Weapons:

Rom.8:37 *Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.*

1 Jn.5:4 *For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.*

III. THE WARFARE:

A. Engaging The Enemy:

1 Tim.6:12 *Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.*

1. These are shocking words to pantywaist preachers & milk-toast Christians, but a real encouragement to Bible-believing warriors.
2. We are not attending a tea party, but are regenerated sinners engaged in a warfare against the forces of hell.

B. Divisions In The Ranks:

Mt.10:34-36 *Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household.*

ILLUS.: In WWII a man born in Germany had become an American citizen & he was compelled to take up arms & consider his own earthly family in Germany as his enemies. The citizenship of his choice made it necessary for him to go against the citizenship of his natural birth. So it is often w/the believer!

C. Troops Who Are A.W.O.L.:

ILLUS.: If the army of our country in WWII had to operate like the church of Jesus Christ had to operate last Sunday, we would all be slaves in Nazi concentration camps! When friends or relatives cause us to be A.W.O.L. the rest of the army & the battle we are called to fight, must limp along.

D. Decorated Heroes:

2 Tim.4:6-8 *For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.*

1. You will listen in vain for words of regret from the lips of Paul, in spite of every hardship known to man.
2. He didn't quit, turn aside, go A.W.O.L. or become a traitor to the Cause!

1 Sam.13:22 *So it came to pass in the day of battle, that there was neither sword nor spear found in the hand of any of the people that were with Saul and Jonathan: but with Saul and with Jonathan his son was there found.*

Ps.78:9 *The children of Ephraim, being armed, and carrying bows, turned back in the day of battle.*

3. He, along w/countless faithful believers over the centuries since, have remained faithful & will be the decorated heroes of heaven! (Will you?!)

CONCL.: Anyone can become weary in well doing, lay aside the weapons of their warfare or become a traitor. But it takes someone who has made a commitment & who refuses to turn back to become one of the decorated heroes of the faith. Only those who are "ARMED & DANGEROUS" pose any threat to the enemy of our soul.

How about YOU?!