

Preach: The Spiritual War

The Believers Attitude - The Cost of Discipleship

Introduction:

- War - Russia 🇷🇺 & Ukraine 🇺🇦 - Devastating! Heartbreaking!
- Jesus warned us. (Matthew 24; Mark 13; Luke 21). We are not taken by surprise. We already know the end!
- We view world events through Biblical lenses! Make sure we allow The Bible to shape our minds.
- War is real
- Casualties are real
- We living in a hostile world.
- Jesus said that we would be hated, persecuted, imprisoned etc
- Ask Paul, Peter, Thomas, James, John, Andrew etc. They knew what it meant to follow Christ.
- “Deny yourself, take up your cross daily and follow Me”!
- “All Those who live godly in Christ will suffer persecution “.
- “Blessed are you when you are persecuted for RIGHTEOUSNESS sake....!
- “If they hated ME, they will hate you”
- “Friendship with this world is enmity with God”
- We are in a WAR
- However, our war is not physical. It’s not against flesh & blood (Eph 6).
- Our declaration of war starts the moment we confess Jesus as Lord and Savior!
- It’s a Spiritual War! Our weapons are different.
- We have a target on our backs!
- We have an enemy who has only one purpose....! He hates the image of God is us!
- IRONY - Enemy stripped of his weapons but has a WILL to fight.
- Church (many believers) are equipped & armed, but WITHOUT a WILL to fight.
- Ukraine - unarmed but trying to stop armoured TANKS! Are you kidding me? A person with a WILL to fight is far more dangerous than a person with weapons but without a will to fight!

2 Timothy 2:1-13 (NKJV)

“You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.

2 And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.

3 You therefore must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

4 No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of [this] life, that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier.

5 And also if anyone competes in athletics, he is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules.

6 The hardworking farmer must be first to partake of the crops.

7 Consider what I say, and may the Lord give you understanding in all things.
8 Remember that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead according to my gospel,
9 for which I suffer trouble as an evildoer, [even] to the point of chains; but the word of God is not chained.
10 Therefore I endure all things for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.
11 [This is] a faithful saying: For if we died with [Him,] We shall also live with [Him.]
12 If we endure, We shall also reign with [Him.] If we deny [Him,] He also will deny us.
13 If we are faithless, He remains faithful; He cannot deny Himself.”

2 Corinthians 10:3-6 (NKJV)

“For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh.
4 For the weapons of our warfare [are] not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds,
5 casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ,
6 and being ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled.”

Ephesians 6:10-20 (NKJV)

“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.
11 Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.
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.]
13 Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.
14 Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness,
15 and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace;
16 above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one.
17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God;
18 praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints--
19 and for me, that utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel,
20 for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.”

Hebrews 12:1-2 (NKJV)

“Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares [us,] and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, 2 looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of [our] faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.”

Q. What comes to mind when we think of a **SOLDIER, ATHLETE & FARMER?**

Q. What should our Attitude be?

We are encouraged to “consider what I say” or think about these 3 characteristics and adopt a similar attitude.

A. Soldier

- Endures Hardships - away from family, away from home, away from familiar surroundings, lack of sleep, food & water etc.
- Understands the cost - Hard work! Physical and mental training & preparation.
- Disciplined.
- Vigilant, watchful, alert, awake,
- Makes sacrifices.
- Follows orders - Obedient - loyal.
- Understands authority. Accountable to authority.
- Respects authority - Sense of honor.
- Personal Courage - lays down his life! Not comfortable Christianity!
- Practice Prioritizing.
- Remind yourself WHY you started especially when things get tough.
- Enlisted as soldier, don't get caught up with civilian affairs.
- Focused on mission at hand.
- Know your weaknesses. Put things in place to cover blind spots!
- Place the good of the unit above the needs of your own.
- Team player.
- Builds trust among fellow soldiers.
- Unity - One Team - One Purpose - One Mission- One Common Enemy!
- Level of discipline directly affects a soldier's conduct and every aspect of military life.
- Decisions made are in line with the call.

B. Athlete

- Sets Goals
- Heb 12:2 - throws off everything that hinders or slows them down.
- Know that every day matters.

- Know WHY we are doing this.
- Know that there is a PRIZE. There is a GOAL. A purpose.
- Has to overcome laziness and distractions.
- Build a “NO-MATTER WHAT” mindset.
- Has to exercise extreme discipline.
- Builds character.
- Helps one focus.
- Helps avoid distractions.
- Helps us choose our battles and focus on priorities.
- Helps us keep the main thing the main thing.
- Helps us say “NO” to things that do not take us in the direction we should be going.
- We have to commit.
- We have to work hard.
- We have to make sacrifices.
- We have to be self motivated.
- We have to exercise self-leadership.
- Where are you going? Vision
- How are you going to get there? Goals
- What do we need to do today to help us get there?

C. Farmer

- Passion
- Problem-Solving skills
- Patience
- Perseverance
- Has to overcome weather challenges, hail, fire, drought, excessive rain, pests like locusts, monkeys, baboons , theft, bad crop harvest, no harvest etc
- Long wait between sowing the seed and reaping a harvest.
- Needs emotional resilience
- Hard work - long hours
- Sacrifices
- Motivated by LOVE
- Strong character
- Commitment - all or nothing!

Conclusion:

- although Disciplines of a soldier, athlete and farmer are different, the principles are mostly the same. We need to get rid of things that hinder. That slow us down. That doesn't count for eternity.
- Q. Are you wearing the “right clothes” or “right outfit “?
- Q. What has God called you to be?
- Q. Are you a David trying to fight Goliath in “Saul’s armour”?
- STOP WEARING SOMEONE ELSE ‘s CLOTHES.