

Conclusion

- A. Is the cross informing your battle plan?

- B. Are you engaged in the battle as a living sacrifice... as one carrying a cross?

- C. Is the cross teaching you how to pray?

- D. A description of soldiers returned home from battle.
(Revelation 12:11)

LIVE THE STORY

*The Gospel is intended to be learned and lived in community.
The following questions are designed for use in our Community Groups
as an aid to growth in the Gospel and Community.*

- Have you ever adopted a different battle plan than the one shown in the cross?
- Have you ever gotten side-tracked into focusing on trying to get more details on who we battle rather than focusing on what the NT focuses on: how we are to battle?
- What weapons have you been doing spiritual warfare with? Are you engaged in the battle as a living sacrifice... as one carrying a cross? Explain how this might look for you.
- How might these weapons be used at home? What kind of spiritual warfare goes on there? Be specific about how we walk this out at home.
- What does the picture of “spiritual war veterans” in Revelation 12:11 teach us about how the battle is fought?

The Cross as a Pattern for Spiritual Warfare

Jerry Cisar — August 9, 2015

Text: 2 Corinthians 10:1-6

Introduction

- A. We are engaged in a war. (Ephesians 6:12)

- B. How then does the Christian wage war? What kind of battle plan have we been given?

I. The Cross Defines Our Battle Plan

- A. There is a profound simplicity in the Lord's table.

- i. Luke 22:19-20

The Passover meal celebrated God's triumph over their enemies through powerful demonstrations culminating in the death of the firstborn of Egypt. Now in Jesus this meal demonstrates God's triumph over our enemies through a powerful demonstration in which God's only Son dies.

- ii. This contrast demonstrates how the battle plan is redefined by the Cross.

- B. Paul's World Conquering Gospel Battle Plan (2 Cor 4:7-12)

- i. *“All powerful message, weak and suffering messengers.”*

- ii. *Treasure in jars of clay looks like...*
 - a) *...hard pressed on every side (ESV afflicted in every way), but not crushed;*

 - b) *...perplexed, but not in despair;*

 - c) *...persecuted, but not abandoned...*

 - d) *...struck down, but not destroyed.*

II. The Cross Differentiates Our Weapons

- A. Weapons of Righteousness (2 Corinthians 6:4-10)

- B. Armor and Weapons (Ephesians 6:14-17)

- C. Armor of Light; Deeds of righteousness (Romans 13:12-13)

- D. A Life of Spiritual Warfare (Romans 12:9-21)

III. The Cross Demonstrates How to Pray in the Battle

- A. Anticipating the Cross (Matthew 26:38-44)
 - a) It is not abnormal to be overwhelmed with sorrow during times of deep suffering.
 - b) It is normal to request deliverance.
 - c) It is normal to have to pray over and over again for grace to trust God in it.
 - d) Without prayer our flesh will be too weak to win.

- B. While on the cross (Luke 23:34)
 - i. We too must learn to pray for the forgiveness of our enemies—even while they are harming us.
 - ii. There is no way we can do true spiritual warfare without praying for our enemies.

- C. In Our Lowest Moments (Matthew 27:46)
 - i. When Jesus prayed this prayer, He demonstrated that the laments of Scripture are available to us to pray when we too are suffering.
 - a) Psalm 22:1-2

 - b) Faith is not faking like we are good with everything when we aren't. It is going to God and being straight with Him in our experience.

- D. The cross gives us whole new categories for understanding our suffering.