



How to be a Good Christian Soldier

Part 2: Character Traits as Spiritual Weapons (April 2002)

In our last few issues of *Prayer Matters* we have been looking at how to be active Christian soldiers who are able to affect the direction of the spiritual battle going on in the heavenlies in relationship to the political struggles for power occurring in our physical world. We have seen that the spiritual armor, which God has instructed us to wear if we are to participate in this battle, includes developing the character traits of truth, righteousness, faith, and peace so that they are consistently manifested in our daily lives (Eph. 10-18).

In Romans 13:12-14 (NIV), Paul also writes about “putting on the armor of light” (NIV). This armor is contrasted with practicing “deeds of darkness” and gratifying “the desires of the sinful flesh.” It is accompanied by the commands to “behave decently” and to be clothed “with the Lord Jesus Christ.” In other words, to be properly suited up in the “armor of light,” we are to allow the Lord Jesus to live His life through us and act like He would. So again we see righteous character traits portrayed as protective armor in the spiritual battle.

Other passages indicate that godly character traits serve not only in a protective manner but also can play an offensive role in the spiritual battle. In 2 Corinthians 6:3-10 Paul speaks of having “weapons of righteousness in the right hand and in the left” (vs. 7, NIV). In the context we see how thoroughly committed he was to having genuine righteousness characterize his life, no matter what the circumstances. This included the traits of purity, patience, kindness, endurance, sacrifice, sincere love, and truthful speech. Through this means Paul was able to maintain his credibility and fend off his attackers.

Later in chapter 10 he speaks again of the “weapons” we fight with in the spiritual battle, stating that they have “divine power” to demolish demonic strongholds as well as every argument and phony substitute set in place to usurp the true knowledge of God (vss. 4-5; NIV). It is very probable that he is referring back to the “weapons of righteousness” that he mentioned in chapter 6. He also points out that these weapons are not only effective in battling the strongholds we encounter in the lives of others but also in sanctifying the thoughts of our own minds.

Christian soldiers must exercise consistent, daily discipline in keeping their “weapons of righteousness” in good operating condition just as soldiers fighting in the physical realm do. They must also maintain their strength by drawing daily sustenance from the Word of God and keep the lines of communication with their “Commander in Chief” open.