



Are You Armed for Battle?

Ephesians 6:11: (NKJV) “Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.”

War has been a part of culture since the beginning of human history. As Christians we are certainly not encouraged to encourage it or provoke it. Yet in the New Testament, the concepts of war and battle are used freely, as a clear picture of what our lives are supposed to be about. The whole key is understanding who and what we are supposed to fight and how we are supposed to fight them. We are discussing the battle of the Christian, the armor that the Christian is supposed to wear, and the victory that the Christian should be seeking. Are you armed for battle?

Questions for consideration:

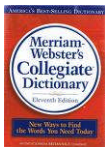
1. What are we supposed to fight against?
2. How are we supposed to fight?
3. What defines victory?

1. What are we supposed to fight against?

Ephesians 6:10-18: (NKJV) “¹⁰Finally, my brethren, be ** in the Lord and in the power of His might. ¹¹Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. ¹²For 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. ¹³Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. ¹⁴Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, ¹⁵and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; ¹⁶above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. ¹⁷And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; ¹⁸praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints.”**

Strong: Strong's #1743 - endunamoo (en-doo-nam-o'-o) to empower:
KJV - enable, (increase in) strength (-en), be (make) strong.

The first lesson is that it is not mere strength that we are talking about - it is empowerment! This is not just physical brawn, but the context is that one is given power and authority to act.



Merriam Webster: em·pow·er Function: *transitive verb*

- 1: to give official authority or legal power to
- 2: Enable
- 3: to promote the self-actualization or influence of

Philippians 4:13: “I can do all things through Christ which **<strengtheneth> me.”**

1 Timothy 1:12: “And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath **<enabled> me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry;”**

2 Timothy 2:1: “Thou therefore, my son, be ** in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.”**

Ephesians 6:10: (NKJV) “Finally, my brethren, be ** in the Lord and in the power of His might.”**



This gives us permission to draw from the Lord. The empowerment we are given relates directly to being "in the Lord" and thereby having access to "the power of his might."

The Apostle set this up way back in the first chapter of this letter:

Ephesians 1:13-14: (ASV) *"¹³in whom ye also, having heard the word of the truth, the gospel of your salvation, in whom, having also believed, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, ¹⁴which is an earnest of our inheritance, unto the redemption of God's own possession, unto the praise of his glory."*

It is like Paul is saying, *'you have already been prepared for this battle with God's spirit through Jesus - This is God's way of not only protecting you as you move forward, but it is His way of showing His approval of your standing before Him - so go and do what must be done!'* "Earnest" used here is in the context of a down payment or a pledge – like an engagement ring.

Ephesians 6:11: (NKJV) *"Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the <wiles> of the devil."*

This idea of "putting on" protection against Satan was common in the New Testament:

Ephesians 4:24: *"And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness."*

Romans 13:14: *"But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof."*

Cover yourself with the merit of Jesus, rather than your own.

Romans 13:12: *"The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light."*

2 Corinthians 6:7: *"By the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left..."*

Why do we need this protection? Because Satan is "crafty"!

Wiles: Strongs #3180 μεθοδεια meth-od-i'-ah lie in wait
Greek-English Lexicon: cunning arts, deceit, craft, trickery

Thayers: 1. to follow up or investigate by method and settled plan; 2. to follow craftily, frame devices, deceive

2 Corinthians 11:3: (ASV) *"But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve in his craftiness, your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity and the purity that is toward Christ."*

Colossians 2:18-19: (NKJV) *"¹⁸Let no one cheat you of your reward, taking delight in false humility and worship of angels, intruding into those things which he has not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, ¹⁹and not holding fast to the Head, from whom all the body, nourished and knit together by joints and ligaments, grows with the increase that is from God."*

Don't be misguided or mislead and take your instruction from anyone other than Jesus as the head of the body. If you look anywhere else, you will be deceived.



Ephesians 6:12: (NKJV) "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."

There is an assault and we are completely overmatched.

(Source: Commentary by Albert Barnes, "Notes: Explanatory and Practical, 1832-72"): "But against principalities: There can be no doubt whatever that the apostle alludes here to evil spirits. Like good angels, they were regarded as divided into ranks and orders, and were supposed to be under the control of one mighty leader. See Barnes "Eph 1:21". It is probable that the allusion here is to the ranks and orders which they sustained before their fall, something like which they may still retain. The word "principalities" refers to principal rulers, or chieftains."

There appears to be a hierarchy of angels within the heavens. The Apostle tells us we have to wrestle against this entire hierarchy of evil spirits.

These foes are far beyond our capability to fight, but not beyond the ability of Christ:

Ephesians 1:18-23: (ASV) "¹⁸having the eyes of your heart enlightened, that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, ¹⁹and what the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to that working of the strength of his might ²⁰which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and made him to sit at his right hand in the heavenly places, ²¹far above all rule, and authority, and power, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: ²²and he put all things in subjection under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church, ²³which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all."

Talk about an impossible task! It would be bad enough for us to wrestle "flesh and blood" be it our own or someone else's, but our battle requires not only battling on this human level, but on a variety of spiritual levels as well, all of which we are basically ignorant.

Ephesians 6:13: "Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to <withstand> in the evil day, and having done all, to stand."

Withstand: Strong's #436 ανθιστημι anthistemi anth-is'-tay-mee
1) to set one's self against, to withstand, resist, oppose 2) to set against

No wonder we are instructed to be totally covered by the "whole" armor and therefore totally prepared!

Our "standing against" is most certainly regarding Satan and the spiritual hierarchy already noted:

John 17:15-17: (NRSV) "¹⁵I am not asking you to take them out of the world, but I ask you to protect them from the evil one. ¹⁶They do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. ¹⁷Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth."

Jesus is praying for protection for all of his followers, then and now. He recognizes they are still in the world, but they are not "of" the world. This is figurative armor for us to fight a spiritual battle.

If you are a Christian, striving to live a life where you are following through on scriptural principles in every aspect, your battle is bigger than you can imagine.



2. How are we supposed to fight?

Let's begin to review in detail the physical implements of our armor, which are the secret to fighting the battle. Belief in Christ requires very specific action.



Ephesians 6:14: (NKJV) "*Stand therefore, **having girded your waist with truth**, having put on the breastplate of righteousness...*"

(Source: Commentary by J. Vernon McGee, "Thru the Bible") "Having your loins girt about with truth:" In the ancient garment of that day, the girdle about the loins held in place every other part of the uniform of the soldier. It was essential. To tell you the truth, if the girdle was lost, you lost everything. The garments would fly open and the pants would fall down. We see this routine in comedies, and the people laugh to see a man trying to run or fight with his trousers drooping down. It looks funny in a comedy routine, but it is not funny in a battle.

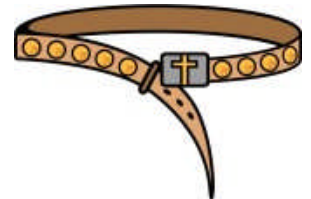
This belt is what holds everything in place.

John 17:14-19: (NKJV) "*¹⁴I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. ¹⁵I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one. ¹⁶They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. ¹⁷**Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.** ¹⁸As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. ¹⁹And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth.*"

The word of God is the Truth.

1 Peter 1:13-16: (NKJV) "*¹³Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; ¹⁴as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance; ¹⁵but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, ¹⁶because it is written, "Be holy, for I am holy."*

When we are faced with trying to find the truth of something, it is really a mental exercise. The battle is within our minds, as we are fighting a spiritual enemy. How profound it is, that the Truth - the word of God - is what gives all of the rest of the armor a consistent base from which it is able to function.



Observations about this Truth:

- **Is of God** - therefore of higher origin than any other source;
- **Is Consistent** - it gives black and white principles from which we can deal with all shades of gray;
- **Is Eternal** - it defines not only what has happened and what is at present, but it also defines what will be;
- **Is Irrefutable** - it stands the tests of time, philosophy, compromise and doubt.

This truth is the foundation, perhaps the unnoticed foundation for victory over Satan!

2 Timothy 2:14-19: (NKJV) "*¹⁴Remind them of these things, charging them before the Lord not to strive about words to no profit, to the ruin of the hearers. ¹⁵Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing*





the word of truth. ¹⁶But shun profane and idle babblings, for they will increase to more ungodliness. ¹⁷And their message will spread like cancer. Hymenaeus and Philetus are of this sort, ¹⁸who have strayed concerning the truth, saying that the resurrection is already past; and they overthrow the faith of some. ¹⁹Nevertheless the solid foundation of God stands, having this seal: "The Lord knows those who are His," and, "Let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity."

Remember, we have been approved in the sense that we have been empowered. ("Be strong in the Lord!") But now your responsibility is to prove yourself - to be a workman. Just because you have come to Christ doesn't mean you don't have to battle. There is much work to be done.



Ephesians 6:14: (NKJV) "Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, **having put on the breastplate of righteousness...**"

Righteousness: Strongs #1343 dikaiosune (dik-ah-yos-oo'-nay); equity (of character or act); specially (Christian) justification; KJV-- righteousness.

Romans 3:9-12: (NKJV) "⁹What then? Are we better than they? Not at all. For we have previously charged both Jews and Greeks that they are all under sin. ¹⁰As it is written: "**There is none righteous, no, not one;** ¹¹there is none who understands; There is none who seeks after God. ¹²They have all turned aside; They have together become unprofitable; There is none who does good, no, not one."

So, **we** are certainly not the source of this righteousness, just as we are not the source of the Truth. Humankind is the created, not the Creator. These protections are of God through Jesus and **MUST BE PUT ON!**

1 John 2:1-3: (NKJV) "¹My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, **Jesus Christ the righteous.** ²And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world. ³Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments."

We have an advocate (on our side), Jesus Christ. We are putting on the breastplate of Jesus' righteousness, his life and his sacrifice.

Once we wear them, they will change our behavior:

2 Corinthians 6:14-18: (NRSV) "¹⁴Do not be mismatched with unbelievers. For what partnership is there between righteousness and lawlessness? Or what fellowship is there between light and darkness? ¹⁵What agreement does Christ have with Beliar? Or what does a believer share with an unbeliever? ¹⁶What agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; as God said, "I will live in them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. ¹⁷Therefore come out from them, and be separate from them, says the Lord, and touch nothing unclean; then I will welcome you, ¹⁸and I will be your father, and you shall be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty."

Wearing this armor changes our behavior. In terms of the world around you, there is a mismatch - you are "in" the world, but not "of" the world. And one of those reasons is you dress differently! How do you dress? In the armor of God! This is not something everyone wants to wear.

John 17:14-18: (NKJV) "¹⁴I have given them Your word; and **the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.** ¹⁵I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one. ¹⁶**They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.** ¹⁷Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth. ¹⁸As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world."





This breastplate of righteousness is in fact the righteousness and justification of Jesus, which protects all of our (spiritual) vital organs. It is a weapon of defense, as the Ransom of Jesus that made it available satisfies the just requirements of God. This breastplate works seamlessly with the girdle of the truth of God's plan, for God's plan is centered on the price that Jesus paid.

Ephesians 6:15: (NKJV) "...and having **shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace...**"

Preparation: Strong's #2091 hetoimasia (het-oy-mas-ee'-ah); preparation:
Lexicon: 1) the act of preparing 2) the condition of a person or thing so far forth as prepared, preparedness, readiness



This seems like an odd statement - your feet wear the "preparation" of the Gospel? Why not wear the Gospel itself?

Isaiah 52:7: "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!"

We can see from the Scripture above that there is something good about feet that carry the Gospel. Perhaps the thought is to have a studied understanding of the Gospel and therefore a continual readiness for its dispensing:

1 Peter 3:14-15: (NKJV) "¹⁴But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you are blessed. "And do not be afraid of their threats, nor be troubled." ¹⁵But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and **always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear;**"



Imagine you are defendant in a courtroom, and your lawyer starts to review your case for the first time right in front of the judge! The message here is simple - be prepared that wherever you go, whatever you do, if you are engaged in this battle, one of your responsibilities is to have the "Gospel of Peace" reflected in your every step.

Here the New Testament reiterates the Isaiah 52:7 scripture:

Romans 10:14-15: (NRSV) "¹⁴But how are they to call on one in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in one of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone to proclaim him? ¹⁵And how are they to proclaim him unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!"

Habakkuk 3:19: "The LORD God is my strength, and he will make my feet like hinds' feet, and he will make me to walk upon mine high places..."

Our feet must be sure-footed because the Gospel is driving us.





Ephesians 6:16: (NKJV) *"above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one."*



Faith: Strong's #4102 *pistis* (pis'-tis); persuasion, credence; moral conviction (of religious truth, or the truthfulness of God or a religious teacher)

Faith is not blind; we believe in it because we have good reason to believe in it. Although there are things unseen, we can boldly have conviction and say, "All I have seen teaches me to trust the Creator for all I have not seen."

(Source: *Commentary by Albert Barnes, "Notes: Explanatory and Practical, 1832-72"*): "The shield was usually made of light wood, or a rim of brass, and covered with several folds or thicknesses of stout hide, which was preserved by frequent anointing. It was held by the left arm, and was secured by straps, through which the arm passed, as may be seen in the annexed cut. The outer surface of the shield was made more or less rounding from the centre to the edge, and was polished smooth, or anointed with oil, so that arrows or darts would glance off, or rebound."



This implement of armor is primarily defensive in its nature. Some characteristics include:

- It can be moved and aimed so as to directly thwart the directional attacks of the adversary;
- Because of its mobility, it can protect specific parts of the body;
- It has the offensive ability to 'push back' the enemy;
- It can even help to defend other soldiers in the battle and works best in close formation;
- Though it is attached, it can be removed and put down.

Remember, this shield is a metaphor for how faith works in our lives. It is active and powerful. Remember to never remove and put down your shield!

1 Samuel 17:45: (NAS) *"Then David said to the Philistine, 'You come to me with a sword, a spear, and a javelin, but I come to you in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have taunted.'"*

Before David went out to battle, King Saul gave him Saul's own armor. David took off the human armor and went out seemingly unarmed. He actually went out with the power of God, wearing spiritual armor.

Faith as a shield thwarting the darts of the enemy in action:

Psalms 56:1-4: (NKJV) *"¹Be merciful to me, O God, for man would swallow me up; Fighting all day he oppresses me. ²My enemies would hound me all day, for there are many who fight against me, O Most High. ³Whenever I am afraid, I will trust in You. ⁴In God (I will praise His word), in God I have put my trust; I will not fear. What can flesh do to me?"*

We see the great depth of protection we have in God, with this great shield of faith.

Romans 5:1-6: (NKJV) *"¹Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, ²through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. ³And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; ⁴and perseverance, character; and character, hope. ⁵Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has*



been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us. ⁶For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly."

Ephesians 6:17: (NKJV) "And take **the helmet of salvation**, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God;"

(Source: Commentary by Albert Barnes, "Notes: Explanatory and Practical, 1832-72"): The helmet was a cap made of thick leather, or brass, fitted to the head, and was usually crowned with a plume, or crest, as an ornament. Its use was to guard the head from a blow by a sword, or war-club, or battle-axe.



Obviously, this helmet is there to protect the head, the mind, the control center for the entire soldier. How fitting that Salvation is what that protection is made of – for we must have an intellectual acceptance and understanding of the Ransom of Jesus on our behalf. With this understanding in place, we are able to truly focus on the battle at hand because we are protected.

Isaiah 1:17-18: (NKJV) "¹⁷Learn to do good; Seek justice, rebuke the oppressor; Defend the fatherless, plead for the widow. ¹⁸"Come now, and let us reason together," says the LORD, "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool."



Being a Christian involves both the head and the heart. It is a conviction that comes from the head and works through the heart. If you aren't convicted in your mind, your heart will grow faint.

The example of Jesus putting that Salvation in place by his intellectual grasp and recall of the Holy Scriptures:

Matthew 4:4: (NKJV) "But he answered and said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.'"

Matthew 4:7: (NKJV) "Jesus said to him, "It is written again, 'You shall not tempt the Lord your God.'"

Matthew 4:10-11: (NKJV) "¹⁰Then Jesus said to him, "Away with you, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve.'" ¹¹Then the devil left Him, and behold, angels came and ministered to him."

Jesus used scripture to fight Satan and was able to repel Satan as a result of God's truth. We want to use that same salvation shown in Jesus to protect our own minds.



Ephesians 6:17: (NKJV) "And take the helmet of salvation, and **the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God**;"

2 Corinthians 5:17: (NKJV) "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new."

1 Corinthians 2:1-5: (NKJV) "¹And I, brethren, when I came to you, did not come with excellence of speech or of wisdom declaring to you the testimony of God. ²For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. ³I was with you in weakness, in fear, and in much trembling. ⁴And my speech and my preaching were not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, ⁵that your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God."



The Sword of the Spirit:

- A weapon of offense;
- Given to us to use in our hand;
- We choose how to wield it;
- We can put it down.



Question: All of the armor is given to us by God except which two pieces?

Answer: The shield of faith and the sword of the spirit! We give these to God.

Ephesians 6:18: (NKJV) "...praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints."

So, it is not enough for the armor to be laid out and put on. Once armed, we must continually keep our perspective intact with prayer. Why prayer?

*To know who we are
To know who God is
To know what our needs are
To know His will for us
To find spiritual strength
To do His will*



Philippians 4:4-7: (ASV) "⁴Rejoice in the Lord always: again I will say, Rejoice. ⁵Let your forbearance be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand. ⁶In nothing be anxious; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. ⁷And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus."

Even when things are going bad, you thank God anyway.

Romans 12:12: (NKJV) "...rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer."

1 Thessalonians 5:16-25: (NKJV) "¹⁶Rejoice always, ¹⁷pray without ceasing, ¹⁸in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. ¹⁹Do not quench the Spirit. ²⁰Do not despise prophecies. ²¹Test all things; hold fast what is good. ²²Abstain from every form of evil. ²³Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴He who calls you is faithful, who also will do it. ²⁵Brethren, pray for us."



3. What defines victory?

Observations about why we must be armed:



- To fight a battle that is bigger than we alone can handle
- To stand firm for righteousness in an unrighteous world
- To do the will of God through Christ
- To do our part in overcoming evil

Romans 12:2: (NKJV) *"And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."*

Victory in this battle includes transforming your mind so that you are now doing the will of God instead of your own.

Philippians 4:8-13: (NKJV) *"⁸Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things. ⁹The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you. ¹⁰But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at last your care for me has flourished again; though you surely did care, but you lacked opportunity. ¹¹Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content: ¹²I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. ¹³I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."*

Strengthens = empowered

1 Corinthians 9:23-27: (NKJV) *"²³Now this I do for the gospel's sake, that I may be partaker of it with you. ²⁴Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it. ²⁵And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown. ²⁶Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air. ²⁷But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified."*

What humility of the Apostle Paul! He is telling us to be ready, put our armor on, and here he tells us that he himself could be disqualified. He recognized that the armor was there because this is the battle of our lives. We have to fight to win, just like Jesus did!



**So are you armed for battle?
For Jonathan and Rick and Christian Questions...
Think about it...!**