

Wisdom Before Warfare, Virtue Before Victory

*Wisdom is better than strength. . . .
Wisdom is better than weapons of war.*
—Ecclesiastes 9:16, 18

JESUS PREPARED His disciples for everything, including war. They saw Him casting out demons. In fact, He sent them forth doing the same. But before He sent them out, He charged them to become wise “as serpents” yet innocent and harmless “as doves” (Matt. 10:16). This fusion of divine wisdom and Christlike innocence is the taproot of all spiritual victory. Indeed, we can defeat the enemy, but wisdom must precede warfare and virtue must come before victory. We must learn the ways of God, which means we must *think* with wisdom. And we must be pure of heart, that we may see God and gain discernment.

Almighty God, give me Your wisdom in all situations as You write on my heart what is true, honorable, right, pure, lovely, excellent, and worthy of praise that I might dwell on these things constantly as I contend by Your grace against evil and offer oppression no peace. Amen.

My spiritual preparation for today:

An Army of Redeemers

*In whom you also are being built together into
a dwelling place of God through the Spirit.*

—Ephesians 2:22

I have known, on occasion, the intimidation of the prince of darkness. I've felt the weight of his confidence as he gloats at how unprepared the church is—how divided and carnal. He has no doubt that ultimately his kingdom will completely rule this world.

However, the immutable Word declares it will be the kingdom of the Most High that expands worldwide, not the kingdom of darkness. As it is written of God's kingdom, "Of [its] increase. . . there shall be no end" (Isa. 9:7).

Therefore let us not surrender to fear or unbelief. If Satan has legions of demons, God has an army of redeemers. In truth, as each of us matures, we must stop thinking of ourselves merely as "church people" and more as a society of redeemers, for that is what we become as we are conformed to the heart of Jesus Christ (Rom. 8:28–29).

O God, just as Jesus prayed that His disciples would be one, I pray that all believers everywhere will be united as one body so that the church, bound together by the power of Your love, may rise up in unity until darkness is fully overcome by the light, which is Jesus Christ. Amen!

My spiritual preparation for today:

Be Bold, Not Brash

*Every purpose is established by counsel,
and with good advice wage war.*

—Proverbs 20:18

We all have seen many who have fallen. Jesus warned that the love of many would grow cold. Do not presume it cannot happen to you. Our enemy has been deceiving mankind for thousands of years. Our experience, on the other hand, spans but a brief moment. It is wisdom to recognize that we do not know all there is to know concerning warfare.

Therefore, be bold, but never brash or arrogant in your prayer life. Use your spiritual authority administratively, compassionately, but never presumptuously. Multitudes of well-meaning but ignorant Christians have approached the field of spiritual battle with flippant attitudes and have suffered greatly for it. Study and seek confirmation from the Lord for your strategies.

Gracious and loving heavenly Father, be my companion always. May I know You as You have revealed Yourself in the Scriptures. Daily illuminate my mind with Your wisdom. Strengthen me that I may stand on the day of battle, confident in the One who defeated all evil. Hallelujah! Amen.

My spiritual preparation for today:
