

Living a Warfare Lifestyle

The Bible is about war. The battle, between good and evil, begins in the first pages of Genesis and concludes in the battlefield of the final pages of Revelation. The victor is already determined. Yet, the war is tough, protracted, and bloody. Hanging in the balances are lost souls—men and women; boys and girls. Global evangelism is constant combat in spiritual warfare.

John Piper admonishes us to live a war-time lifestyle. This means we intentionally invest our resources of time, talent, and finances in the task of world evangelism. We need to be proactive, rather than reactive.

Christians with a warfare lifestyle are not only interested in being added to the kingdom, they are focused on advancing the kingdom. They are kingdom-minded. They refuse to keep silent. They realize it isn't enough to be blessed; they know they are blessed to be a blessing. They have found something they love so much, from Someone that loves them so much, that they are willing to live in reckless abandon to the great commission of pleasing Him.

There is a huge difference between a warfare lifestyle and a peace-time mindset. Drifting into a peace-time mentality is when we start feeling at "home" in this world, and look at luxuries as needs. We forget the urgency of rescuing the battle-scarred and lost; those that are perishing.

Some of us are old enough to remember the sacrifices made during World War II. The whole country changed its priorities. Everyone tried to help; both those at home and abroad. Raw materials were needed for the wartime effort so rationing took place. Food items were restricted. Necessities became scarce. Everyone sacrificed. No one was exempt. Everyone cut back and reprioritized. There was a sense of commonality. We were all in the war together; those that went, and those that stayed. People wondered, "What can be done to advance the cause and ensure victory?" Everyone answered the call for personal involvement.

The strength of the church is not measured by those who sit protected on padded pews, but those soldiers that are sent forth to wage war. They march to the orders of their Commander-in-Chief, stay faithful to His plan of search and rescue; and never retreat. They charge forward in fulfillment of the Great Commission. Such warriors agree with the words of J. Hudson Taylor, "The Great Commission is not an option to be considered; it is a command to be obeyed." Missions is—and must always be—the battle cry of every born-again believer.

Thank God for our missionaries and national ministers on the frontlines gaining monumental territories and strategic victories. They are truly advancing the kingdom and making an eternal impact on their world. But, that is not enough. Must they go alone? All need to be enlisted in the battle. That, by the way, includes you and does not exclude me.

In wartime, people get together, and express care and concern for those on the frontlines. Letters are written. Care packages are sent. News from the troops is always kept before the people at home. Let your frontline missionaries know you care. Open your churches for them to have services in preparation for the ensuing battle. Prove to them that they are not going alone. We are in global evangelism together. Keep missions in the forefront of local church life and activities. Celebrate overseas victories. Share them with your people. Visit the troops on the battlefield. Send relief teams to assist. Give to finance open door efforts in new and unreached nations.

We can pray: "Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession" (Psalms 2:8). I like how *The Message* paraphrases it, "What do you want? Name it: Nations as a present? continents as a prize?" My response is a resounding "Yes," to both questions. God literally wants to put nations within our grasp. He is doing it now. It starts with prayer. It is fueled by giving. It presses forward through going.

The Christian life hasn't changed. There is still a raging battle to be fought. We press forward knowing that one day we can testify, with Paul, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course. I have kept the faith" (2 Timothy 4:7).

We should not look at life casually. We cannot live each day carelessly. We need to recognize that there is a cause. Otherwise, there will be numerous spiritual casualties. Remember, what David said, as he contemplated the battle with Goliath, "Is there not a cause?" (1 Samuel 17:29). There certainly is. Unlike, David and Goliath, this battle cannot be fought and won alone. We need the united efforts of the entire church. It is time to live a warfare lifestyle. Can we sign you up for battle?