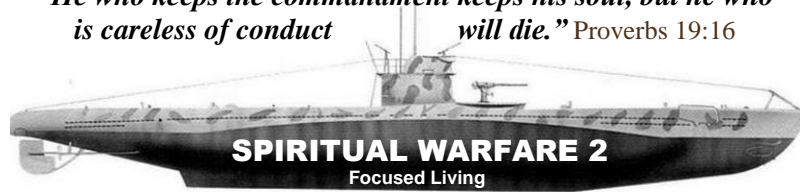


“He who keeps the commandment keeps his soul, but he who is careless of conduct will die.” Proverbs 19:16



U 571 and 15⁰ How vital is it for men to obey commands during times of war? Why do most men unwisely hate to read instructions, receive directions or carry out strategic commands from authorities?

COMBAT COMMANDS In our theme passage, Ephesians 6:10-20, God gives 5 clear, strategic, powerful, non-negotiable commands so that men can experience a real measure of victory in family relationships, decisions, temptations, lifestyles, priorities, disciplines, weaknesses and even failures. The more we receive and diligently apply the following commands the greater will be our growth in victorious living in every area of life (Joshua 1:6-9). When we faithfully apply these commands, we will be able to experience victory regardless of Satan’s strategy as God transforms us from **wusses** and **worriers** into **warriors**!

“Be STRONG in the Lord” (10). If you are a follower of Christ *believing* in Him alone for salvation and *receiving* His gracious gift of forgiveness for your sin, you are now a part of God’s forever family, daily learning how to let His truth rule and reign over your life. Though Satan has lost his grip on and authority over your life he has not lost his power to wreak havoc in you and your family.... if you let him (Rom 6:16-20; Col 1:13-14; 2:13-14; Heb 2:14). The key to victory is staying strong **“in the Lord”** (in dynamic relationship with) moment by moment. In all believers Christ is **present**. In some Christ is **prominent**. Sadly, only in a few is Christ **pre-eminent**. How strong would you say you are currently in the Lord? On whose power (dynamite) have you relied on lately as you have faced temptation, made decisions or attempted discipline. Prov 3:5-6

“STAND firm...” (11, 13, 14; I Cor 10:12). You will either *stand* for Christ or *fall* for every distraction, lie or temptation that comes your way. As every lineman knows, it doesn’t matter how big, quick or smart you are, if your stance or base is weak you will go down every time in defeat. If your feet are strong defeat will retreat (sorry, couldn’t resist!). The more secure your base, the more solid will be your stand against the adversary. How solid is your spiritual foundation? Where does it need repair/rebuilding? When was the last time you checked? Where are you getting pushed around or pushed over? Prov 18:10

“PUT ON full armor of God” (11, 13; Rom 13:14) The average soldier in the US Army carries between 80 and 100 pounds of gear into battle including weapons, ammunition, food and clothing - all “must have” items. If our soldiers would never dream of entering battle without being fully equipped, then how much more should the man of God be fully equipped for spiritual warfare? Did you enter the battle today fully equipped for war or ‘streaking’ naked? What “must have” items do you now wish you had packed? Why?

“Be ALERT” (18; I Peter 5:8 Matt 26:40-41) You must be vigilantly watchful never letting down your guard as you can expect the enemy to attack your **HEAD, HEART** and **HOME** when you are...

1. Growing your faith in God’s character/promises (Jn 10:1-18; Job 1-2)
2. Invading enemy territory by doing God’s work (Dan 6; Ex 3-14)
3. Pursuing/applying God’s truth and exposing a lie (Dan 3)
4. Destroying a pattern of sin while breaking with the world (Neh 4)
5. In a time of transition (Luke 4:1-13; I Sam 11:1-10)
6. Tired, weak, discouraged (I Kings 18-19)
7. What other times must we be alert to enemy attacks?

“PRAY at all times in the Spirit” (18, 19). As a seasoned spiritual warrior often in Roman custody, Paul understood the power of prayer and challenged the church at Ephesus to pray constantly. He realized that prayer is not preparation for the battle, it is the battle (Lk 22:39-46; Jn 17). For what specifically did Daniel pray when he was thrown into spiritual warfare (Dan 2:17-23)? What critical principles does Ex 17:8-13 teach about spiritual warfare? For whom do you need to be praying and how might we be praying for you?

ASSIGNMENT Call one man in your TAG team this week sharing where you most need to be on the alert and then praying together.

TAG TEAM DISCUSSION Which of the combat commands have you obeyed lately? How did it work out? What combat command have you neglected? What happened?