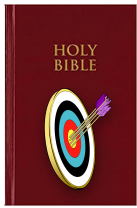


## Spot On

*Restoring the Hebraic foundational emphasis on the processes of how you live your life:*

- *the responsive actions our Lord commands all of His followers,*
- *and their responsibility to deferentially obey by grace the One they love.*



### Spot 1: Spiritual Warfare Is The Bonafide Life In The Kingdom

There's no room for passivity nor for shrinking back from our demonic foe (see Hebrews 10:39). Yet two of the most common translations (New International Version and King James Version) have watered down the intensity of both the nature of the battle as well as our own obedient response to it. We've collectively been deceived by an enemy who has used Hellenist/Nicolaitan control to dominate so much of Christendom. Multiple centuries of pew-sitting passivity have dulled the hearts and minds of those who've separated their "spiritual lives" from the rest of their values, goals and activities. Let's examine some texts which may shake up your complacent religious mindset and stir you to run to our Lord, calling out, "Here I am! Put me in the battle!"

- 1 Timothy 1:18 "*Fight the good fight*" as translated in the NIV and KJV smacks of a sports coach pumping up his team to go onto the field. Yet Paul is urging his protege Timothy to literally "*war the good warfare*" according to the prophecies that had been given the young man. This particular military term encompasses the afflicting hardships and arduous work of a soldier who is called to do battle. Trusting your "Commander" and being confident in His ability to direct your path is essential in this ongoing war — engagement by engagement.

And that can't be done by listening to a clergy person sermonize the topic, and then going home and forgetting what you heard the rest of the week. Being a "hearer only" makes Satan snicker and keeps you from recognizing and overcoming his deceitful schemes.

- 1 Timothy 6:12 is translated by both sources as "*Fight the good fight of the faith*", but Paul's admonition here is even more intense than the idea of waging war: to "*struggle with agony the good struggle for the faith.*" The "agony" used here means straining every nerve to the utmost toward your goal. That's intentionally and daily pressing on toward our goal as we follow Jesus — the "*good, agonizing struggle I have struggled*" (2 Timothy 4:7) which Paul has exemplified for us today. That's the same kind of "*agonizing struggle*" in Paul's heart that propels him onward on behalf of the followers of Jesus in Colosse and Laodicea (Colossians 2:1). These people aren't just "evangelism targets" for him; they're precious and dear souls for whom he has labored so *agonizingly* in the power of Christ in him (Colossians 1:29).

- 2 Timothy 2:4 "*No one serving as a soldier gets involved in civilian affairs — he wants to please his commanding officer*" (NIV). Yet the literal translation places the Hebraic emphasis on the action of obedience that comes from a soldier toward the One Who has called him to serve His purposes alone: "*No one soldiering is involved with the affairs of life, in order that he may please the one having enlisted him.*" Our Father chose you — enlisted you — to fulfill His purposes as a spiritual warrior. That kind of deliberate, love-grounded obedient trust is what pleases Him. And the various trials and suffering you go through in this spiritual battle strengthen you in His faithfulness to sustain you: "Suffer ill with us as a good soldier of Christ Jesus" (2 Timothy 2:3).

- In Romans 13:12 we are commanded to “*put aside the deeds of darkness*”(NIV), and “*put on the armor of light*” (KJV) You could think of the “*armor of light*” rendered in both translations almost as a defensive barrier between you and any evil that might come your way. Yet spiritual weapons are offensive in nature — they’re meant to be used by a soldier against an enemy force. Hence, the literal translation is to “*put on the weapons of light.*” Since the warfare that’s discussed throughout the Newer Testament is of the spiritual realm, your weapons of light emanate from the character of Jesus. But this means first *thrusting off* the attitudes and actions which have formerly ruled your flesh (and that’s a far stronger command than “*putting aside*” your deeds of darkness!).

- And finally, Jesus Himself makes clear in Luke 13:24 that entering His Kingdom entails purposeful and ongoing intensity. That literal “*agonizing struggle*” He cites is far more passionate than the NIV “*make every effort*” or the KJV “*strive to enter*” offers.

Too many today may find themselves believing false gospels from various creedal stances which use a parroted “**prayer of salvation**” to guarantee a ticket to heaven. Tragically, this blatant contradiction to the *agonizing struggle* Jesus spoke of leaves them unrepentant, unchanged and aimed for the broad pathway to hell. Doesn’t that hurt your heart when you realize how many people you know who say they’re “Christian” but whose lives are no different than those who openly admit they don’t care about God? It certainly grieves HIM.

### **Something to carry away from this discussion:**

Spiritual warfare against our spiritual enemy, Satan, and his demonic forces is a very real, ongoing battle for us who love and follow Jesus as Lord of our lives. The whole of Ephesians 6:10-18 is absolutely clear: we who serve Jesus as Lord are engaged in a military-style spiritual conflict with an insidious enemy in the unseen realm of the “*heavenlies.*” We are spiritual warriors who have been called to stand firm and stay alert and on guard against Satan’s schemes of deception. The whole armor of God that’s detailed in this passage wasn’t intended for you to admire in the mirror and stay isolated from battle. As with anything in Scripture, from a Hebraic understanding it’s meant to be put into action You’ve been called to keep standing firm and take the offensive to overcome the enemy of your soul!

