

Here I Am

Faith Wins the Battle

Pastor Craig Sweeney | April 27, 2025

Thread: Faith wins the battle.

“...Meanwhile, Saul stayed at Gilgal, and his men were trembling with fear.”

I Samuel 13:7 NLT

I Samuel 13:1 - 7 NLT

To his credit, Saul was courageous and brave.

- The Spirit of the Lord was upon him and this changed him.
- I applaud him for knowing his mind and recognizing this is his burden to carry as king.

I Samuel 13:8 – 13 NLT

It's tragic that Saul believed and chose to fight this battle alone without the help of God.

- Saul only calls on God at the desperate end.
- This is what it looks like to take matters into one's own hands.
- Saul had not cultivated his relationship with God to any depth prior to this moment.

I Samuel 13:13- 14 NLT

The difference between Saul and David was FAITH in a sovereign God against the impossible enemy.

How does the New Testament speak to this topic?

I Samuel 13:19 – 20 NLT

The weapons they fought and won with were not typical and neither are ours. II Corinthians 10:3 – 5 NLT

“...Be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on all of God's armor so that you will be able to stand firm against all strategies of the devil. For we are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world, and against evil spirits in the heavenly places.”

Ephesians 6:10 – 12 NLT

We must know what we are fighting against.

- Ours is a spiritual battle for the minds and hearts of people.

“Therefore, put on every piece of God's armor so you will be able to resist the enemy in the time of evil...” **Ephesians 6:13 NLT**

We don't defeat the work of Satan, Jesus does. We resist evil.

- The armor is for protection and defense so the enemy's blows do not do damage.

We do have authority over evil in Jesus' name. Authority not to be enslaved and defeating evil are different.

- **Authority** for us means not having to agree with nor obey evil.
- **Defeating** once and for all requires a power we do not possess—but Jesus does.

“...Then after the battle you will still be standing firm. Stand your ground...”

Ephesians 6:13 – 14 NLT - This is our goal: to “stand firm” in Christ on His ground.

“...putting on the belt of truth...” **Ephesians 6:14 NLT - God's truth: “the narrow way” of Jesus and His life and teachings.**

“...and the body armor of God's righteousness” **Ephesians 6:14 NLT- When the fiery arrows and blows of the enemy come at me and I am guilty of the accusations, the forgiveness of God covers me.**

“For shoes, put on the peace that comes from the Good News so that you will be fully prepared.” **Ephesians 6:15 NLT - Be at peace when threats of defeat are hurled our way.**

“In addition to all of these, hold up the shield of faith to stop the fiery arrows of the devil.” **Ephesians 6:16 NLT - Your faith in Jesus, His work on the cross and His Holy Spirit present in you deflect the deadly arrows of the enemy.**

“Put on salvation as your helmet...” **Ephesians 6:17 NLT - Let your mind be calm and at the ready—not given to fear and despair for you are loved by God.**

“...and take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.” **Ephesians 6:17 NLT - This is the truth, the context, and the worldview that we use throughout the battle to defend ourselves and take new ground.**

We are asking God for the Kingdom's ground to break through which is why we: *“Pray in the Spirit at all times and on every occasion. Stay alert and be persistent in your prayers for all believers everywhere.”* **Ephesians 6:18 NLT**

Challenge:

-What battles are you fighting?

-Are you taking matters into your own hands?

-Do you need to call on God differently—according to His Word, not yours?